



**(SLIDE #1) GREAT EVENTS OF THE BIBLE -- THE RAISING OF LAZARUS!**

**Introduction:**

- A. The Ministry Of Jesus Was Filled With Teaching, Miracles, And Preparing His Apostles For His Departure And For Their Ministry.
  
- B. In Our Last Lesson We Studied The GREAT SERMON -- The Sermon On The Mount!
  
- C. Tonight We Study The Heart-Rending Event Of Lazarus' Death And The Heart-Rousing Joy When Jesus Raised Him From The Dead! The Text: Jn 11:1-54
  
- D. The Setting:
  - 1. Jesus had been in Jerusalem for the Feast of Dedication. Jn. 10:22
    - a. This was the memorial event of the time when Judas Maccabees re-consecrated the Temple after Its defilement by Antiochus Epiphanes.
    - b. It was during the winter.
    - c. When Jesus affirmed that He and His Father were one, the Jews tried to stone Him to death because they accused Him of blasphemy. Jn. 10:30-36
  
  - 2. Jesus left Judea and went to Perea, the land east of the Jordan River. Jn. 10:39-42
    - a. This was the area where John the Baptizer had been baptizing and where Jesus was baptized by John.
    - b. It was about thirty miles from Jerusalem.
    - c. Many there acknowledged that He had performed so many signs in contrast with John who did not perform signs; they affirmed that John had correctly prophesied about Him; they came to faith in Jesus!
  
  - 3. Then the story quickly reverts back to events in Bethany, a small town about two miles outside of Jerusalem on the southeastern slope of the Mount of Olives.

**I. The Family Of Mary, Martha, And Lazarus Faced A Crisis! 1-2**

- A. Lazarus Became Sick.
  
- B. He Was The Brother Of Mary And Martha.
  - 1. Mary was the woman who afterward anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair! Jn. 12:1-8
  
  - 2. Jesus stayed at their house often when He was in Jerusalem.
    - a. Martha had welcomed Him into their home. Lk. 10:38
      - 1. This was the time when Mary just sat at Jesus' feet, eager to hear and learn. Lk. 10:39-42
      - 2. Martha was running about trying to show hospitality to Him.
      - 3. Martha got frustrated that her sister was not helping her.
      - 4. Jesus cautioned Martha about worry and fretting over having company and serving; He complimented Mary for choosing the good part that could not be taken away from her!
    - b. Bethany was a convenient location for Jesus to stay when He was teaching in Jerusalem; it was only two miles from Jerusalem. 11:18
  
  - 3. **(Slide #2)** Jesus loved this family deeply and visited them often! 5

## **II. The Concerned Sisters Sent For Jesus. 3**

- A. Deeply Concerned For Their Brother, The Sisters Sent A Message To Jesus That Beloved Lazarus Was Sick.
  - 1. Their actions suggest that this was no ordinary sickness.
  
  - 2. They knew it was very dangerous.
  
- B. Interestingly, Nothing Is Said About Seeking Physicians.
  
- C. They KNEW Jesus' Power And What He Could Do -- They Believed That Jesus Could Heal Lazarus.

## **III. Jesus' Reaction That Seems Confusing. 4-6**

- A. Instead Of Immediately Arising And Going To Bethany, He Stayed In Perea Two More Days.
  
- B. He Affirmed, "This Sickness Is Not Unto Death, But For The Glory Of God, That The Son Of God May Be Glorified Through It."
  - 1. He knew what was happening.

2. He knew that Lazarus was going to die.
3. This was going to provide an opportunity for Him again to show His Divine power!

#### **IV. On The Third Day, Jesus And His Disciples Began The Return Trip To Bethany. 7-16**

- A. When Jesus Told The Apostles That They Were Going To Return To Judea, They Were Concerned; They Knew The Jews Had Recently Tried To Stone Him! 7,8; 11:30-36
- B. Jesus Spoke A Cryptic Simile. 9-11
  1. He statement: “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. <sup>10</sup>But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” 9,10
  2. Jesus was returning to Judea because He had a task to do that was a part of His mission!
  3. Jesus is emphasizing that when there is a work to be done, it must be done without delay; He had a work to do -- to raise Lazarus!
- C. Then He Told Them, “Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.” 11
  1. The disciples did not realize that Lazarus had died. They said, “Lord, if he sleeps he will wake up.” 12
  2. Jesus used the word “sleep” as a metaphor for “death.” 13
  3. He then plainly declared, “Lazarus is dead.” 14
  4. Jesus declared that He was glad for their sakes that He was not in Bethany when Lazarus became ill and died. If He had been there, He would have healed Lazarus. Because He was not there, Lazarus died; He would raise Lazarus and that event would have a great impact upon them! What He was going to do would help their faith! 15,16

