

The Potters House

Bishop T.D. Jakes



STICKS & STONES

Transcribed and Published by Livingsermons.com

Sticks & Stones

Source: The Potters House

Preacher: Bishop T.D. Jakes

Publisher: LivingSermons.com

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For Kingdom impact worldwide.



Foreword

*There are sermons that inspire, and there are sermons that confront. Then there are sermons like **Sticks & Stones**—messages that do both while awakening something deep within the soul.*

*In this powerful teaching, T. D. Jakes takes us through one of Scripture’s most vivid patterns of divine deliverance: the mystery of the **stick and the stone**. What appears ordinary in the hands of man becomes extraordinary in the hands of God.*

A shepherd’s rod parts seas.

A rock releases water.

A cross becomes redemption.

A sealed tomb becomes resurrection.

*Through his unmistakable prophetic voice and piercing biblical insight, Bishop Jakes unfolds a timeless truth: **God often uses what seems insignificant to perform what seems impossible.***

This book is more than a sermon transcript. It is a prophetic call to anyone who has ever felt trapped behind a stone—whether that stone be fear, shame, grief, pride, addiction, trauma, or despair. Within these pages, you will discover:

- *That your wilderness is not your end.*
- *That your praise is a weapon.*
- *That your pain may be preparation.*
- *That what tried to bury you cannot hold you.*
- *And that when God says, “Get up,” no grave has the authority to keep you down.*

Perhaps the most compelling strength of this message is its raw honesty. Bishop Jakes does not merely preach theology; he speaks from lived experience—hardship, endurance, resilience, and faith forged in discomfort. That authenticity gives this message unusual weight.

At LivingSermons.com, it is our conviction that sermons carry power beyond the moment they are preached. By preserving them in book form, we extend their reach—allowing the voice of the Spirit to continue ministering across generations, nations, and seasons.

As you read this manuscript, do not approach it casually. Read it prayerfully. Read it expecting God to reveal the “stone” in your own life—and to move it. And when He does, do not stay where He found you.

Rise.

For the same God who brought water out of the rock and life out of the grave is still working miracles today.

May this book strengthen your faith, deepen your understanding, and awaken your courage to step fully into the freedom Christ has already purchased for you.

Grace and peace.

— Wisdom Epsi

Chief Editor, LivingSermons.com

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Publisher's Note

This book is a faithful transcript of a live sermon delivered by the preacher under the inspiration and unction of the Holy Spirit. Every effort has been made to preserve the preacher's exact words, tone, flow, and spiritual authority, while carefully proofreading and formatting the message into a clear and readable ebook format.

The message you are about to read was originally ministered in a live congregational setting. As such, it carries the weight, urgency, and atmosphere of that sacred gathering. Minor grammatical and structural adjustments have been made solely to enhance readability, without altering the substance, intent, or power of the original delivery.

Watch the live sermon from which this message was transcribed on YouTube, at [**the Potters House Official YouTube Channel**](#)

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Our standard is reverence for the Word of God.

Our daily goal is to transform powerful live sermons into polished PDF and ebook editions for the edification of the Body of Christ.

It is our prayer that as you read, the same grace, conviction, clarity, and impartation present in the live service will minister to you afresh.

— ***Livingsermons.com***

A Spirit-led Publishing Stewardship

Main Message

Begins Here



Introduction

Turn with me to **Exodus 17:1–6**.

It is so good to see you this morning. It is just good to see you. You did not have to be here this morning, and I did not have to be here this morning. But God was good enough to let our moments roll on.

You ought to say yes.

The book of Exodus describes the exit of the children of Israel out of the bondage of the Egyptians, where they had been oppressed for four hundred years. They had lived in Egypt for four hundred and thirty years.

The first thirty years they were not oppressed. But when Joseph died, another Pharaoh arose—a Pharaoh who knew not Joseph nor his God—and he began to oppress them.

People will change on you, won't they?

They lived in oppression for four hundred years. That is a long time to live under oppression. They had almost forgotten who they were—their customs, their ceremonies, their language, their rituals.

Yet they cried unto God in a haphazard way, not fully knowing what to call Him, how to use His name, or how to stand on His Word. But He heard the cry.

And He told Moses:

“I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry...” (Exodus 3:7, KJV)

Go down into Egypt and tell Pharaoh to let My people go. God is going to release somebody in here today. I feel it. God is going to release somebody in here today.

