

CALVARY CHAPEL OF PHILADELPHIA

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

1ST GRADE

TEACHER'S PACKET

SUNDAY MORNING

Study 17

Jesus Raises Lazarus



Jesus Raises Lazarus

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will show Jesus' power over death and present Him as the ultimate solution for death using the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead.

Key Verses

John 11:1-46—Main Teaching Passage
Genesis 3; Revelation 20:14

Memory Verse - John 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.'"

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, Luke 2:11.

Have the students name some of Jesus' miracles that you have studied so far this year. Have the class vote on which miracle was the most impressive to them and have some of them tell you why.

Jesus has done many impressive miracles, but the one we see in today's story will be His most impressive yet.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

Today's story begins with Jesus hearing the news of the sickness of His friend Lazarus (please note that this is not the same Lazarus from the parable we read last week). However, rather than hurrying to go save His friend, Jesus waited two more days before making the journey to see him. Jesus knew that He would not make it to Lazarus in time and He later told His disciples that Lazarus was dead, but He also knew that the death of Lazarus would be an opportunity for Him to show His glory.

When Jesus arrived, Lazarus' sister Martha met Him and said that if He had been there, Lazarus would not have died. When Jesus assured her that Lazarus would rise again, she assumed He was talking about the future resurrection at the end of time. However, Jesus said that He *is* the resurrection, and that anyone who believes in Him, even if they die, they will live. Then Mary, Lazarus' other sister, came to Jesus and again stated that Lazarus would have survived if Jesus had been there earlier. At this point, Jesus was grieved and began to weep. He then asked Mary to take Him to the tomb where they buried Lazarus. When they arrived, Jesus ordered the stone to be removed from the tomb. Martha protested that it had been four days since Lazarus died and his body by now stunk, but Jesus said that He was going to reveal His glory. He then prayed and called Lazarus to come out of the tomb, and he did. After seeing this, many onlookers believed, but others went and told the Pharisees.

LOOK

The raising of Lazarus from the dead is a classic example of the Lord's ways being higher than ours. At least three times (vs. 21, 32, and 37), Jesus was rebuked for not doing enough to save Lazarus from death. Mary, Martha, and all those who had come to mourn Lazarus wondered how Jesus could allow this tragedy to happen when He had saved the lives of so many others. Yet Jesus knew that what He was about to do would be far greater than simply healing a sick man.

This year, we have already seen a number of examples of Jesus miraculously healing people. He had demonstrated His power over disease, nature, and spiritual forces. This time, Jesus was going to reveal His power over a greater enemy. Jesus was going to prove that He had power over death.

You could read the overarching narrative of the Bible as being God's plan to overcome death. Death was first introduced as the disastrous result of the Fall in Genesis 3, and it is destroyed at the end of history in Revelation 20:14. Death is the consequence of man's sin. It goes against

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

God's design for mankind to have unbroken fellowship with God. Here in this chapter, we find that the shortest verse in the Bible (John 11:35) tells us that death caused Jesus to weep. This story is about more than Jesus simply performing His most impressive miracle prior to His own resurrection. In the raising of Lazarus, we see Jesus showing Himself to be the ultimate cure to death, man's greatest problem.

Jesus called Himself the resurrection and the life, the ultimate cure for death. However, it is important to note that His answer to death is not to make it so that we never die. Raising Lazarus from the dead was not Christ's ultimate victory over death, as Lazarus would die again one day. Instead, Jesus told Martha that whoever believes in Him, though he dies, yet he will live. When we trust in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we are able to overcome death, not because we will not die, but because death will not get the final say. As believers, we do not need to fear death because after death comes resurrection. Lazarus being raised from the dead is just a small preview of the victory over death that awaits all believers. And of course, Jesus' ultimate victory over death would come when He rose from the dead on Easter Sunday.

This great news comes with an important condition: it is only for those who believe in Jesus. Only by trusting in His death and resurrection to forgive our sins can we take part in His great victory over death. The Bible teaches that if we confess our sins and ask Jesus to forgive us through His work on the cross, we can take part in the resurrection and know that when we die, we will begin eternal life with Him forever.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

Present the Gospel message and offer the students an opportunity to make Jesus their Lord and Savior.

As a class, memorize John 11:25.

Pray: Praise Jesus for having power over death. Pray for those who have entrusted their lives to Christ.

