



The Raising of Lazarus John 11 (NLT)

Verses 1, 3, 5–6

A man named Lazarus was sick. He lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha ... So the two sisters sent a message to Jesus telling him, "Lord, your dear friend is very sick."... So although Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, he stayed where he was for the next two days.

- We know very little about Lazarus except:
 - He was the brother of Mary and Martha
 - He was a close friend of Jesus
 - He lived in Bethany
- We do not know why Jesus waited two days before coming to Bethany, but some scholars suggest that Jesus waited to make sure that Lazarus was indisputably dead, thereby making the miracle more impressive.

Verse 17

When Jesus arrived at Bethany, he was told that Lazarus had already been in his grave for four days.

- Conventional wisdom of the day suggested that the soul of the dead remained near the body of the dead for three days in the hope of returning to the body. At the end of the third day, the soul permanently left.

Verses 18–22

Bethany was only a few miles down the road from Jerusalem, and many of the people had come to console Martha and Mary in their loss. When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask."

- Couched within a statement of faith, Martha attempts to put Jesus on a guilt trip by implying that Jesus' failure to come immediately to Bethany was the cause of Lazarus' death.

Verses 23–27

Jesus told her, “Your brother will rise again.” “Yes,” Martha said, “he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day.” Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?” “Yes, Lord,” she told him. “I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God.”

- Jesus’ statement that he is the resurrection and the life captures the essence of our Christian faith.
- Jesus is the source of life. He offers life that is both abundant and eternal.

Verses 28–29, 32–33

Then she [Martha] returned to Mary. She called Mary aside from the mourners and told her, “The Teacher is here and wants to see you.” So Mary immediately went to him . . . When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.” When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled.

- Jesus was not angry at Martha and Mary. He was angry at the crowd because he saw their emotion as sheer hypocrisy.

Verses 34–44

“Where have you put him?” he asked them. They told him, “Lord, come and see.” Then Jesus wept. The people who were standing nearby said, “See how much he loved him!” But some said, “This man healed a blind man. Couldn’t he have kept Lazarus from dying?”

Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. “Roll the stone aside,” Jesus told them. But Martha, the dead man’s sister, protested, “Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible.”

Jesus responded, “Didn’t I tell you that you would see God’s glory if you believe?” So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me. You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me.” Then Jesus shouted, “Lazarus, come out!” And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, “Unwrap him and let him go!”

THINK ABOUT IT

Our study of the “Healing Stories of Jesus” has revealed three important truths:

- God does not promise us an earthly, physical healing, but God promises a spiritual healing to all who seek it in Jesus.
- Physical healings are always temporary. Spiritual healings are eternal.
- God’s ultimate goal is not to permanently sustain our life on earth, but to bring us home to Him in heaven.