Delivered, But Still in the Desert

So they left Egypt, heading toward the Promised Land by way of the desert. God does not always let you choose the route He takes to deliver you.

It is not always comfortable.

It is not always convenient.

It is not always cool.

And just because you get out of one trouble does not mean you will not face another. They got out of one kind of hell and ran into another. Now they are in the desert—scorching hot during the day, freezing cold at night. But they were free. Look at somebody and say: **“I still got problems... but I’m free.”**

Everything is not going right, but I am free.

My money is funny, but I am free.

My husband walked out on me, but I am free.

My parents are sick, but I am free.

My refrigerator is half full, but I am free.

And I have learned:

“...for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.”

(Philippians 4:11, KJV)

That is maturity. When you can praise God when everything is not quite right.

Adjusting to a New Reality

We enter into this text at a moment where Israel is adjusting to a new reality. And I believe God put this text on my heart because we are adjusting to a new reality too. It is not that the past was perfect. But now we have a new kind of problem to fight.

And it is going to take:

- A new kind of ingenuity
- A new kind of wisdom
- A new kind of power

Moses is trying to lead a people who are:

- Displaced
- Confused
- Frustrated

They are not sure of their leader.

They are not sure of themselves.

And they are not sure of God.

Because you have to walk through a whole lot of situations to be sure of God.

Anybody can trust God when all the bills are paid, your body feels good, your kidneys are working, and there is no cancer. But when all hell breaks loose, the devil will ask:

“Where is your God now?”

When Thirst Makes People Bitter

The Bible says:

“And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin... and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink.” (Exodus 17:1, KJV)

And because there was no water, they chided with Moses. Whenever things get tight, people get nasty. When people get tight, they need somebody to blame. So they blamed Moses:

“Give us water that we may drink.” (Exodus 17:2, KJV)

And Moses said:

“Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the Lord?” (Exodus 17:2, KJV)

Let me translate that: Why are you fooling with me?

If you chide with me, you tempt God. If you mess with me, you mess with God. You may think I am standing here by myself, but I am surrounded by God. The people thirsted there for water, and they murmured against Moses. Those two things go together:

Thirst and gossip.

Thirst and murmuring.

When you are not satisfied in your own life, you become cynical, condescending, and hard to get along with. And you have to understand this: **When people are mean to you, they are mad at themselves.**

The Pressure on the Leader

Moses cried unto the Lord:

“What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.”
(Exodus 17:4, KJV)

You can say things that make a man of God cry unto God. And when they cry unto God, something is going to happen. The Lord said unto Moses: Take the elders. Take your rod. Go before the people.

And then God says something strange:

“...thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it...” (Exodus 17:6, KJV)

Lord, they are thirsty. Why You got me hitting rocks?

Have you ever had God give you an answer that made no sense?

You are talking about the rent, and God tells you to water the dog.

Sometimes God will command you to do something that seems unrelated to your situation. But obedience unlocks miracles.

Take your rod.

Take your stick.

Hit the rock.

And water shall come out. I have never seen a rock that looked like a water cooler. But God said: If you obey Me, I will make things that were not supposed to bless you, bless you.

I will give you jobs you were not supposed to have. I will give you relationships that make people wonder how you got so blessed.

Sticks and Stones

Take your rod and smite the rock. That is my subject this morning: **Sticks and Stones.**

Spirit of the living God, fall fresh in this place right now. Move in the midst of Your people. In the mighty name of Jesus.

And somebody shout:

Amen.

Raised in the Wilderness

I have been in Dallas for the last thirty years. I was raised in Charleston, West Virginia. I am sixty-nine years old come June.

I have been preaching nearly fifty years. But when I was a boy, we grew up on the side of a hill in Vanalia, Charleston, West Virginia. And when Mama sent us outside to play, she sent us with no toys.

We made toys.

Sticks became bows and arrows. Rocks became castles.

A magnifying glass became entertainment. I chased ants. I caught salamanders. I caught turtles. Those were my toys.

Because I was raised in the wilderness. And it is hard to hurt somebody raised in the wilderness. Because when you have been raised in hard places, what breaks other people will not break you.

You default back to where you came from and remind yourself:

I'm going to be alright.

