

## 2.13.22 / John 11 / The Resurrection and the Life

Have you ever known something was wrong... and you did it anyway... because it felt better?

11:1-16 Jesus receives word about Lazarus and prepares to leave

11:17-37 Jesus talks with Martha and Mary and walks to the tomb

11:38-44 Lazarus raised from the dead

11:45-57 Discussion among Pharisees

Bethany – east of Jerusalem over Mt of Olive - 1.5 miles, as Capernaum was Jesus’s “base” in Galilee, Bethany seemed to be His “base” while in Jerusalem.

Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup> (This Mary, whose brother Lazarus now lay sick, was the same one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped his feet with her hair.) <sup>3</sup> So the sisters sent word to Jesus, “Lord, the one you love is sick.”

<sup>4</sup> When he heard this, Jesus said, “This sickness will not end in death. **No, it is for God’s glory so that God’s Son may be glorified through it.**” <sup>5</sup> Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

<sup>6</sup> So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, <sup>7</sup> and then he said to his disciples, “Let us go back to Judea.”

<sup>8</sup> “But Rabbi,” they said, “a short while ago the Jews there tried to stone you, and yet you are going back?”

<sup>9</sup> Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Anyone who walks in the daytime will not stumble, for they see by this world’s light. <sup>10</sup> It is when a person walks at night that they stumble, for they have no light.”

<sup>11</sup> After he had said this, he went on to tell them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.”

<sup>12</sup> His disciples replied, “Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.” <sup>13</sup> Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep.

<sup>14</sup> So then he told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead, <sup>15</sup> and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”

<sup>16</sup> Then Thomas (also known as Didymus<sup>[a]</sup>) said to the rest of the disciples, **“Let us also go, that we may die with him.”**

### Jesus Comforts the Sisters of Lazarus

<sup>17</sup> On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days.

There was a well-known Jewish belief (attested from about a.d. 200) that the soul of a dead person remained in the vicinity of the body “hoping to reenter it” for three days, but once decomposition set in, the soul departed. John wants us to know clearly that Lazarus is truly dead and that the miracle of Jesus cannot be construed as a resuscitation.

There would be great wailing and crying (cf. [Mark 5:38](#); [Acts 8:2](#)), some beating their chests in grief ([Luke 18:13](#); [23:48](#)).

Formal mourning lasted for seven days, called in Hebrew the *shibah* (cf. [Sir. 22:12](#)), and it commenced immediately on the day of burial, which took place on the same day as death. We can assume that Lazarus was buried in a rock-cut tomb of the type that have been discovered throughout the hills of Judea. Inside a cave room (perhaps ten to fifteen feet square) burial benches were carved in stone along the inner wall. The body was prepared here and then laid in horizontally cut burial tunnels (Heb. *kochim*) about six feet deep and there left to decompose. After a year or so, the body was removed from the *koch* and the bones placed in a limestone “burial box” (an ossuary). The tomb was closed (and reopened for further burials) with a wheel-shaped “rolling stone” fitted to cover the entrance in a stone channel.

<sup>18</sup> Now Bethany was less than two miles<sup>[b]</sup> from Jerusalem, <sup>19</sup> and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them in the loss of their brother. <sup>20</sup> When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home.

<sup>21</sup> “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. <sup>22</sup> But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.”

<sup>23</sup> Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

<sup>24</sup> Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

<sup>25</sup> Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; <sup>26</sup> and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

<sup>27</sup> “Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

<sup>28</sup> After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. “The Teacher is here,” she said, “and is asking for you.” <sup>29</sup> When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him.

<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. <sup>31</sup> When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

<sup>32</sup> When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

<sup>33</sup> When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.

Greek verb *embrimaomai*. In classical Greek this word describes the snort of a horse (in war or in a race). For humans it describes outrage, fury, or anger. Jesus is angry at death itself and the devastation it brings. His only interest now is to locate the tomb ([11:34](#)) and begin to demonstrate divine power over humanity’s foe.

Jesus’ tears should be connected to the anger he is feeling so deeply. The public chaos surrounding him, the loud wailing and crying, and the scene of a cemetery and its reminders of death — all the result of sin and death — together produce outrage in the Son of God as he works to reverse such damage.

<sup>34</sup> “Where have you laid him?” he asked.

“Come and see, Lord,” they replied.

<sup>35</sup> Jesus wept.

<sup>36</sup> Then the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”

<sup>37</sup> But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

### **Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead**

<sup>38</sup> Jesus, once more deeply moved, (same greek verb as v33 – outraged – death didn’t have a chance against this rage!) came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance.

<sup>39</sup> “Take away the stone,” he said.

“But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.”

<sup>40</sup> Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?”

<sup>41</sup> So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. <sup>42</sup> I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”

<sup>43</sup> When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”

Lazarus “in a loud voice” to come out. This is not a whisper or a firm request. It is a shout of raw authority.

<sup>44</sup> The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.”

Can’t you picture Jesus hugging him and then no body knows what to do with this command... touch an unclean dead man??

### **The Plot to Kill Jesus**

<sup>45</sup> Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. <sup>46</sup> But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.

<sup>47</sup> Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin.

Some believe. Some don’t. This has been the case all along.

“What are we accomplishing?” they asked. “Here is this man performing many signs. <sup>48</sup> If 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.”

<sup>49</sup> Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! <sup>50</sup> You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.”

<sup>51</sup> He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, <sup>52</sup> and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one. <sup>53</sup> So from that day on they plotted to take his life.

<sup>54</sup> Therefore Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the people of Judea. Instead he withdrew to a region near the wilderness, to a village called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples.

<sup>55</sup> When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, many went up from the country to Jerusalem for their ceremonial cleansing before the Passover. <sup>56</sup> They kept looking for Jesus, and as they stood in the temple courts they asked one another, “What do you think? Isn’t he coming to the festival at all?” <sup>57</sup> But the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that anyone who found out where Jesus was should report it so that they might arrest him.