

MIRACLES OF JESUS

THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE - JOHN 11:1- 46

A. Context

1. The major theme of the Gospel of John is the identity of Jesus as the Son of God.
2. In John, Jesus presented Himself as the Water of Life, the Bread of Life, the Light of Life, and now the Resurrection and the Life.
3. This section highlights belief and unbelief in Jesus.

B. The death of Lazarus (1-16)

1. Jesus told of Lazarus' illness (1-4), *Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. 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."*
 - a. Lazarus was the brother of Mary and Martha.
 - 1) Mary honored the Lord by anointing His feet and wiping them with her hair.
 - 2) Martha invited Jesus into her home and focused on providing for the needs of her guests, Luke 10:38-42.
 - b. The sisters sent word to Jesus that Lazarus was ill.
 - 1) Jesus was known to love Lazarus and the sisters believed Jesus would help him.
 - 2) Jesus meant that the illness would not lead to final death because He would raise Lazarus back to life.
 - 3) He stated that the sickness would bring glory to the Father and the Son.
 - a) God's glory refers to the revelation of Who He is.
 - b) It is not speaking of praise that would come to Him.
 - c) People need to see Jesus for Who He is.
2. Jesus told the disciples that they would go to Lazarus (5-10)
 - a. Jesus decision to go to Lazarus was based on His love for the family (5), *Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.*
 - 1) He had been taken into Martha's home.
 - 2) Mary had shown deep interest in His teaching.
 - 3) The Bible only speaks of Jesus' love for Lazarus.
 - b. He delayed going for two days. (6-7), *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."*
 - 1) The delay was not based on lack of interest but divine purpose.
 - 2) His visit was one of love and one which would glorify God.
 - c. The disciples reminded Jesus that Judea was a dangerous place for Him (8-10)
 - 1) Jews in Judea had attempted to stone Him (8), *The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?"*
 - a) John 8:59, *So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.*
 - b) They were responding to Jesus' declaration that *before Abraham was, I am.*
 - 2) Jesus told His disciples of the importance of working when there is opportunity (9-10), *Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."*
 - a) The daylight hours represent the Father's will.
 - b) Jesus was safe as long as He did the will of His Father.
 - c) Those who walk in the night refers to those not doing the Father's will.
 - d) 1 John 1:6, *If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.*

3. Jesus explained that Lazarus had died (11-16)
 - a. Jesus told the disciples that Lazarus had fallen asleep (11-13), *After saying these things, he said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him." The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep.*
 - 1) Jesus told His disciples that He was going to awaken Lazarus from his sleep.
 - 2) They thought He meant that Lazarus had an illness from which he could recover.
 - 3) Jesus meant that Lazarus had died and that is why He waited 2 days to go to him.
 - b. Jesus explained that Lazarus had actually died (14-16), *Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died, and for your sake I am glad that 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, that we may die with him."*
 - 1) Jesus told them that Lazarus had died and it would be a time for the disciples to believe in Who Jesus is.
 - 2) Thomas encouraged the disciples to go even if it meant death.
 - 3) William Taylor, *...the warmth of the affection may stimulate the faith.*
- C. Jesus spoke to the sisters of Lazarus (17-37)
 1. Jesus told Martha that He is the resurrection and the life (17-27)
 - a. Lazarus was entombed at Bethany (17-19), *Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother.*
 - 1) Bethany was near Jerusalem and many had come when they heard of Lazarus' illness..
 - a) Many family and friends had come to console Mary and Martha.
 - b) A large group would be present to witness Jesus' miracle.
 - 2) Lazarus had been dead for 4 days when Jesus arrived.
 - a) Many Jewish rabbis believed that the spirit of a person lingered over the body for three days.
 - b) That could explain why Jesus waited 2 days before heading to Bethany.
 - c) Jesus wanted there to be no question that Lazarus had truly died.
 - b. Martha went to out to Jesus when she heard He was there (20-22)
 - 1) Mary stayed in the house while Martha went to Jesus (20), *So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained seated in the house.*
 - 2) Martha revealed her faith in Jesus (21-22), *Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you."*
 - a) She believed Jesus could have healed Lazarus.
 - b) She believed that whatever Jesus asked of God that it would be granted to Him.
 - c. Jesus increased Martha's faith even more (23-27)
 - 1) Jesus prepared Martha for a lesson on resurrection.
 - a) He declared that her brother would rise again (23), *Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."*
 - b) Martha thought Jesus meant on resurrection day (24), *Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."*
 - c) Jesus explained that He is the resurrection and the life (25), *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live,*
 - 1] The one who believes in Jesus will live even if one dies because He is the Source and Giver of life, John 1:4, *In him was life, and the life was the light of men.*
 - 2] Jesus gives life because of His relationship to the Father, John 14:1, *Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.*
 - 3] Warren Wiersbe, *When you are sick, you want a doctor and not a medical book or a formula. When you are being sued, you want a lawyer and not a law book. Likewise, when you face your last enemy, death, you want the Savior and not a doctrine written in a book. In Jesus Christ, every doctrine is made personal.*

