

# JESUS RAISES LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD

BIBLE TEXT : John 11:1-46

LESSON 145 Junior Course

**MEMORY VERSE:** "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

## BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

### **John 11:1-46**

<sup>1</sup> Now a certain *man* was sick, *named* Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

<sup>2</sup> (It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

<sup>3</sup> Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

<sup>4</sup> When Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

<sup>5</sup> Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

<sup>6</sup> When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

<sup>7</sup> Then after that saith he to *his* disciples, Let us go into Judaea again.

<sup>8</sup> *His* disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

<sup>9</sup> Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

<sup>10</sup> But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

<sup>11</sup> These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

<sup>12</sup> Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

<sup>13</sup> Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

<sup>14</sup> Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

<sup>15</sup> And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may

## BIBLE REFERENCES:

### NOTES:

#### **Sickness**

Jesus had visited in the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. Martha had busied herself to prepare and serve a meal to Jesus (**Luke 10:40** <sup>40</sup> But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me). It was Mary who had sat at Jesus' feet to learn of Him (**Luke 10:39** <sup>39</sup> And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word). In humble service, Mary anointed His feet with costly oil (**John 12:3** <sup>3</sup> Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment). No doubt Jesus had been with this family often, for He loved them.

Into this home which had entertained Jesus, and into the life of a man whom Jesus loved, came sickness. We read in Ecclesiastes 9:2, "All things come alike to all." Sickness is not heaped upon the ungodly, nor are the godly spared from being sick. When a Christian is sick, he trusts in the Lord for healing as the Bible instructs him to do. "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. . . . Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up" (James 5:13-15).

When Lazarus became sick, his sisters sent word to Jesus, just as we do when we pray. Jesus told the disciples that Lazarus' sickness was for the glory of God. He said that Lazarus' sickness would milt result in death but that the Son of God would receive glory.

#### **Delay**

One might think that Jesus would go to Lazarus immediately. That was not Jesus' way in this case. For two days, He remained in the same place, so far as we know, before He even mentioned about going to Lazarus. Perhaps this was to test the faith of Lazarus and his sisters. We do not know that Jesus even sent word to them, but His delay did not mean that He would not go. Without a doubt, by Christ's delay, God received more glory than if Lazarus had been healed soon after he had been taken sick. Jesus said that the delay was intended to give more faith and to deepen it in their hearts.

Lazarus could have been healed by Jesus' power without Jesus even being there, for others were healed by Jesus' word. When the servant of a centurion was sick, his master went to Jesus saying, "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." Jesus marveled at the centurion's faith and told him that it would be done as he believed. The servant was healed that very hour (**Matthew 8:5-13** <sup>5</sup> And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, <sup>6</sup> And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. <sup>7</sup> And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and

believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.

<sup>16</sup> Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

<sup>17</sup> Then when Jesus came, he found that he had *lain* in the grave four days already.

<sup>18</sup> Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:

<sup>19</sup> And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

<sup>20</sup> Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat *still* in the house.

<sup>21</sup> Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

<sup>22</sup> But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* thee.

<sup>23</sup> Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

<sup>24</sup> Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

<sup>25</sup> Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

<sup>26</sup> And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

<sup>27</sup> She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

<sup>28</sup> And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

<sup>29</sup> As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

<sup>31</sup> The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

<sup>32</sup> Then when Mary was come where

heal him. <sup>8</sup> The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. <sup>9</sup> For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*. <sup>10</sup> When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. <sup>11</sup> And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>12</sup> But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>13</sup> And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour). At another time, Jesus healed the Syro-phenician woman's daughter without being near her. The mother went to Jesus in behalf of her daughter. "She besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter" (Mark 7:26). Jesus honored her faith and told her to go her way, for "her daughter was made whole from that very hour" (Matthew 15:28). The mother went home and found it so.

Even today people are healed who live so many miles from the church that they cannot be anointed and prayed over. They send in a request for prayer and God's people pray for their healing. Many, many people have been healed through faith in Jesus even though they were in far-distant places. But Jesus did not raise up Lazarus in this manner.

### Jesus in Danger

When Jesus told the disciples that they were going to Lazarus, they objected and reminded Jesus that the Jews had sought to stone Him (**John 8:59** <sup>59</sup> Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by. **John 10:31** <sup>1</sup> Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him). Jesus cared little about danger when there was work to do. His work had to be done while there was an opportunity, for He said that night and darkness would come when no man could work (**John 9:4** <sup>4</sup> I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work).

In the face of danger, Jesus went to Lazarus, who had by this time died. Jesus knew that it was time for the glory of God to be shown. Jesus told the disciples that Lazarus was asleep and that He would awaken him from the sleep of death. The disciples went with Jesus, not knowing but that He and they would be stoned by the Jews.