Parent Question: How did Jesus overcome death?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on John 11:1-45 by David Guzik

JESUS RAISES LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD

A. The death of Lazarus.

1. ([John 11:1-3](#)) A request is brought to Jesus.

Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."

a. **Now a certain man was sick:** This begins perhaps the most remarkable miracle Jesus performed. One might say that it is foolish to think one miracle is more difficult than another, but this seventh sign of John's gospel is unique.

i. "There is no parallel whatever for the raising of a man who had been dead for four days and whose body had begun to putrefy." (Barclay)

ii. "It is surprising that the other evangelists have omitted so remarkable an account as this is, in which some of the finest traits in our Lord's character are exhibited. The conjecture of *Grotius* has a good deal of weight. He thinks that the other three evangelists wrote their histories during the life of Lazarus; and that they did not mention him for fear of exciting the malice of the Jews against him." (Clarke)

iii. Morris suggested another reason the Synoptic Gospels did not include the account of the raising of Lazarus is that Peter was not present; in these months he was in Galilee while Jesus was in Perea and Bethany. Many think that the Synoptic Gospels are centered on Peter's account of Jesus' teaching and ministry.

iv. **Lazarus of Bethany:** "'Lazarus,' the Greek form of Eleazar = God is my Help." (Dods)

b. **Lazarus... Mary and her sister Martha:** Jesus had a close relationship with this family. When **Lazarus was sick** it was natural for them to bring their need to Jesus. It was expected that if He miraculously met the needs of so many others, He would meet their need also.

c. **Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick:** Mary and Martha did not specifically ask Jesus to come and heal Lazarus. They felt they did not need to, that it was enough to simply tell Jesus what the problem was.

i. "The love of Jesus does not separate us from the common necessities and infirmities of human life. Men of God are still men." (Spurgeon)

2. ([John 11:4-6](#)) Jesus responds with a delay.

When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was.

a. **This sickness is not unto death:** Lazarus was already dead when Jesus said this, but He knew the end result would be **the glory of God**, not death. Jesus also knew that the events recorded in this chapter would set the religious leaders in determination to kill Jesus. This meant the end result would be **that the Son of God may be glorified** in His death and resurrection.

i. "The only right understanding of this answer, and our Lord's whole proceeding here is, -- that *He knew and foresaw all from the first.*" (Alford)

ii. "We should have said that the sickness was unto death, but, ultimately, to the glory of God. But he who sees the end from the beginning streaks with a grandeur of style which could not be imitated by us. So the Lord speaks of things, not as they seem to be, nor even as they are in the present moment, but as they shall be in the long run." (Spurgeon)

b. **Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus:** John reminds us that Jesus did genuinely love these sisters and their brother. It was an important reminder, showing that a testing of their faith was not a denial of His love.

i. "The separate mention of the three persons is probably meant to put some stress on Jesus' affection for each one individually. He did not simply love the family. He loved Martha and He loved Mary and He loved Lazarus." (Morris)

ii. The *individual* love of Jesus towards these three is especially significant when we think of how they were different, both in their temperament and in their situations of life.

iii. "That disciple whom Jesus loved is not at all backward to record that Jesus loved Lazarus too: there are no jealousies among those who are chosen by the Well-beloved." (Spurgeon)

c. **He stayed two more days:** It seems strange that Jesus did not immediately act upon this great need. The delay was probably mystifying to the disciples and agonizing to Mary and Martha.

i. It is clear that Jesus prolonged the sorrow of Mary and Martha. These were **two more days** of agonized grief for them. Yet, "Sorrow is prolonged for the same reason as it was sent. It is of little use to send it for a little while." (Maclaren)

ii. Jesus deliberately waited to bring Lazarus back from the dead until he had been in the tomb four days. "Lightfoot quotes a remarkable tradition of Ben Kaphra: 'Grief reaches its height on the third day. For three days the spirit hovers about the tomb, if perchance it may return to the body. But when it sees the fashion of the countenance changed, it retires and abandons the body.'" (Dods)

iii. In John's Gospel there are three times when someone dear to Jesus asked Him to do something ([John 2:1-11](#) and [7:1-10](#)). In each of these three cases, Jesus responded in the same way.

- Jesus first refused to grant their request and then He fulfilled it after showing that He does things according to the timing and will of God, not man.