Built for Hard Seasons

I know how to make the best out of a bad situation. And I am not ashamed of that. It gave me stick-to-itiveness.

It gave me stability.

It gave me fight.

It gave me drive.

It gave me tenacity.

It gave me relentlessness. I do not need a Hammond B3 to praise God. Give me an upright piano, a microphone, and a washboard. And we would bring down more glory with a washboard than some folk do with all this technology.

I can praise God in my house.

I can praise Him in my car.

I can praise Him in the bathtub.

Because I was not raised needing all this fancy stuff. The praises of God were already in my mouth.

Deliverance Is Not Comfortable

The children of Israel were adjusting to the heat of the desert. They had been slaves for ten generations. And when they asked God for deliverance, they assumed deliverance would be comfortable.

But deliverance was not comfortable.

Pharaoh was still chasing them.

Deliverance brought them to the Red Sea.

A stoppable place.

And some of you are there right now.

But understand this:

God's greatest miracles often happen in stoppable places.

Pharaoh had four hundred chosen chariots.

Moses had one stick.

And God asked:

“What is that in your hand?”

Moses said:

“A rod.”

And God said:

Lift up what you've got.

Do not wait for it to get better.

Do not wait for it to get easier. Do not wait until you feel stronger. If all you have is a stick—**Lift it.**

Because God can make a stick stronger than a chariot. And when Moses stretched forth his rod over the Red Sea, the waters parted. And when he stepped into the sea—he stepped on dry ground.

See, you are still stuck at the fact that the waters stood up. You have not even thought about the fact that God dried the ground that was sitting under the water. Will God not dry the land for you?

Will He not make a way out of no way?

Will He not put you in a position where He makes your pathway smooth?

I wish I had a witness in here—where God made smooth what you thought was going to be hard. And God brought them through on dry ground. Having brought them through, they came out on the other side.

By the time Pharaoh got to the Red Sea, the walls were collapsing, the dry ground had turned to mud, and they were drowning. They were drowning in what you walked through. I said they were drowning in what you walked through.

Praise Is a Weapon

And Miriam grabbed a tambourine. I wish somebody had one right now. She started beating that tambourine. Because praise is a weapon. And the more she praised, the more Pharaoh's army drowned in the sea.

If you would start praising God over those bills, God would drown those bills. If you would start praising God in that hospital room—yes, they might think you are crazy—but if you would just tap that tambourine a little bit, God would do something with that cancer.

He would move that tumour. He would shrink that disease.

For:

“Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” (1 John 4:4, KJV)

While you are praising God, God is drowning your enemies. When you start praising God:

- Devils start growling
- Bodies get healed
- Doors start opening

We are not dancing just to dance. We are in a fight. I am not dancing because I got new shoes. I will kick off my shoes and dance barefoot because I am in a fight. Anybody in a fight?

Slaves Became Sons

God brought them through. The Bible says He brought them through on eagle's wings. He gave them first-class service. They survived slavery. They went in slaves and came out sons.

They were baptised unto Moses in the cloud and under the sea. There was a cloud above them and water around them. And God called it baptism. Some things you call trouble, God calls baptism.

And now they are in the wilderness. And they are thirsty.

After surviving slavery...

after making bricks without straw...

after enduring oppression...

now they are complaining over thirst. Because thirsty people are angry people. And sometimes even if you give them water, it still will not stop the anger. Because the thirst is deeper than water.

- The thirst is frustration.
- The thirst is pain.
- The thirst is confusion.

And sometimes people will take that out on you.

God Is About to Use Your Stick

They blamed Moses.

And Moses cried unto God:

Why are they chiding with me?

And God said:

I am about to do something with your stick that has never been done before.

And the Lord sent me to tell you:

He is about to do something with your stick that has never been done before.

There is a relationship in this text between the stone and the stick.

It is a shadow of Calvary.

Deliverance keeps happening around stones and sticks.

Take the stick and strike the rock.

And water will come out.

The Mystery of the Rock

God has always used rocks. David picked up smooth stones and killed Goliath. Jacob laid his head on a rock and saw heaven open. Moses hid in the rock and saw God's glory pass by. Solomon built the temple with stones. The walls of Jericho fell.

Lazarus came out of a rock tomb. And the Bible says Christ is:

"The chief corner stone." (Ephesians 2:20, KJV)

God does things with rocks. And when you put the stick with the rock—water comes out.

