

In The Beginning Was The Word

John 11:38-44

INTRODUCTION: JESUS RAISES LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD

As we see verse 37 closes with sarcastic comments from the Jews, they did not believe Jesus to be their Messiah and they certainly did not believe him to be God either.

Their disrespectful remark in verse 37 surely made our Lord again groan within himself as he made his way to the graveyard of Lazarus.

In this section of scripture we are going to see the similitude of what the final days of the resurrection will be like, where Jesus will raise all men. Some to life eternal with him and some to damnation.

Lazarus is a type or a picture if you will, in the NT as to how Jesus will raise up the believers at the end times.

- The scriptures tell us that it is appointed unto man once to die and then the judgment. Every living person at some stage in their life will eventually die.

Hebrews 9:27²⁷ And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

2 Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive **the things done in his body**, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Acts 17:31³¹ Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

- At the resurrection there will be a Judgment Jesus said.
- With all that now in mind, we can see why Jesus groaned in himself, because of the unbelieving Jews. They would one day face the judgment also.

³⁸ Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

1. As in verse 33 Jesus groaned within himself as he saw the Jews also weeping which came with Mary, **he groaned** in the spirit, and was troubled.
2. The reason Jesus groaned again here in verse 38 was because the same unbelieving Jews had no regard for the Lord. And their destination was hell.
3. When we now look at Lazarus we see a likeness, as Jesus would also be buried in a cave; and both would be sealed by a stone.
4. Was this scene going to be familiar to everyone later on?

39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

1. Jesus gave an instruction, take away the stone.
2. Martha's hesitant reply showed either a lack of faith at this time, or she did not want anyone to see her brother already in a stage of decomposition and smelling. Her answer to the Lord suggests that it was partly the reason for her answer. But was the Lord worried about that?
3. By this time Lazarus had been dead four days and was stinking dead.
4. The Lord was not concerned about how long he had been dead, he was concerned about how long the Jews had already been "dead" in their sins.
5. You see Jesus wept, before he came to the tomb of Lazarus. He had wept because of their unbelief.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

1. The Lord reminded Martha about his earlier discussion with her about believing, and when she said that she believed? Did she believe? Maybe not truly until now when the Lord had to remind her?
 2. Do you and I need reminding?.....of course we do.
 3. For those who don't believe, they will never see the glory of the Lord.
 4. The question to Martha and to all is the word "if" you will believe.....then you will see the glory of the Lord.....and not before.
- To see the glory of God requires salvation (to believe).
 - To see the glory of God on earth is one thing.
 - But to see the glory of God In heaven is quiet another.

The bible says that there is no salvation in any other. Meaning there is no other way, no other person, no other god, and no other merit whereby you can get saved. And then to go on to see the glory of God in heaven.

Acts 4:12 ¹² Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

- When Jesus said to Martha "if thou wouldest believe", he was showing her here that "if" she did believe, she shouldest see the glory of God?
- The closest we will get to here on earth to see the glory of God is what the Psalms tell us about Gods glory from an earthly perspective.

Psalm 19:1-3 ¹ The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. ² Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. ³ There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

- But as Jesus said to Martha if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?. This would be from a heavenly perspective one day when we go to be with the Lord.

- An unbeliever will not get to see the glory of the Lord from a heavenly perspective.

41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

1. As the stone was taken away from the tomb opening, and as it revealed the place where Lazarus body lay in the dust. Jesus lifted his eyes upon heaven as he spoke with his Father.
2. The words he spoke were words to his Father.
3. The words he spoke "**I thank thee that thou hast heard me.** These were the words which Jesus had already communicated with his Father. God in heaven.
4. But these were NOW for this moment SPOKEN words, so that the crowd could hear Jesus request to his Father. This was in defense of Jesus' earlier narrative to the Jews when he said to them, that he does nothing in secret and that everything that he does, his Father is in witness to it as well.

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

1. The answer to the direct verbal prayer of Jesus to his Father is explained also here in the text.
2. His prayer was directed heavenward.
3. His statement was that His Father always hears him.
4. He loudly speaks out as he addresses his Father, so that all the Jews present could hear the reason why he spoke the way he did.
5. The reason was that Jesus said it was because: **that they may believe that thou hast sent me.**

- Jesus spoke many times with his Father. For example.
- **John 17:1ff** These words spake **Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come;** glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:
- Read John 17:ff.....for more of Jesus communication with his Father.

This is exactly the reason why Jesus spoke out aloud on that day with Lazarus.

43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

1. After communication with his Father Jesus did the following miracle.
2. Just like in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, Jesus **cried with a loud voice.**
3. The voice of one with authority over the dead. The voice of one who has victory over death. The voice of one who holds the keys to eternal life. It was his voice that Lazarus would hear. And it was to his voice that Lazarus would respond to from the other side of the grave when Jesus called him BY NAME.
4. Your name and my name are very significant to the Lord. All names are known by the Lord. But the names of his people is especially important to him. Paul

writes of these names being recorded and written down in heaven. As we see in Philippians and Luke 10:20.