- Through His actions Jesus demonstrated that His delays were not denials. They would bring greater glory to God.

3. ([John 11:7-10](#)) Jesus courageously decides to go to Judea and Jerusalem.

Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?" 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 one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

a. **Let us go to Judea again:** Jesus *could* have raised Lazarus from a distance. Because of the opposition from the religious leaders, Judea was a dangerous place for Jesus. Nevertheless, Jesus was willing **to go to Judea again** — despite the warnings from His disciples.

b. **Are there not twelve hours in the day?** Jesus' disciples were shocked that He would return to the region of Judea when He was a wanted man there. Jesus responded with by saying that He still had work to do. The **twelve hours** were a figurative way to speak of the time allotted by God the Father for the earthly work of Jesus.

i. There are many practical applications of this wise statement.

- Nothing can shorten our time.
- There is enough time for everything that needs to be done.
- We only have that time, so it must not be wasted.

ii. “Jesus is saying that a man must finish the day’s work within the day, for the night comes when work is ended.” (Barclay)

iii. “There are but twelve hours in the day, and it will be sunset before you dream of it. Get done what God has sent you here to do.” (Morrison)

c. **If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble:** During these **hours** no harm could come to Jesus and the disciples. They had to work before the **night** of Jesus’ passion.

i. “I have a fixed time during which to work, appointed me by my Father; during that time I feel no danger, I walk in His light, even as the traveller in the light of this world by day.” (Alford)

4. ([John 11:11-15](#)) Jesus tells them plainly of Lazarus’ death.

These things He said, and after that He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.” Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.” However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him.”

a. **Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up:** Jesus used the familiar metaphor of *sleep* to describe the death of Lazarus. The figure of speech was especially meaningful because Jesus would soon **wake him up** — bring Lazarus back from death.

i. Jesus said of Jarius’ daughter that she was asleep ([Matthew 9:24](#)). At the end of Stephen’s martyrdom we are told that he fell asleep ([Acts 7:60](#)).

b. **Lazarus is dead. And I am glad:** Jesus could be **glad**, even in the death of a dear friend, because He was certain of the outcome. We see at the end of the events of this chapter that grief was comforted, life was restored, many more believed, and the necessary death of Jesus was set in motion. All of these were reasons to be **glad**.

i. “So we may learn that He often permits us to pass into profounder darkness, and deeper mysteries of pain, in order that we may prove more perfectly His power.” (Morgan)

ii. **Nevertheless let us go to him:** “Our Lord probably left *Bethabara* the day, or the day after, Lazarus died. He came to *Bethany* three days after; and it appears that Lazarus had been buried about four days, and consequently that he had been put in the grave the day or day after he died.” (Clarke)

5. ([John 11:16](#)) Thomas’ bold faith.

Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”

a. **Thomas, who is called the Twin:** Church tradition says that Thomas was called **the Twin** because he looked like Jesus, putting him at special risk. If any among the disciples of Jesus were potential targets of persecution it would be the one who *looked* like Jesus.

i. All Jews in those days had two names — one a Hebrew name by which a man was known in his own circle, the other a Greek name by which he was known in a wider circle. *Thomas* is the *Hebrew* and *Didymus* the *Greek* for a *twin*.” (Barclay)

b. **Let us also go, that we may die with Him:** Thomas was willing to go with Jesus even if it meant dying with Him. He made this commitment without much understanding of a promise of resurrection.

i. "Thomas utters a cry of loyal despair." (Tasker)

ii. "He is the pessimist among the disciples, and now take the gloomy, and, as it is proved, the correct view of the result of this return to Judaea, but his affectionate loyalty forbids the thought of allowing Jesus to go alone." (Dods)

B. Jesus meets with Martha and Mary.

1. ([John 11:17-22](#)) Martha greets Jesus as He comes to Bethany.

