Take Away The Stone

[Part Two]

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God bless you,

Oluwatobi S. Adewuyi
Coordinator

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God bless you!

Topic:
Take Away The Stone
Text:John 11:38-39

Prayer
Our father we thank you for how faithful you are, thank you for your loving kindness and your grace. Lord, as we go into your word, minister to us and open our understanding. Thank you, father. In Jesus Christ name we pray, amen.

Introduction
The story of Lazarus is a story many of us would know, if not all of us, though. But have we taken time to really study about the story? I will do well to explain some things today, and you will understand how deep that story is. After Jesus was told of Lazarus' death and He came over, we would see something specific that happened. Let's go into our text and dive more deeper into the study.

Bible text: John 11:38-39 KJV
(38) Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.
(39) Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

Study
John 11:38:KJV
"Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it". We see that Jesus was not pleased with the state He found the people and with what happened. He groaned in Himself when He approached the grave. This is how Jesus is groaning because of a lot of people.

He knows that the situation they are in is unpleasant, and He is willing to help but just can't. Not that He is incapable of helping, but because He is restricted. You will understand as we proceed—just ensure you follow keenly. **John 11:39: KJV** "Jesus said, **TAKE YE AWAY THE STONE**. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days."In the case of Lazarus, he was laid in a cave and a stone was used to cover the cave. The stone was meant to prevent people from entering the cave and for securing the cave and the corpse. It was also meant to reduce the stench that would be oozing out of the cave, as it won't allow a free flow of the polluted air.

When Jesus got to the cave, why didn't He just call Lazarus to come forth straightaway? It was because there was a blockage between Him and Lazarus, and such blockage could hinder Lazarus from coming out even though Jesus was capable of calling him out. The blockage was the stone between Jesus and the cave, and because Jesus understood principles and legalities, He instructed them to take away the stone first before He was able to gain access to the dead body. You will notice that He Himself didn't take away the stone by Himself; He told them to take it away.

It means that there was a need for every restriction between the dead body and Jesus to be taken away before Jesus could wrought the wonders He wanted to wrought. And it is our duty to ensure there are no restrictions between Jesus and us. We should roll away every stone that might be causing restrictions between us and what God is planning to do with us. This is what is happening in our present world. Jesus is willing to use a lot of people, He is willing to do a lot of things in the lives of people, but there is still a blockage and restriction in them, and this

blockage is restricting Jesus from doing what He purposes in His heart to do. There is still a big stone which needs to be taken away in many people's lives, but they are not willing to take it away yet, and they want Jesus to work in their lives unrestricted. It is like shutting the door and still expecting someone to enter.
How will the person enter when the door is shut? We give people access into our homes and rooms by unlocking the door for them to enter, but many of us want to allow Jesus work on us, yet we are refusing to roll away the big stone restricting Him. I tell you that as long as this stone is still intact, God wouldn't do anything in our lives. What then is this big stone? This could be the question popping up in your heart presently. Well, we will know what it is very soon. Just stay with me!

What is this stone?

1. **Lack of total surrendering to God:** If God would work in your life, you need to totally surrender to Him. Many are not genuinely born again, but they go to church and pray that God should favour them. They have forgotten that the prayers of a sinner are abominations unto God. The only prayer God answers from a sinner is the prayer of repentance. Before you can pray to Him and ask Him to do wonders in your life and He would answer, you need to totally surrender to Him.

Going to church does not mean you have surrendered totally to God. Some are still serving God and worshipping idols in their backyard, and they think they are serving God like that. They are only deceiving themselves. The stone hindering God from working in your life could be lack of total surrendering to God.
So, surrender totally to Him today if you want Him to hear you and hearken to you.

2. **Distractions**: The stone hindering God from working in your life could be distractions. You are truly a child of God, but you

are really distracted and not focusing well. When you are supposed to observe your quiet time, you get distracted with things online and stay long hours online, forgetting that you have not fellowshipped with your Father. Distractions could be from any source. For some, their parents are their distractions. They can't study their Bibles or pray fervently wherever their parents are because they will be distracted. For some, their spouses are their distractions. Whatsoever is distracting you from focusing on God could be a stone hindering God from working in your life. Some should have gone really far in life, but distractions have really hindered them and caused their journey to be very slow. Roll away that stone by cutting off those distractions, either by setting structures in place or doing what is necessary so that God can have full access into your life.

Are you with me?

3. **Idols in the heart**: Some have made a lot of things idols in their hearts, and this is restricting God from doing what He ought to do in their lives. You may be asking what it means to have idols in the heart. What it means is that whatever you have raised above God in your heart is now an idol in your heart. It could be your partner, your child, your phone, your gadgets, your money/wealth, your television, your parents, or even your business. Some people are so engrossed in their business that they can stay in the shop from morning till midnight, not caring about their secret place. Whatsoever ranks more than God through your actions towards it is now an idol in your heart.

And, for you to roll away this stone, you need to get rid of idols in the heart and let God take charge of your heart fully. Some people's hearts are filled with sexual-related contents, and they meditate on these things even more than the way they meditate on the word of God.

You need to take away this stone for it not to be a hindrance to what God wants to do in your life.

4. **Worldliness**: Another stone that is hindering God from working in the lives of people is worldliness. When a person gets deeply rooted in worldliness, it becomes difficult for God to use the person or work in such person's life. Just imagine that Mary who gave birth to Jesus gave herself to immorality and worldliness; she would not have been given the privilege to birth the Saviour. God continually uses a vessel that is purged, according to the book of Timothy.

Before a vessel can be fit for the master's use, it must be purged thoroughly. And, the Bible says that friendship with the world is enmity with God. So, if you allow worldliness to take hold of your life, it means you are an enemy of God because you are a friend of the world. And, God will not wrought wonders in the life of His enemy. So, roll away the stone by doing away with worldliness. Cut yourself totally from the world and anything that has to do with the worldly system.

5. **Stubbornness/Unyieldedness**: The last one I will mention is stubbornness and unyieldedness. These can serve as a stone in that some are not yielding to God's instructions. They are stubborn to His instructions and not obeying. And, this can cause a restriction between God and a person. When a person is persistently stubborn and unyielding to God's instructions, such has refused to take away the stone and can cause restrictions between him and what God wants to do in his life. The way to roll away these stones is by obeying God's instructions and yielding to Him totally. What has God told you to do? What instructions has He given you that you have refused to hearken to? Check your life: are you not stubborn? Are you not unyielding? Is your heart tender?

Roll away the stone that is blocking and restricting Jesus from working wonders in your life. Jesus is beckoning to you to roll away the stones so that you can witness the glory of God, just the way Mary and Martha witnessed it. Until you roll away the stones, some things might not happen in your life. May the grace and strength to roll away such stones come upon you, in Jesus Christ's name, amen.

We have come to the end of today's study. If you have any questions, do ask. But, if none, have a good day ahead, brethren.

Invitation

If you know that you are still living in sin and you are ready to repent and begin to live your life in strict obedience to God so that you can overcome every sin in your life to make heaven, please place your right hand on your chest and say this prayer with your mouth.

Say,

"Lord Jesus, I accept You as my personal Lord and Savior. I believe that You died for me and took away my sins so that I will not face the penalty of them. I surrender my life to You today, and I make a decision to obey and follow You. Come into my life now and accept me as Your child. Thank You for saving me, in Jesus Christ's name I pray, Amen."

Congratulations, now you are saved. If you prayed this short prayer, please WhatsApp **+2347067511039** and let me know that you have just been saved. I want to have a word with you. God bless you!

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