

JOHN 11: 38-44

LESSON: DEATH AND RESURRECTION —January 31, 2016

INTRODUCTION:

Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha had died and Jesus finally gets to where Mary and Martha are.

11:33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled. Jesus sees how Mary and the Jews were wailing and He did not hide his emotions, for He groaned and was troubled. This caused strong emotions within Him. He was greatly moved; moved with indignation and deeply troubled by the whole scene of sorrow and death. Some of the Jews were wailing and moaning and being hypocritical and insincere in their sorrow.

11:34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. At this point, Jesus turns and asks "*where is the dead person*"; "*where have you laid Lazarus?*" Of course, Jesus already knew where Lazarus was laid, but He needed to distract the people from their deep wailing and arouse their expectation for something unusual that was about to happen. He's showing them that He is still concerned after receiving their news and Martha's confession of faith.

11:35 Jesus wept. This is the shortest and yet the deepest verse in Scripture—"Jesus wept". Why did He weep, for He already knew the outcome? There are so many speculations, but, it is here that we are reminded of the humanity of Jesus, as He breaks out into tears. He enters into all our experiences and knows how we feel. He sympathizes with us. "*He is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief*" Is.23:3. And He wants us to have the faith to believe, not of unbelief.

11:36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!—The Jews then seeing Jesus weeping with the others, they began to see His love for Lazarus.

11:37 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?— Then some of the Jews began to debate...

- How much Jesus loved Lazarus because He wept.
- Others complained because He didn't arrive in time to heal Lazarus.
- They reasoned that since Jesus opened the eyes of the blind, and caused them to see, this man should not have died

LESSON: I. THE GRAVE APPROACHED John 11:38-40

11:38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Groaning within Himself,

- He saw the pain of Mary and Martha and their dear friends.
- He sensed the terrible dread and bondage that death held over His dear friend Lazarus, and over the whole human race.
- He was keenly conscious of His own terrible death that lay only a few days away.

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

He felt the emotions of both compassion and anger, sympathy and indignation. He groaned from deep within, sensing an intense love for all who suffer; a holy anger, and a posture of what death would bring. Jesus stood face to face with the grave. Tombs at that time were usually caves carved in the rock of a hillside. A tomb was often large enough for people to walk inside. Several bodies were usually placed in one tomb. After burial a large stone was rolled across the entrance to the tomb.

11:39 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. I don't think they were expecting Jesus to say "*Take away the stone.*" Jesus always has a purpose for the things He does or says to do. And Martha didn't quite understand this strange request Jesus was giving, for all she knew Lazarus had been dead for four day, and by now his body was stinking.

11:40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?— Jesus now has to remind Martha of the earlier conversation that they had already had.

- He wanted her to conquer her complaining and to set aside her objections.
- He wanted her to trust Him, to quit questioning what He did.
- He wanted her to trust...
 - His judgment and Will.
 - His knowledge and understanding.
 - His Word and instructions.

Very simply, Jesus wanted her to rest in Him, to place an unlimited, resting faith in Him. Because, the promise was: "*if she would believe*"—rest in him, she "*would see the glory of God.*" By "*the glory of God*" meant Jesus' *mercy and power and care on the earth*, as well as in the next world to come. The person who will step back and let God act as He wills; the person who truly rest in God will see the glory of God her and forever.

II. THE PRAYER OFFERED John 11:41-42

11:41 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. The stone was rolled away from Lazarus' tomb and Jesus lifted His eyes upward toward the Father in a prayer of thanksgiving. Before attempting anything; wanting the Father's help, prayer comes first, as Jesus demonstrates for our behalf. In this case, the prayer was none other than a prayer of thanksgiving, rather than a prayer of petition. He is thankful that His Father heard Him. He already knew when to come. He already knew His purpose when He got there. How?- Because He and the Father are in close communion. He's thanking the Father for the miracle planned; for the miracle that's only possible by Him.

11:42 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. Now we see and hear what Jesus knew. He says the Father always hears Him. So, His purpose in praying at this time was for the people standing around; that they may know His source; that they would know that He and the Father were in communication, and believe that the Father had sent Him.

III. THE DEAD CALLED FORTH

11:43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. His great shout of power came forth with the name Lazarus.

1. The power over death comes from Jesus alone. Jesus alone has the power to raise the dead. Notice,

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

He only spoke three words: "*Lazarus, come forth*", but He shouted them out with a loud voice. Why?

- a. A shout matched the enormity of the miracle. It stressed the enormous power required to raise the dead.
- b. A shout stressed that the power within Jesus is the power of God Himself. With just a shout Jesus can...
 - call forth the enormous power of God.
 - call forth the greatest amount of power imaginable, the power to raise a person from the dead.
2. The shout of Jesus is personal. Jesus shouted the name of Lazarus. He didn't just shout "*Come forth*." He shouted "*Lazarus come forth*." If he hadn't called him by name, He would have emptied the whole graveyard. Jesus knows every believer by name, and He is personally concerned over the death of everyone. The day is coming when He will shout "*Come forth*" and only the ones personally known by Him will come forth. *Praise God!*

11:44 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.

3. The results of the shout of Jesus were twofold:
 1. The person who was dead came forth. Lazarus came forth immediately, obediently, and visibly. The enemy could hold him no longer when the Son of God spoke and called him forth by name. He who was dead came forth bound hand and foot with grave clothes. There was no way he could remain in the grave; no other power could hold him there. His face was even bound about with a napkin.
 - In Jesus' day there were at least two separate pieces of clothing included on the body.
 - The grave clothes wrapped around the body.
 - And the napkin upon the face.

When Jesus was buried He also had a napkin wrapped around his face. It was left folded either by Him or an angel as He was resurrected.

2. The person who was dead had to be "*Loosed, and let go*." The people witnessed and took part in rolling the stone away—and loosing; unwrapping the cloths off Lazarus.

SUMMARY:

¹When Jesus saw Martha weeping and other people wailing with her, He was deeply troubled (**v. 33**). He asked where they had put Lazarus, and when they showed Him, He broke into tears. He sympathizes with them. He enters into all our experiences and knows how we feel. (**vv. 34-35**). Here we are reminded of the humanity of Christ and His love and concern for His people. The Jews debated whether or not He could have prevented this tragedy by healing Lazarus (**vv. 36-37**).

Jesus saw the pain of Mary and Martha and their dear friends, and Jesus groaned in Himself coming to the grave. Jesus then requested the people to take the stone away from the grave. Martha didn't quite understand because she knew the body would be stinking after four days. But, Jesus now has to remind Martha of the earlier conversation they had already had. If she wanted to see the glory of God, she had to believe (**11:38-40**).

They took away the stone and Jesus lifted up His eyes and prayed thanking the Father that He always hears Him because of their close communion. Jesus wanted the people to believe that the Father had sent Him (**11:41-44**).

The miracle is now seen as Jesus shouted, "*Lazarus, come forth*" and he came forth bound with graveclothes and a napkin on his face. If Jesus had not called Lazarus by name when He shouted, the whole cemetery would have been emptied. The completion of the miracle was to "*loose him and let him go*", so all could see Jesus' power. (**11: 43-44**).

¹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/jesus-calls-lazarus-forth-from-the-grave/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sunday-school.html>