

## Miracles of Jesus - Come Forth – John 11

### Introduction:

1. A few weeks ago, we celebrated the Resurrection victory of Christ.
2. I like to think about the purpose of Christ's coming and how the victory of the cross was prophesied in Isaiah, saying that the distant islands and coastlands will see his glory, hear of his fame, and see his glory.
3. And so, there are fellow believers assembling today worldwide to worship the Risen Savior – think about that.
4. Story of Missionaries and John Paton.
5. **John 11:2-57** contrasts Lazarus' journey from death to life with Jesus' journey from life to death.
6. This would be Jesus' second greatest miracle, second only to his resurrection.
7. **John 11:1: "Now a certain man was ill Lazarus of Bethany., in the village of Mary and her sister Martha."**
8. Bethany was beyond Jordan, where Jesus and his disciples were, and Bethany close to Jerusalem, where Jesus would resurrect Lazarus.
9. These villages likely served as Jewish Essene diaconal centers for the nationwide Essene network of diaconal poor houses.
10. **Luke 22:7-13. "The disciples asked, where do you want us to prepare it?" Jesus responded. "As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters and say to the owner, 'The teacher asked where the guest room is where I may eat the Passover with my disciples. He will show you a large room upstairs, all furnished. Prepare there.'"**

### The Sisters:

1. **Verse 2. "Mary anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill."**
2. **Verse 3 – 4: "So, the sisters sent to him, saying, Lord, he whom you love is ill. But when Jesus heard it, he said, this illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."**
3. Additionally, there are remarkable parallels between the raising of Lazarus and the healing of the man who was born blind (**Chapter 9**)
4. In the case of the healing of the blind man, light was given, and in the case of Lazarus, life was given.
5. **Verse 5: "Now Jesus loved Martha, her sister, and Lazarus."**
6. **Verse 6: "So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. Then, after this, he said to the disciples, let us go to Judea again."**
7. Reading **verses 5 and 6** make little sense.
8. If Jesus loved them, why didn't he come immediately?
9. However, if we read the text carefully, we would quickly realize that **verse 5** is a parenthetical comment inserted between **verses 4 and 6**.
10. **Verse 6 - "So, when he had heard it",** it was a continuation of **verse 4. "It is for the glory of God, so the Son of man may be glorified through it."**
11. **Verse 8 -10: "The disciples said to him, Rabbi, the Jewish authorities were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going to go there again? Jesus answered. 'Are there**

*not 12 hours in the day? Anyone who walks in the day does not stumble because he sees the light of the world. But if anyone walks at night, he stumbles because the light is not in him."*

12. **Verse 11-16.** *"After saying these things, he told them our friend Lazarus had fallen asleep, but I went to awakening. The disciple said, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.' Now, Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought he meant taking rest and sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus has died, and for your sake, I'm glad I was not there so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' So, Thomas called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, 'Let us also go also that we may die with him.'"*

#### Tradition – in Israel:

1. There is a tradition in Judaism that still exists today.
2. After death, the soul does not immediately depart but hovers over the body for three days, during which resurrection is possible.
3. Remember, Jesus arrived in Bethany, near Jerusalem, on the 4th day.
4. **Verse 20:** *"When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she met him. But Mary remained seated in the House. Martha said to Jesus, Lord, if you'd been there, my brother would not have died. But even now, I know that whatever you ask from God, he will give you."*
5. Martha knew that when Jesus received the message, Lazarus was dead.
6. But the story, as it is, is that she was not destined for mediocrity.
7. Martha is a woman of action; she's very practical.
8. Remember another time when it says, *"As they were traveling along, Jesus went into a village. A woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary. Mary sat at the Lord's feet and listened to him talk. But Martha was upset about all the work she had to do. So she asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister left me to do the work alone? Tell her to help me." The Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha! You worry and fuss about a lot of things. There's only one thing you need. Mary has made the right choice, and that one thing will not be taken away from her."*
9. **Verse 21:** *"Jesus said to her, ' Your brother will rise again. ' Martha told him, ' I know he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.'*
10. She was careful, seeking not to raise her hopes too high.
11. **Verse 25:** *"Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believed in me, though he dies, yet shall he live. And everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this? She said to him, yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world into the world."*
12. *It is as if Jesus had told Martha, "You must understand that the resurrection is not something I do—I am the Resurrection and the Life. Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die."*
13. Her confession of Jesus' identity in the face of personal trial and tragedy is a staggering expression of faith.
14. **Verse 28:** *"When she said this, she called her sister Mary, privately saying the teacher was there and he's calling for you. When she heard it, she rose quickly and went to*

**him. Now, Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still in the place where Martha had met him.”**

15. We must move slowly here - we must experience the pain of Lazarus's death and the deep disappointment of Jesus' seeming betrayal when Martha whispered in Mary's ear that Jesus had finally arrived.