So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. Then 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 of God, God will give You."

a. **He had already been in the tomb four days:** Jesus waited **four days** because He knew the Jewish superstition of that day that said a soul stayed *near* the grave for three days, hoping to return to the body. Therefore, it was accepted that after **four days** there was absolutely no hope of resuscitation.

b. **Many of the Jews had joined the women around Mary and Martha:** This was a large crowd, still present four days after Lazarus was buried. It was considered an important obligation to join with those who mourned the death of a near relative.

i. "A procession composed of relatives, friends, and sometimes hired mourners accompanied a body to the grave; and mourning usually lasted for several days afterward." (Tenney)

ii. **Mary was sitting in the house:** "It is likely that by this circumstance the evangelist intended to convey the idea of her sorrow and distress; because anciently afflicted persons were accustomed to put themselves in this posture, as expressive of their distress; their grief having rendered them as it were immovable." (Clarke)

c. **Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died:** Martha honestly stated her disappointment in Jesus' late arrival. She believed that Jesus was able to heal her brother while he was sick yet still alive. It's possible that she didn't even consider that Jesus was able to raise Lazarus from the dead *now*.

i. "Death was no stronger in His presence than disease, but these did not realize this. They would think of Death as the unconquerable. With disease men may grapple, and fight, and often overcome. But in the presence of death they are helpless." (Morgan)

d. **Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You:** Martha was not confident that Jesus would raise her brother. Instead, she said that she would still trust Jesus *despite* this disappointment. This was a remarkable demonstration of faith, one that should be taken as an example.

i. "Some prayers would be all the better if they were shorter -- all the better if they did not so much declare our own will as declare our confidence in the good will of Christ. I like the omissions of Martha's and Mary's prayer." (Spurgeon)

ii. There can be great power in "**even now**" prayers.

- Your loved one can be as dead and smelly as Lazarus — do you believe Jesus for them, **even now**?

- Your own situation can be as far gone as Lazarus was — do you believe Jesus for yourself, **even now**?

2. ([John 11:23-27](#)) I am the resurrection and the life.

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in

the resurrection at the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

a. **Your brother will rise again:** Martha understood that her brother Lazarus would **rise again** with all the righteous on the **last day**. She did not even consider that Jesus might immediately bring Lazarus from the dead.

i. We may comfort a grieving person by saying, “You will see him again.” We sincerely mean it and sincerely mean the comfort, but we don’t mean “You will see him again right now.” Jesus meant that Lazarus would **rise again** *right now*.

ii. “That resurrection in the last day shall be only *by my Power*, and therefore I can raise now as well.” (Alford)

iii. **I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day:** “Thanks to the influence of the Pharisees and those who followed their line, this was now the general belief among Jews, in spite of the Sadducean resistance to it.” (Bruce)

iv. “It is clear that she derived very little consolation from the fact of a distant and general resurrection: she needed resurrection and life to come nearer home, and to become more a present fact to her.” (Spurgeon)

b. **I am the resurrection and the life:** Jesus did not claim to *have* resurrection and life, or *understand secrets* about resurrection and life. Instead Jesus dramatically said that He *is* **the resurrection and the life**. To know Jesus is to know resurrection and life; to have Jesus is to have resurrection and life.

i. “She looked upon the resurrection and the life as things that were to be in some dim and misty future. ‘No,’ says Christ, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Not only do I get these things by prayer from God, but I am these things.’” (Spurgeon)

ii. “Apart from Him there was neither resurrection nor life.” (Dods)

iii. “Thou sayest that thy brother shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day; but by whom shall he arise if not by ME, who am the author of the resurrection, and the source of life? And is it not as easy for me to raise him *now* as to raise him *then*?” (Clarke)

c. **He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live:** Jesus boldly challenged Martha to trust that He was the source of eternal life. Jesus presented Himself as the champion over death. While humanity in general fears death, the Christian can only fear dying. The believer will never die, but simply make an instant transition from an old life to a new life.

i. “Those that believe in Jesus Christ appear to die, but yet they live. They are not in the grave, they are forever with the Lord. They are not unconscious they are with their Lord in Paradise. Death cannot kill a believer, it can only usher him into a freer form of life.” (Spurgeon)

ii. “Jesus does not of course mean that the believer will not die physically. Lazarus was dead even then, and millions of Jesus’ followers have died since. But He means that he will not die in the sense in which death has eternal significance.” (Morris)

iii. “Death comes to the ungodly man as a penal infliction, but to the righteous as a summons to his Father’s palace: to the sinner it is an execution, to the saint an undressing. Death to the wicked is the King of terrors: death to the saint is the end of terrors, the commencement of glory.” (Spurgeon)

iv. “In the primitive Church, when they repeated that article of the creed, ‘I believe in the resurrection of the flesh,’ they would point to their bodies and say, *etiam hujus carnis*, even of this very flesh.” (Trapp)

v. Jesus made an enormous claim: **I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live**. Only God could say such things in truth.