### In Bethany

Jesus did not go to Mary and Martha only to comfort them. He had something greater in mind — a miracle for the glory of God. Their home was one of sadness, for Lazarus had been buried for four days already. Many of their friends were there to comfort them but they were looking for the best Friend, Jesus.

Martha went to meet Jesus. She knew that He could have prevented her brother's death. She believed that she would see Lazarus again on the Resurrection Day.

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Jesus had all power in Heaven and in earth (**Matthew 28:18** <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth) — power to make alive as well as power to heal the sick. Martha said she believed that He was the Son of God and that His prayer could get anything.

Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

<sup>33</sup> When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,

<sup>34</sup> And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.

<sup>35</sup> Jesus wept.

<sup>36</sup> Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

<sup>37</sup> And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

<sup>38</sup> Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

<sup>39</sup> 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.

<sup>40</sup> Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

<sup>41</sup> Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

<sup>42</sup> And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said *it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

<sup>43</sup> And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

<sup>44</sup> And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

<sup>45</sup> Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

<sup>46</sup> But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

Martha went to her sister with the message that the Master was there and called for her. Mary went to Jesus, acknowledging her faith in His power to heal. If Jesus had been there before, she would have asked Him to heal her brother; but she thought that He had come too late.

They went to show Jesus the place where Lazarus was laid. Jesus' heart of compassion was touched as He saw Mary and the others weeping. He was the Son of God but He was also human, and showed His grief, for He wept as He went to Lazarus' grave.

At the Grave

A sorrowful group stood by Lazarus' tomb that day. Little did they realize what a wonderful miracle was about to take place. At first they did not co-operate with Jesus when He told them to remove the stone at the door of the grave. They thought that it was too late, for surely by that time the body of Lazarus would be corrupted.

Upon one occasion *Jesus* did not perform miracles because of the unbelief of the people (**Matthew 13:58** <sup>58</sup> *And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief*). When Jairus' daughter was reported dead, Jesus said to her father, "Fear not: believe only" (Luke 8:50). To the father of a mentally sick child Jesus said, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23). There is a saying that seeing is believing, but Jesus turned it around and said that if they believed they would see. Jesus said, "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matthew 21:22). People today would see more of the glory of God revealed if they had more faith in God.

Jesus' words encouraged those who stood around Lazarus' tomb, and they removed the stone. Jesus lifted up His eyes heavenward and prayed — not a prayer of necessity but one of thanks that God had already heard Him and that He was about to receive glory from those about Him.

Perhaps the disciples were talking among themselves: "Did He not say that Lazarus was asleep, and that He would awaken him? Said He not that Lazarus' sickness was not unto death? What did He mean, for was not Lazarus dead and buried?" They were soon to find out what Jesus meant.

## New Life

They heard Jesus say with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." They saw the one who had been dead for four days, come forth bound hand and foot with his grave clothes. At Jesus' command they loosed him. Lazarus was alive by the power of Jesus. What rejoicing there must have been that day! There had been weeping and sadness until Jesus came. He turned it all to happiness by the words He spoke. Truly, because of their faith in Jesus' power, Lazarus lived, though he had been dead.

Jesus' power did not end there. Many people who were dead in sin (**Colossians 2:13** <sup>13</sup> *And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses*) heard Jesus speak their names. They came forth to walk a new life (**Romans 6:4** <sup>4</sup> *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life*), for they believed that in Jesus is the resurrection and the life. They had been bound hand and foot; but with the Psalmist they can say to the Lord, "Thou hast loosed my bonds" (Psalm 116:16). What Jesus did for Lazarus in the natural He will do today in the spiritual sense.

Every sinner is like Lazarus when he was in the grave — dead, bound, and in the dark. Every Christian is like Lazarus after he was raised from the grave — he has life. He is loosed from the bonds of his sins. He is in the light and walks in the light (**John 8:12** <sup>12</sup> Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life).

Lazarus' sickness was for the glory of God. Surely, raising the dead was greater than preventing death. Many Jews had gone to comfort Mary and Martha. They gathered with the others at the graveside. They had seen the miracle-working power of Jesus. Many did more than see — they believed in Jesus. Many saw, but only those who believed received eternal life (**John 3:36** <sup>36</sup> He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him).

### QUESTIONS

- 1 Why was Lazarus sick?
- 2 What did his sisters do?
- 3 How long was Lazarus dead?
- 4 How was he raised to life?
- 5 Why were there many people gathered around the tomb?
- 6 How did God receive glory?
- 7 What are some promises given to those who believe on the Lord?