



Lazarus raised from the dead



(John 11:1-57 TLB & CEV)

Lazarus was sick, then died.

Four days later Jesus Brought him Back ALIVE!

The Gospel of John Chapter 11 contains a truly huge amount of Bible truth and facts. In this story, Jesus was sent a message to say that Lazarus, a good friend of His, was very sick, (not the same as “Lazarus and the Rich Man” story) **but Jesus does not hurry to make him better!** He easily could have, but He didn't - and Lazarus died!

Then his family buried Lazarus in a tomb and sealed it with a stone, as was normal practise. In Jesus' day, graves were mostly tombs (caves) cut into the strong but fairly soft limestone or sandstone in that area. Many families had 'Family tombs' which were sometimes shaped like a bottle ... a narrow entrance with space inside big enough to stand up in. The 'top' was sealed with a suitable stone. So it was with Lazarus.

The main players in this story are Martha and Mary, sisters of Lazarus, Jesus and his disciples and a big crowd at the house to comfort and support Mary and Martha, including paid mourners and musicians. They were all watching, and listening, as the drama (powerful story) unfolded. Mourning could last several days, even a week.

Naturally, Martha and Mary were upset when their brother died ... because they both knew full well that Jesus was quite capable of healing Lazarus before he died. But he didn't come, why? They both must have thought that and said so to Jesus: “Sir, if you had been here our brother would not have died.” (V.21 and v.32)

Jesus knew in his mind of the coming death of Lazarus. How - well somehow God planned how this story would unfold so that many people would be made to decide, in their minds, if this Jesus was truly the Messiah or whether he was not! Jesus did raise Lazarus back to life ... and many Jews believed on Him, that He truly was God's son, the long awaited Messiah.

Jesus knew that Lazarus would die and said to the disciples: “The purpose of his illness is not death, but for the glory of God. I, the Son of God, will receive glory from this situation.” (Verse 4)

Jesus and the disciples walked the several miles to the home of Martha and Mary, not in a great hurry. There He spoke with several people, after Lazarus had died and was buried four days earlier, in the limestone tomb with the stone covering the entrance.

Martha said to Jesus: “If you had been here my brother would not have died. And even now it is not too late for I know that God will bring my brother back to life again, if you will only ask him to.” (V 21-22)

Jesus told her that “he will come back to life.” She replied, “Yes - on Resurrection Day.” (meaning in eternity)

Now Jesus says about the most powerful words ever spoken about life and death.

He said: “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” (NIV) Another Bible translation puts Jesus words a bit differently: “I am the one who raises the dead and gives them life again.” (V 25 TLB)

Some Bible writers (Scholars) call this statement is “the greatest of all the things that Jesus said.” I agree, and hope you understand it ... meaning that eternity is REAL! You cannot buy eternal LIFE, or work for it, or earn it by being ‘good’ - it is a free gift. After you know you have been given (promised) eternal life you really **want** to know God - and do the things that please Him. Believing in Jesus is only the first step. Everyone who receives the gift should want to learn more about *the ‘Giver.’* So - seek out more and more about Jesus - there is much ‘good stuff’ to learn.



Immediately after Jesus spoke of the eternal life he can give, He called everybody to “Come close.” He then told them to roll away the stone from the tomb. Then He lifted up his face to heaven and prayed this prayer: “*Father, thank you for hearing me. (You always hear me of course, but I said it because of all these people standing here, so that they will believe that you sent me)*” **Then he shouted: “Lazarus, come out!”**

And Lazarus came out - bound up in the grave cloth. Jesus said: “Unwrap him and let him go.” They did.

And so Lazarus was raised back to life and many who saw it happen, finally believed on Him as the Son of God.

However, even though

this amazing miracle

had just happened -

Other Jews did not believe or want Jesus to be the Messiah - and so they began plotting to kill him and met with the Pharisees to plan to get rid of Jesus. ***He was upsetting the system! THEIR system!!!***