d. **Do you believe this?** Jesus challenged Martha not to debate or intellectual assent, but to *belief*. She must believe Jesus was who He said He was and that He could do what He said He could do.

i. “He saith not, Understandest thou this?” (Trapp)

ii. “Does that mean that He would not raise her brother unless she believed? No; for He had determined to ‘awake him out of sleep’ before He left Perea.” (Maclaren)

e. **Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world:** Martha answered correctly. Jesus was and is indeed the Messiah (**the Christ**). Jesus was and is God in human form among us (**the Son of God**).

i. **I believe:** “Here ‘I’ is emphatic. Whatever may be the case with others she has put her trust in Jesus.” (Morris)

ii. Boice called these words of Martha *faith’s foothold* — they were a sure support from which she could climb higher.

3. ([John 11:28-32](#)) Mary’s regret.

And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, “The Teacher has come and is calling for you.” As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him. Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, “She is going to the tomb to weep there.” Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.”

a. **She went her way and secretly called Mary her sister:** We aren’t told exactly *why* Martha did this secretly. It’s fair to guess that she did it to help Mary have a few uninterrupted moments with Jesus before the crowd of other mourners surrounded them.

i. **The Teacher has come:** “She speaks of Jesus as ‘The Teacher’ and the article is probably important. Among His followers Jesus was designated primarily by His teaching activities. But He is recognized as incomparable. He is ‘*the* Teacher’.” (Morris)

ii. **The Teacher:** “It is important to notice this use of the term by a woman. The Rabbis refused to instruct women, but Jesus took a very different view.” (Morris)

iii. **As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him:** “Martha told Mary that Jesus was asking for her. To Mary, this was equivalent to a command to come. Mary wasted no time in going to Jesus.” (Tenney)

b. **Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died:** Lazarus had two sisters, Mary and Martha. Martha has already spoken to Jesus regarding the death of Lazarus, then Mary spoke. Her words are remarkably similar to what Martha told Jesus ([John 11:21](#)).

i. “It is likely that they had said this to each other several times since Lazarus died.” (Bruce)

c. **My brother would not have died:** This is one of the places in the Bible where we wish we could hear the tone of voice and see the expressions on the face. This could have been a noble statement of faith, saying that if Jesus was there they have no doubt at all that He would have healed Lazarus. On the other hand, it could also be seen as a criticism of what seemed to be the tardiness of Jesus.

C. Lazarus is raised.

1. ([John 11:33-38](#)) A deeply moved Jesus comes to the tomb.

Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, “See how He loved him!” And some of them said, “Could not this

Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?" Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it.

a. **When Jesus saw her weeping:** The grief and tears of Mary and Martha moved Jesus. God sees the tears of the grief stricken and is moved with compassion.

- God sees our tears.
- God is touched by our tears.
- God remembers our tears.
- God acts to dry our tears.

b. **And the Jews who came with her weeping:** The Jews of that time and place were not reserved in their expressions of sorrow or grief.

i. "We must remember that this would be no gentle shedding of tears. It would be almost hysterical wailing and shrieking, for it was the Jewish point of view that the more unrestrained the weeping, the honour it paid to the dead." (Barclay)

ii. **Jesus saw her weeping... Jesus wept:** There is an important contrast between the tears of Mary and the tears of Jesus. **Weeping** (the word used for Mary in [John 11:33](#)) is a word that describes loud wailing. **Wept** (the word to describe Jesus' expression of grief in [John 11:35](#)) is another word that indicates a quiet weeping. Jesus *was* greatly moved, but *not* out of control.

iii. Morris on **Jesus wept:** "That used here (and here only in the New Testament) points rather to a quiet weeping. Jesus did not wail loudly but He was deeply grieved."

c. **He groaned in the spirit and was troubled:** Coming to the scene of Lazarus' tomb, Jesus intensely **groaned in the spirit**. In the ancient Greek, this phrase literally means, *to snort like a horse* — implying anger and indignation.

i. "The verb rendered 'groaned' is an unusual one. It signifies a loud inarticulate noise, and its proper use appears to be for the snorting of horses. When used of men it usually denotes anger." (Morris)

ii. According to Trench, the sense of **was troubled** is "'And troubled Himself.' The phrase is remarkable: deliberately summoned up in Himself the feelings of indignation at the havoc wrought by the evil one, and of tenderness for the mourners."