#### **V. (Slide #3) Jesus And The Apostles Came Near To Bethany; Martha Came Out To Meet Him. 17-27**

- A. Lazarus Had Been Dead And Entombed For Four Days. 17

- B. Many Jews Had Come To Comfort The Grieving Sisters! 19
  
- C. As Soon As Martha Heard That Jesus Was Approaching, She Got Up, Left Mary In The House, And Went To Meet Him! 20-
  - 1. Her agonizing affirmation: “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.” 21
  
  - 2. Her confidence in Jesus: “But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.” 22
    - a. This may sound as if she might have expected that Jesus would raise Lazarus from the dead.
    - b. However, her statement in verse 24 may cause us to question her understanding here.
  
  - 3. Jesus told Martha, “Your brother will rise again.” 23 [He was NOT talking about the Resurrection on the Last Day; He was affirming that He would raise Lazarus!]
  
  - 4. She KNEW that Lazarus would be raised on the Last Day! She said, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” 24. She made this statement from faith; however, it was with deep feelings of sadness because the fact that Lazarus would be raised on the Last Day took none of her grief away at this moment!
  
  - 5. Jesus declared, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. <sup>26</sup>And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” 25,26
  
  - 6. Martha professed her faith in Jesus, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.” 27

**VI. Martha Rushed Back To The House, Retrieved Mary, And Went Back Outside The City To See Jesus. 28-37**

- A. Martha Returned To Their House In Bethany And Secretly Reported To Mary That Jesus Was Near.
  - 1. She said, “The Teacher has come and is calling for you.” 28
  
  - 2. Mary quickly arose and came to see Jesus. 29
  
- B. When Some Of The Jews Who Were Comforting The Sisters Saw Mary Quickly Depart, They Followed Her And Observed Her Talking With Jesus. 30-

1. Jesus was still at the place where Martha met him. 30
  2. The Jews thought Mary was going to the tomb to grieve. 31
  3. Mary fell at Jesus' feet and said, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." 32
- C. **(Slide #4)** The Lord's Heart Broke As He Observed Mary's Grief! 33-36
1. As He observed the grief of Mary and her friends, Jesus groan in the spirit and was troubled. 33
  2. He asked where Lazarus was buried; they would take Him to the tomb. 34
  3. And that poignant passage, "Jesus wept." 35
  4. The Jews' response:
    - a. Some said, "See how He loved him!" 36
    - b. Others sarcastically said, "Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?" 37

## **VII.Events At The Tomb. 38-44**

- A. Jesus Was Agonizing As He Approached The Tomb, A Cave With A Stone Against The Opening. 38
- B. **(Slide #5)** He Told The People To Remove The Stone. 39
- C. Martha's Concern: "Lord, By This Time There Is A Stench, For He Has Been *Dead* Four Days." 39
  1. She knew that his body was already decaying.
  2. This must have been an unnerving request for the family and others who might be squeamish about seeing and smelling a decaying body!
- D. Jesus Told Martha That If She Would Believe, She Would See The Glory Of God! 40
- E. Jesus Prayed To The Father: 41,42
  1. He knew that His Father heard His prayers.

2. He prayed this because He wanted those present to believe that the Father had truly sent Him to the Earth!

F. **(Slide #6)** His Call: “Lazarus, Come Forth!” 43

1. Imagine standing there watching with anticipation! Some likely were skeptical and filled with doubt!
2. Bro. Marshall Keeble was purported to have said, “If Jesus had not specifically called out, ‘LAZARUS’, ALL OF THE DEAD would have been raised! 43
3. Immediately Lazarus arose from the dead still bound hand and foot by his grave clothes and with his face wrapped in a cloth. 44
4. **(Slide #7)** Jesus told those present to unwrap him and let him go. 44

**VIII. (Slide #8) Reactions To This Supernatural And Awesome Event: 45-54**

A. (►) Many Of The Jews Who Had Come To Comfort Mary And Martha Believed In Jesus! 45

1. WHY WOULD THAT SURPRISE US?
2. They were objective and honest -- they knew what they saw and knew that it was legitimate!