- d) Every living person who believes in Jesus will never experience spiritual death (26), ***and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?***
- 1] John 5:24, *Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.*
 - 2] Philippians 1:6, *And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*
- 2) Martha responds by faith to Jesus' question (27), ***She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."***
- a) Martha agreed with His statement concerning faith in Him and then she declared that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
 - c) Thomas Constable, *She correctly concluded that if Jesus was the One who would raise the dead and impart spiritual life He must be the Messiah.*
2. Jesus reveals His deep compassion to Mary (28-37)
- a. Mary went to Jesus (28-31), ***When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." And 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. When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.***
 - 1) Martha told her that Jesus was calling for her.
 - 2) She rose quickly and met Jesus where Martha had met Him.
 - 3) The mourners thought she was going to the tomb to weep.
 - b) She revealed her faith in Jesus (32), ***Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."***
 - 1) Mary fell at Jesus' feet, not only here, but in the other two times she is mentioned in the New Testament.
 - a) Luke 10:39, *And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching.*
 - b) Luke 12:3, *Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.*
 - 2) She declared that Jesus could have healed her brother just as Martha had said.
 - c) Jesus was moved by Mary's grief (33-37)
 - 1) He was angered by the situation (33), ***When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled.***
 - a) He was angered, or, indignant at the misery caused by sin through death.
 - b) He was angered as well by the many present who would not believe despite what would soon take place.
 - 2) He went to Lazarus' tomb and wept (34-35), ***And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept.***
 - a) Jesus was weeping over the consequences of sin and because of His compassion for mankind.
 - b) Luke 19:41, *And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it,*
 - 2) Some present thought Jesus was simply moved by the death of His friend (36-37), ***So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?"***
 - a) Some in the crowd thought Jesus's tears were due to the loss of His friend.
 - b) Others thought he was upset because He couldn't do anything to prevent Lazarus from dying.
 - c) Actually, Jesus chose that Lazarus should die so He could demonstrate the truth that He is the resurrection and the life.

D. The resurrection of Lazarus (38-46)

1. Jesus went to the tomb and had the stone removed (38-41a), *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, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days." 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.*
 - a. Jesus showed His emotions as He came to the tomb.
 - b. When He ordered that the stone be removed, Martha reminded Jesus that Lazarus had been dead four days and there would be an odor from decomposition of the body.
 - c. Jesus reminded Martha that if she believed she would see the glory of God.
 - d. The stone was removed.
2. Jesus prayed openly for the benefit of the people (41b-42), *And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me."*
 - a. He declared that the Father always hears Him but said it so the people present would believe that the Father sent the Son.
 - b. Jesus' conversation with the Father showed the people how close the relationship is between the Father and the Son.
 - c. Belief or denial of Jesus would come at the resurrection of Lazarus.
3. Lazarus came out of the tomb (43-44), *When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." 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."*
 - a. Jesus commanded Lazarus to come out.
 - 1) Jesus was specific concerning who He was commanding to return from the dead.
 - 2) One day, every person who had died will rise at the command of Jesus.
 - b. Lazarus came out bound with the funeral cloths.
 - 1) Jesus' body was prepared for burial in the same way.
 - 2) John 19:40, *So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.*
 - c. Jesus ordered that Lazarus be unbound.
 - 1) A person bound in this manner could hop but would have difficulty walking.
 - 2) That had to be an exciting and terrifying moment based on how one viewed Jesus.
4. The response of those who witnessed Lazarus' resurrection (45-46), *Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him, but some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done.*
 - a. Many placed faith in Jesus.
 - 1) The degree of faith certainly varied, some saw Him as a prophet while others declared Him to be the Messiah.
 - 2) Leon Morris, *A faith based on miracles is not the highest faith, but John viewed it as better than no faith at all.*
 - b. Some went to the Pharisees to warn them of what Jesus had done.
 - 1) This miracle failed to convince many that Jesus is God the Son.
 - 2) Some informed the Pharisees so they could take action against Jesus.

CONCLUSION

- A. New Testament miracles were performed to authenticate the person and work of Jesus.
- B. This miracle demonstrated that Jesus is God the Son, the resurrection and the life.
- C. Those with made-up minds don't need proof to confuse their pre-conceived opinions.
- D. We who have placed faith in Jesus are no longer enslaved by death because we have passed from death to life.