iii. "In ordinary classical Greek the usual usage of *embrimasthai* is of a horse *snorting*. Here it must mean that such deep emotion seized Jesus that an involuntary groan was wrung from his heart." (Barclay)

iv. It means that Jesus wasn't so much *sad* at the scene surrounding the tomb of Lazarus. It's more accurate to say that Jesus was *angry*. Jesus was angry and troubled at the destruction and power of the great enemy of humanity: death. Jesus would soon break the dominating power of death.

v. "Christ does not come to the sepulcher as an idle spectator, but like a wrestler preparing for the contest. Therefore no wonder that He groans again, for the violent tyranny of death which He had to overcome stands before His eyes." (Calvin)

d. **Jesus wept:** Jesus shared in the grief of those who mourn. Yet unlike any other, God the Son was able to *do* something about their grief. Jesus allowed this sympathetic passion to uniquely do for Lazarus what He will one day do for all the righteous dead.

i. **Jesus wept:** There are many aspects to these two words.

- Jesus was truly a man.
- There may be no sin or shame in tears.

- Jesus was acquainted with grief.
- Jesus was not ashamed of His humanity.
- Jesus identified with others in their sorrow.
- Jesus loves people.

ii. "Jesus had *humanity* in its perfection, and humanity unadulterated is *generous* and *sympathetic*." (Clarke)
 "He suffered all the innocent infirmities of our nature." (Spurgeon)

iii. Jesus dignified the tears of others in the Bible who wept, and all who weep.

- Abraham wept when he buried Sarah.
- Jacob wept when he wrestled the Angel.
- David and Jonathan wept together.
- Hezekiah wept over his sickness.
- Josiah wept over the sin of his nation.
- Jeremiah was the weeping prophet.

iv. "Sometimes we are told that if we really believed that our friends would rise again, and that they are safe and happy even now, we could not weep. Why not? Jesus did. There cannot be any error in following where Jesus leads the way." (Spurgeon)

v. Barclay explains that to the mind of the ancient Greek the primary characteristic of God was *apatheia*: the total inability to feel any emotion whatsoever. The Greeks believed in an isolated, passionless, and compassionless God. That isn't the God of the Bible. That isn't the God who is really there.

vi. **Again groaning in Himself:** "The repetition of 'deeply moved' (*embrimomenos*), the present participle of the verb, shows that Jesus was still under the same emotional tension that his first contact with the mourners had aroused." (Tenney)

vii. **See how He loved him!** "And when *we* see him pouring out his blood and life upon the cross for mankind, we may with exultation and joy cry out, *Behold how he hath loved US!*" (Clarke)

e. **And some of them said, "Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?"** These seem to be words of genuine sorrow and sympathy. They thought it truly sad that even Jesus, in all His greatness, could do nothing for Lazarus at this point.

- "There is no reason for thinking of the words as spoken in mockery." (Morris)
- Yet, these words were not helpful to anyone. Spurgeon noted that all this "what if" talking is vain, of no use. "Perhaps the bitterest griefs that men know come not from facts, but from things which might have been, as they imagine; that is to say, they dig wells of supposition, and drink the brackish waters of regret." (Spurgeon)
- "Suppose that Jesus is willing to open the eyes of the blind, and does open them; is he therefore bound to raise this particular dead man? If he does not see fit to do so, does that prove that he has not the power? If he lets Lazarus die, is it proven therefore that he could not have saved his life? May there not be some other reason? Does Omnipotence always exert its power? Does it ever exert all its power?" (Spurgeon)

2. ([John 11:39-40](#)) Jesus commands the stone to be removed.

Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been *dead* four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"

a. **Take away the stone:** Everybody thought this was a strange thing for Jesus to ask. After all, Martha knew *Lord, by this time he stinketh* (King James Version). People probably thought that Jesus was so taken with grief that He wanted one last look at His dear friend Lazarus.

b. **By this time there is a stench:** In any case, the condition of the body was an irrefutable confirmation of Lazarus' death.

i. "The Greek word *ozw* signifies simply *to smell*, whether the scent be *good* or *bad*; but the circumstances of the case sufficiently show that the latter is its meaning here." (Clarke)

c. **If you would believe you would see the glory of God:** Jesus was fully capable of this miracle without the faith of Martha or Mary. But if they would *not* believe, then *they* would never **see the glory of God**. They could see the end result and be happy in that, but they would miss the **glory** of working together with God in the fulfillment of His plan.