B. (►) Some Who Opposed Jesus Went To The Pharisees And Reported To Them What Jesus Had Done! 46

1. The chief priests and Pharisees met to decide how they would respond. 47
2. Their question: “What shall we do?”
3. Their dilemma:
  - a. We cannot deny these miraculous events! “For this Man works many signs.” 47
  - b. “If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.”<sup>48</sup>
  - c. Caiaphas, the high priest said, “You know nothing at all, <sup>50</sup>nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.” 49,50
    1. He was saying, “You just do not get it!”
    2. “We must act; if we don’t, the whole nation may perish!” is a statement of concern about the Roman government crushing the oppositions that are occurring. Caiaphas’ declaration: “being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation,

<sup>52</sup>and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad” 51,52. Caiaphas believes that Jesus’ death will save the nation and bring scattered Jews together; he had NO IDEA that the venomous hate that he and the Jewish leaders would in reality bless ALL NATIONS and bring salvation to all who believe in Him and unite them into one Body, the Church!

4. Their decision: They would find a way to kill Him! 53

C. (▶) Jesus’ Reaction: He No Longer Walked Openly Among The Jews; He Went To An Area Near The Wilderness To The City Of Ephraim And Remained There With His Disciples. 54

### **IX. (Slide #9) Eternal Truths From This Great Event!**

A. (▶) The Divine Power Of Jesus!

1. He had power over sickness and debilitating illnesses; He had power over nature; He had power of the demons and Satan!
2. Observers were amazed!
  - a. Mt. 8:27 “So the men marveled, saying, ‘Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?’”
  - b. In Jerusalem many asked this question, “When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this *Man* has done?” Jn. 7:31
3. When John the Baptizer sent the message and asked Jesus, “ARE YOU THE MESSIAH OR NOT? Jesus gave this answer: “Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: <sup>5</sup>*The* blind see and *the* lame walk; *the* lepers are cleansed and *the* deaf hear; *the* dead are raised up and *the* poor have the gospel preached to them.” Mt. 11:4,5
4. Observers came to faith!
  - a. Nicodemus early in the ministry of Jesus understood: “This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, ‘Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.’”
  - b. Unbelieving Jews at the tomb of Lazarus became believers!
    1. Jn. 11:45 “Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him.”
    2. Later at His Triumphal Entry many who saw this event testified to its veracity! “Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness.” Jn. 12:17

3. Peter would later, on the Day of Pentecost, magnify the power of Jesus! Ac. 2:22 “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know.”
4. Paul years later reminded believing Jews who were being pressured to give up their faith in Christ that they could NOT give up their faith in Christ! Heb. 2:2-4 “For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, <sup>3</sup>how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*, <sup>4</sup>God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?”
5. Even His most vicious opponents could not deny His miracles! The chief priests and Pharisee realized that they could not deny those miraculous events! “For this Man works many signs.” 47
6. Non-Christians, SEE His miracles; come to faith; be baptized tonight!
7. Christians, SEE His miracles, stay in love and in awe; NEVER leave Christ!

B. (►) The HEART Of Jesus.

1. In this event we see Jesus care for the grief of His friends, Martha and Mary.
2. Even though He KNEW that He had come to Bethany to raise Lazarus from the dead, His heart broke for these sisters who grieved for their brother!
3. Observe:
  - a. He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. 33
  - b. He wept! 35 [He shed tears because of the emotion of the time]
  - c. He agonized as He approached the tomb. 38
4. His miracle took away their grief!
5. The resurrection of Lazarus turned grief into glorious joy!
6. Does He care about your burdens? Pains? Grievs?
  - a. The song “Does Jesus Care” addresses this, “O yes, He cares, I KNOW He cares, His heart is touched with my grief.”
  - b. I Pet. 5:7 “casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”



- C. (▶) Some Will See A Miracle And Come To Faith Readily; Others Will Refuse To Believe And Will Turn Against Jesus!
1. What about You?
  2. What will YOU Do?
  3. I pray we will be true believers!
- D. (▶) Jesus Has Power Over Death!
1. He is the “resurrection and life!”
  2. Because God raised Him, He will also raise us! I Cor. 15:20 “But now Christ is risen from the dead, *and* has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”
  3. Faith in Jesus NOW is vital to remove the sting of death!
    - a. Jn. 11:25 “Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.’”
    - b. Jesus gives us life BEFORE Death (salvation from our sins) AND life AFTER Death (resurrection).
    - c. WHAT A SAVIOR!
    - d. Believe in Him; be blessed by Him NOW and ETERNALLY!!!!
- E. (▶) EVERY BIBLE READER AND BELIEVER IN JESUS Knows About Lazarus!