Touch your neighbour and tell them: **Water is about to come out.**

This whole pew is about to get wet.

Calvary: The Stick and the Stone

What happened on Calvary was foreshadowed in the Old Testament. The resurrection story is a story of a stick and a stone. In Genesis 22, Abraham took Isaac and laid wood upon him. That wood was the stick. He built an altar with a stick and a stone.

Isaac carried the wood.

Jesus carried the cross.

But the cross was just a stick.

And Jesus understood the power of the stick.

No man took His life.

He laid it down.

But He laid it down on a stick.

They hung Him high.

They stretched Him wide.

They drove nails into His hands and His feet.

He became the bridge between Jew and Gentile under one gospel.

But they made a mistake.

If they had left the cross on the ground, I would not be saved.

But they lifted Him up.

And He said:

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” (John 12:32, KJV)

They hung Him from the sixth to the ninth hour. They hung Him until the graves opened. They hung Him until the veil in the temple was rent from top to bottom. They hung Him until the Old Testament folded into the New. They hung Him until the law was fulfilled. And He died.

Not just for the sins you testify about—but for the sins you keep secret.

- Your hidden sins.
- Your private sins.
- Your personal sins.

And before He died, He declared:

“It is finished.” (John 19:30, KJV)

Tell your neighbour:

It is finished.

- You can talk about it—it is finished.
- You can bring it up—it is finished.
- You can roll your eyes—it is finished.

When God finishes a thing, it is finished. That is why I do not walk with my head down. My head is up. My back is straight. Because it is finished. I can come boldly to the throne of grace because it is finished.

When I Think of His Goodness

When I think of His goodness...

When I think of where He brought me from...

When I think about domestic violence...

When I think about child abuse...

When I think about agony...

When I think about the struggle...

My soul cries out: **Hallelujah!**

Thank God for saving me.

Borrowed for a Moment

The Bible says they borrowed a grave from Joseph of Arimathaea. And anytime you borrow something, you do not plan to keep it. Jesus borrowed that grave because He only needed it three days.

And when I came into this world, I borrowed this body. Because I do not plan to stay here.

For:

“For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God...” (2 Corinthians 5:1, KJV)

- Somebody will drive my car.
- Somebody will wear my clothes.
- Somebody will sleep in my bed.

That is alright. I just borrowed it. Because I have a mansion over in glory. And it is mine.

Sunday Morning

They took Jesus to the borrowed tomb. They rolled the stone in front of Him. He stayed there all day Friday. All day Saturday. But Sunday morning—Sunday morning—He got up.

Yes, He did.

He got up out of the grave.

Victorious.

Alive forevermore.

And you remember that Lazarus had to be loosed.

But who loosed Jesus?

He loosed Himself.

He set Himself free.

He spoke Himself into a new existence and walked around in the grave.

But it did not stop there.

Because it is not enough to get out of your grave clothes.

It is not enough to wake up out of the grave if you are still trapped behind the stone.

And as I get ready to close, some of you have been resurrected—but you are still living behind the stone.

- A stone of doubt.
- A stone of poverty.
- A stone of insecurity.
- A stone of pride.
- A stone of lust.

But the Lord said: **“I am getting ready to roll the stone away.”**

You have been in there a long time, trying to praise Me behind a stone. But I am about to roll it out of your way. Tell your neighbour: **“Get out of my way. I’ve got to come out of this grave.”**

I have got to come out of this depression. I have got to come out of this condition.

I have got to come out of this state.

I am tired of living this way.

Roll the Stone Away

Is there anybody in this room with faith?

Take your faith and roll the stone. God is getting ready to move it out of your way. And when you come out—come out praising. Come out glorifying God. Come out lifting Him up. They nailed you to a stick. They hid you behind a stone. But God is about to bring you out of everything they had you trapped behind. Who am I preaching to?

Start leaping.

Leap until the stone knows it cannot hold you. Leap until sickness knows it has to let you go. Leap until depression leaves your body.

Leap until suicide leaves your spirit.

Leap until joy returns.

Leap until your dance comes back.

And if you cannot leap—crawl.

If you cannot crawl—walk.

But whatever you do—**Get out.**

Ain't No Grave Going to Hold Me

Tell somebody:

“I’ve been down too long.”

There is a power pulling me out of this.

Ain't no grave going to hold my body down.