3. (John 11:41-42) Jesus prays at the tomb of Lazarus.

Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me."

a. **Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying:** This was a definite and remarkable step of faith. Jesus compelled Martha and Mary to act on their faith and they did by obeying Jesus and His unusual request.

i. We see that Jesus dealt with Martha according to steps deliberately intended to stretch and build her faith.

- Jesus gave her a promise.
- Jesus drew attention to Himself.
- Jesus called upon her to confess her faith.
- Jesus called her to act on her faith.

b. **Jesus lifted up His eyes and said:** Jesus likely had the traditional posture of prayer — hands raised, eyes open upwards as if looking towards heaven.

c. **Father, I thank You that You have heard Me:** Jesus was confident in His relationship with God the Father. The *public* nature of the prayer was for the sake of Mary, Martha, and **the people who are standing by**. The *power* of the prayer was rooted in the private prayer times of Jesus.

i. "No pomp of incantation, no wrestling in prayer even; but simple words of thanksgiving, as if Lazarus had already returned." (Dods)

ii. "During His humiliation on earth, these acts of power were done by Him, not by that glory of His own which He had laid aside, but by the mighty working of the Father in *Him*, and in answer to His prayer." (Alford)

4. (John 11:43-44) Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead.

Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

a. **He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"** Jesus simply called Lazarus out of the tomb. Others whom God used to raise dead bodies in the Scriptures often used far more elaborate procedures

i. **Cried with a loud voice:** "Means with John the loud decisive tone of authority." (Trench)

ii. "The loud voice was not, of course, because a loud voice was needed to make the dead hear. Probably it was in part at least, so that the crowd could know that this was no work of magic, but the very power of God. Wiz-

ards mutter their incantations and spells (cf. [Isaiah 8:19](#)). Not so the Son of God.” (Morris)

iii. “Jesus had said on a previous occasion that a time would come when all who were in their graves would hear his voice ([John 5:28](#)). This occasion was a single demonstration of that authority.” (Tenney)

b. **Lazarus, come forth!** Jesus spoke to a dead body as if Lazarus were alive because He is *God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did* ([Romans 4:17](#)).

i. “The words spoken were brief, direct, and imperative and can be paraphrased, ‘Lazarus! This way out!’ as if Jesus were directing someone lost in a gloomy dungeon.” (Tenney)

ii. “If this voice of Christ had been directed to all the dead, they had presently risen.” (Trapp)

c. **And he who had died came out:** Jesus fought death at Lazarus’ tomb, and plundered the grave. Jesus told death the He would soon completely conquer it completely.

d. **His face was wrapped with a cloth:** Lazarus was not resurrected, but resuscitated. He arose bound in grave-clothes, for he would need them again; Jesus left His grave-clothes behind in His tomb, never again having need of them.

i. “How he moved I do not know. Some of the old writers thought that he glided, as it were, through the air, and that this was part of the miracle. I think he may have been so bound that though he could not freely walk yet he could shuffle along like a man in a sack.” (Spurgeon)

e. **Jesus said to them, “Loose him, and let him go”:** Jesus did not miraculously remove the grave-clothes from Lazarus, but He asked attendants to do so. Jesus did what only God could do, and then He looked for man’s cooperation for the completion of Lazarus’ deliverance.

i. “The man was wholly raised, but not wholly freed. See, here is *a living man in the garments of death!*” (Spurgeon)

ii. “What a man can do for himself God will not do for him, and what Christian people can do for sinners they must not expect the Lord to do, they must work themselves according to the ability God has given them up to the point of possibility, and then they may look for divine interposition.” (Spurgeon)

D. Two reactions.

1. ([John 11:45](#)) The reaction of faith: **many of the Jews... believed in Him.**

Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him.

a. **Many of the Jews who had come to Mary:** Those who came to join in the sorrow of the grieving sisters did not expect that their reason for grief would be taken away.

b. **Had seen the things Jesus did, believe in him:** This was undeniably an impressive work of God, and for many it helped them put their trust in who Jesus said He was by seeing what He did.