#### **A Jewish Burial:**

1. How burials occur tells us much about the people's worldview.
2. **Verse 34: “And he said, where have you laid him? They said, Lord, come and see.”**
3. Most Jews in Israel buried people twice.
4. When someone died, the body was first wrapped in a cloth and placed in a cave for a prolonged period.
5. After the body decayed and only the bones remained, they were collected and placed in a special box called an *ossuary*.
6. No other section in the scripture shows Jesus so deeply emotional.
7. He did not just cry – he wept.
8. Even though he knew he was about to resurrect Lazarus, his reaction was fully compatible with the Jewish practice of grieving and wailing.
9. **Verse 37, “But some of them said could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?”**
10. The reasoning is logical—if Jesus could give sight to the blind man, surely, he could also heal a sick man.
11. **Verse 38-39: “Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave. And a stone lay against it. Jesus said. Take away the stone. Martha, his sister, the dead man said to him. Lord. By this time, there will be an odor, for he's been dead for days.”**
12. And no one was prepared for what was about to take place.
13. **Verse 40: “Jesus said to her, Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God? So, they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted his eyes and said, Father, thank you for hearing me. I know you always hear me, but I said this because the people around may believe you had sent me.”**
14. **Verse 43: “When he had said these things. He cried out with a loud voice. Lazarus, come out.”**
15. If one thinks further about this, one could ask why Jesus could not go inside the cave and raise Lazarus by helping him to get up.
16. Remember, Jesus was not a Christian - he was a walking and breathing Torah-observant Israelite and a Jew.
17. This meant that the purity requirements of the Torah about not touching the dead were very important to him.
18. There were several warnings; here is a key one – “whoever touches the human corpse will be unclean for seven days.” **Numbers 19:11.**

#### **Lazarus Come forth:**

1. The key we need to understand is that it's no more difficult for Jesus to raise someone who's been dead for four minutes, four hours, four days, four weeks, four months, four years, or four centuries.
2. It's all the same to him. Lazarus is asleep. Jesus' power is limitless.

3. ***Remember when Jesus rose from the dead - Matthew 27:51-53: "At that moment the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, rocks split apart, and tombs opened. The bodies of many godly men and women who had died were raised from the dead. They left the cemetery after Jesus' resurrection, went into the holy city of Jerusalem, and appeared to many people."***
4. ***Jesus shouted – "Lazarus – come forth"***
5. ***Verse 44: "The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, unbind him and let him go."***
6. ***Verse 45-50: "Therefore many of the Jewish leaders who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. However, some went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. Then, the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin. What are we accomplishing, they asked? Here is this man performing many signs. And we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our temple and our nation. Then, one of them, Caiaphas, was the high priest you spoke up with. "You know nothing at all. Do you not realize that it is better for you that one man dies for the people than all the nation perishes?"***
7. ***Verse 51-53: "not say this on his own, but as the high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. So, from that day on, they plotted to take his life."***
8. Even more interesting, the following verse states that Jesus, realizing the danger to his and his disciple's lives by remaining near Jerusalem, relocated to a village called Ephraim.
9. Today, a Christian village in the Palestine West Bank is called in Arab Taybeh, the very place the gospel refers to.
10. It is in the territory of the tribe of Benjamin and was once called Ephraim.
11. ***Ezekiel 37:15-28. "Israel's God, through the symbolic action of the prophet putting two sticks together and holding him in the prophet's hand, says: "I'm going take the stick of Joseph, which is in Ephraim's hand, and of the Israelite tribes associated with him, and join it to Judah stick. I'll make him into a single stick of wood, and they will become one in my hand. Hold the sticks you've written on before their eyes and say to them, "This is what the Sovereign Lord says. I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and return them to their land. I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. There will be one king over all of them, and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms. They will no longer defile themselves with the idols and vile images or any of their offenses, for I will save them from all their sinful backsliding, and I will cleanse them. They will be my people, and I will be their God."***
12. Watch Israel for what is coming ahead – reading the prophecy and seeing what is happening is fascinating.
13. But just a caution – no one knows when Jesus is coming back.