Gravity cannot hold me down.

Enemies cannot hold me down.

Situations cannot hold me down.

Death cannot hold me down.

When God says get up—I am getting up. The nails cannot hold me.

The grave cannot hold me. Your stares cannot hold me. Your opinions cannot hold me.

Roll your eyes if you want to—I am still getting up.

Write your notes if you want to—I am still getting up.

He's Stronger

I feel something breaking loose in this place.

If I had a hundred radical people who made up their minds they were not going to take it anymore—something would break in here.

He is stronger than witchcraft.

He is stronger than roots.

He is stronger than Satan.

He is stronger than the enemy.

He is stronger than trouble.

He is stronger than turmoil.

He is stronger than sickness.

He is stronger than disease.

Whatever you need from God—**He is stronger than that.**

Break loose from your bands and praise Him.

Say it:

He's stronger.

Say it again:

He's stronger.

I have been down too long—but He's stronger.

Grab your neighbour by the hand and say:

“Get up.”

God still wants to use you.

Get up.

God still wants to anoint you.

Get up.

God still has a plan for your life.

For the next few minutes, find a way to get up out of your grave.

Throw your stone away.

Pull the nails out.

The Stone in Your Life

The only thing worse than being in the grave—is being resurrected and still unable to get out.

To have the knowledge...

To have the understanding...

But still be blocked.

You walk so far and then hit something and go right back.

And the enemy has convinced you that the stone in your life cannot be moved.

I do not know what kind of stone it is.

- It may be depression.

- It may be fear.
- It may be trauma.
- It may be PTSD.

But every time you try to come out—you hit it. And some of you have decided: “I will just live in the tomb.”

But God says:

No.

Lift your hands.

Worship Him.

That stone in your life does not have to stay there.

That stone in your house does not have to stay there.

Cry unto God.

And He will move it.

Early in the morning, the women came looking for Jesus where He used to be. And the angel sitting on the stone said:

“He is not here: for he is risen...” (Matthew 28:6, KJV)

And I can imagine people coming to where you used to be—and the angel says: She is not here. He is not here. I know the person you are talking about—but they are not here anymore. They have risen.

The Call to Come Out

I cut my message short because the Lord is leading me to pray for somebody who wants to rise up out of it.

Who is tired of living in the tomb.

Who is tired of being surrounded by dead things.

You go out with them.

You party with them.

They come over your house.

But you know—God has done too much in your life for you to stay there.

If you want out badly enough—do not care about your image.

Do not care who is beside you.

Do not care who is watching.

Tell them:

Move out of my way.

I am coming out.

If I have to come from the balcony—I am coming.

If I have to come from the back—I am coming.

If I came in broken—I am still coming.

Because I want change.

Grace Space

This is grace space.

And grace does not last forever.

“Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid.” (Romans 6:1–2, KJV)

If we are buried in the likeness of His death—we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.

He quickened you.

He gave you life.

He gave you something no drug dealer can give.

No relationship can give.

No addiction can give.

Only Jesus.

This is your opportunity.

There is nothing in your life—nothing in your past—nothing in your mind—that God cannot forgive. There is no darkness His Word cannot penetrate.

There is no habit He cannot break. There is no stone He cannot roll away.

- He will roll the stone.
- He will roll the habit.
- He will roll the pain.
- He will roll the bondage.

Right out of your way.

Closing Exhortation

Do not stay in the tomb. Do not stay where death is. Jesus did not die for you just to “have church.”

He died for you to have life. Not existence. Life. Abundant life.

And today—you can rise.



About The Potter's House

The Potter's House is an intergenerational church passionately committed to uplifting humanity by embodying Christ's call to salvation while addressing the most pressing challenges facing our world—both locally and globally.

At its core, The Potter's House believes that true transformation requires more than spiritual growth alone. In an ever-changing world, thriving demands a holistic approach to human development—one that nurtures spiritual depth, emotional resilience, meaningful community, intellectual growth, and economic empowerment.

With a mission rooted in faith and innovation, The Potter's House meets people at every stage of life, providing practical solutions, spiritual guidance, and empowering opportunities designed to help individuals and families evolve with purpose, strength, and power.

As a global voice of hope and restoration, The Potter's House remains dedicated to building lives, strengthening communities, and advancing the Kingdom of God through transformative ministry.

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