Luke 10:20²⁰ Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

Philippians 4:2-4² I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.³ And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.

5. These names like Lazarus name are not forgotten at all. But remembered and called out in heaven at the appointed time.
- These names represent people who have believed in Jesus by faith for their salvation.
- Then there are also those names written down who did not believe in Jesus for their salvation.

Revelation 20:15¹⁵ And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

- For those whose names are of the saved people; Jesus will bring them with him at his second coming as (1 Thessalonians 4:16) reminds us.

1 Thessalonians 4:16¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

- It is to this call that the dead in Christ like Lazarus will respond at the end of the age.
- Even in (1 Corinthians 15:52), Paul told the Corinthian church that God will call them out of their sleep. (when they died).

1 Corinthians 15:52⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

- Those that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. (1 Thessalonians 4:14)

⁴⁴ **And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.**

1. The prefigure of Lazarus, especially helps us to believe that we as mortals will one day be raised from death (sleep), if we believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord God and Savior.
2. The reason why Lazarus came forth, or forward was because Jesus called out his name.

3. The reason why Jesus called out very loudly..... **he cried with a loud voice** is not because Lazarus was hard of hearing or because he was dead. On the contrary Jesus called out loudly so that there could be no mistake in whom he was addressing in the Tomb. It is evident from the scripture that this Tomb may have contained other dead bodies. Jesus called out the name he wanted to come forward from amongst the dead. **(Verse 41)...** **they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid.**
4. Evidently the Jews did not believe that Jesus could raise a man from the dead.
 - Look at what 1 Corinthians 15 says about Jesus.

1 Corinthians 15:12-20

¹² **Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?**

¹³ **But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:**

¹⁴ And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

¹⁵ Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

¹⁶ **For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:**

¹⁷ And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

¹⁸ Then **they also which are fallen asleep in Christ** are perished.

¹⁹ If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

²⁰ **But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.**

4. In our text this morning in verse 44, it tells us that **he that was dead came forth.**
5. As a witness to the future resurrection, Lazarus came forth from the dead that sleep in Christ, to be among the first witnesses of Jesus' power over death.
6. Whilst this resurrection of Lazarus was not the final resurrection to come. He only put back on the body that he had left with to sleep. In the true resurrection at the end of the age, Lazarus like us will but on a incorruptible bodies as promised by the Lord. (1 Cor 15:53).(Philippians 3:21)
7. The evidence of death was witnessed by all present at the tomb of Lazarus. As he came from the grave bound still hand foot and face in his burial garments of the dead.
8. What did Jesus say at this point? He said "**Loose him, and let him go**".
9. By saying that, Jesus witnessed to the crowd, that Lazarus no longer needed the burial garments, because he was free from death now.
10. To his disciples, they would reflect on what Jesus had said to them earlier, especially Thomas. "Lazarus is asleep". (verse11).

11. What a witness of Jesus being God, and Lord over all, including over death.
12. Jesus is a glorious witness to life everlasting.
13. Even as Lazarus**his face was bound about with a napkin** and he could not see, yet he came forth on Jesus command. With literally no vision to see, he was guided by the voice of the Lord.

Folks the scriptures says in verse 44**he that was dead came forth.**

When some one dies. Their body becomes lifeless and there is nothing you or I can do to reverse that status.

There is no amount of mourning and no amount of tears that can bring that person back to life.

That person has died and their soul has left their body. We cannot replace that soul or breath life back into them. They are gone. Gone either to be with the Lord, or gone to a place of torment. Wherever they have gone they are dead folks and we cannot bring them back.

BUT.....There is one who can, and his name is above all names.....His name is Jesus Christ God of all.

Revelation 19:13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and **his name is called The Word of God.**

Philippians 2:9⁹ Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him **a name which is above every name:**

- Won't you trust him today?

There were other occasions that Jesus raised the dead.

Jairus the ruler trusted Jesus.

Luke 8:41,49-55

⁴¹ And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house:

⁴⁹ While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.

⁵⁰ But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.

⁵¹ And when he came into the house, **he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.**

⁵² And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth.

⁵³ And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.

⁵⁴ And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise.

⁵⁵ And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.

1. If we look at this situation, even among believers there is sometimes doubt that the Lord is able to do what he said he would do.
2. The disciples most likely as well as the dead girl's parents all laughed when Jesus said she was sleeping?
3. Remember Jesus had only allowed those in verse 51 to go in..... he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother.
4. When they ⁵³ And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise.
 - How much faith do you have in Jesus now? This very minute?

PRAYER.....CLOSE