

For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little.

First Love Ministries, Inc.

PRAYER STUDY #199

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

CHAPTER 11

1. Jesus raises Lazarus.
2. Many are converted, but the Pharisees want to kill Jesus.

PART ONE-VERSES 1-44

1. Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.
2. (It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)
3. Therefore, his sisters sent unto Him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.
4. When Jesus heard *that*, He said, **This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.**
5. Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.
6. When He had heard therefore that he was sick, He abode two days still in the same place where He was.
7. Then after that saith He to His disciples, **Let us go into Judaea again.**
8. His disciples say unto Him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again?
9. Jesus answered, **Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.**
10. **But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.**
11. These things said He, and after that He saith unto them, **Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.**
12. Then said His disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.
13. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death, but they thought that He had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.
14. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, **Lazarus is dead.**
15. **And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto Him.**
16. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with Him.

17. Then when Jesus came, He found that he had lain in the grave four days already.
18. Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off.
19. And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary to comfort them concerning their brother.
20. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary sat still in the house.
21. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.
22. But I know, that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.
23. Jesus saith unto her, **Thy brother shall rise again.**
24. Martha saith unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.
25. Jesus said unto her, **I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.**
26. **And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?**
27. She saith unto Him, Yea, Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.
28. And when she had so said, she went her way and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come and calleth for thee.
29. As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came unto Him.
30. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him.
31. The Jews then which were with her in the house and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.
32. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying unto Him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.
33. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit and was troubled.
34. And said, **Where have ye laid Him?**
35. Jesus wept.
36. Then said the Jews, Behold how He loved him.
37. And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?
38. Jesus, therefore, again groaning in Himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave and a stone lay upon it.

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.
40. Jesus saith unto her, **Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?**
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.**
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.**
43. And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, **Lazarus, come forth.**
44. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, **Loose him, and let him go.**

This wonderful miracle takes place about a month before Jesus' own death and resurrection. This is the third time that Jesus raises someone from the dead. The miracle took place in Bethany, which is only about two miles from Jerusalem, at the Mount of Olives and on the road to Jericho. When in Judea, Jesus seems to have preferred staying in Bethany rather than in Jerusalem, and His ascension into Heaven is said by Luke to have taken place "over against Bethany" (Luke 24:50-51). Matthew (21:17), Mark (11:11 & 11:19) and Luke (10:41-42) record previous visits to this home of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha in Bethany. This was the last of the seven miracles recorded by John, who stated later, in his Gospel, that if he had recorded all the miracles and signs and things Jesus did, he suspected that the entire world could not have contained the book that should be written (John 21:25).

Jesus loved Lazarus, Mary, and Martha, and they loved Him and knew that He was the Messiah. Dr. Griffith Thomas says of them, "To Lazarus, He was the mighty Lord. To Martha, the eternal life. To Mary, the incarnate Love."

When Jesus is told by the messengers of the critical condition of Lazarus, He says his sickness will not have death as the final outcome but is for two purposes: 1) For the glory of God and 2) For His own glory. Then Jesus does an unusual thing: He purposely delays His coming to Lazarus. In fact, He did not arrive until about 5 or 6 days later.

Before continuing with the story, with the help of Herbert Lockyer's *All the Men of the Bible* and *All the Women of the Bible*, let's look at the people whom Jesus is relating to in this miracle story:

Lazarus: This man apparently was quiet and loved obscurity. His name is never mentioned in the New Testament apart from his sickness and death and the miracle of his resurrection. Yet Jesus apparently deeply loved this man and wept at his grave. Even after this greatest miracle of the Gospel, Lazarus is never heard from again, except for being named as present at a special banquet celebrating his resurrection. What happened to Lazarus is a question we cannot answer. Why was he, of all people, not at his Master's side during Jesus' trial and crucifixion? Perhaps Lazarus knew that the miracle of his own resurrection had infuriated the elders and knew his presence would only increase the Master's danger, or maybe he himself was apprehended by the authorities.

Martha: Some scholars believe that Martha was the daughter, wife, or widow of Simon the Leper. Thus, his house at his death became hers and so that was where the resurrection of Lazarus was celebrated. She was the eldest of the three siblings. I think she has been maligned somewhat because her gift was the gift of hospitality, and she in practical ways provided a home where Jesus was always welcome to stay. Apparently Martha and her two siblings were affluent and well-respected in Bethany, and Bethany is referred to as the village of Mary and her sister Martha. There were many friends in Bethany and from Jerusalem who came to share in the sisters' grief over the death of their brother. Even in her sorrow, she, not Mary, went out to meet the Lord while Mary sat at home weeping. Martha was, like each of us, not perfect and sometimes complained and was blunt speaking before she thought. Perhaps there was some sibling rivalry, but in the end she upheld her sister and did not complain when Mary anointed the Lord's feet with expensive perfume.

Mary: Most scholars do not believe that this Mary was the woman who was a sinner and anointed the feet of Jesus in Luke 7:36-50. Mary of Bethany also anointed Jesus' feet, but this was as an act of gratitude that the Master had brought her brother back to life and love for Jesus. We believe that she was a very godly woman who was a deep thinker who loved to sit at Jesus' feet. When she went to meet Jesus at her sister Martha's urging, she fell at His feet. The only time Mary is found saying anything at all was when she repeated the complaint of Martha about

Jesus not being there when her brother died. Even when she anoints His feet and wipes them with her feet, she is silent. Some of the greatest works for Jesus are not accompanied by words. The substance Mary anointed Jesus with was worth almost a year in wages. She was a believer full of love and unselfishness, and the Lord caused her act of kindness to Him to be remembered throughout the ages.

Thomas: The first thing we think about Thomas is that he lacked faith and is Doubting Thomas. The Gospel of John redeems Thomas in this chapter and shows us that he was a man very loyal to Christ and willing to die with the Lord.

Why did Jesus delay in going to Bethany?

1. His own words say that He was waiting for Lazarus to die so that His Father and Himself could be glorified.
2. Rick Renner says that Jesus, being omniscient and led by the Spirit, knew that the Jewish leaders hated Him and would assume that He would come before Lazarus died. When Jesus didn't appear after Lazarus died, the religious leaders decided He wasn't coming and went back to Jerusalem.
3. The Jews believed that the soul hovered over the body for three days until corruption of the body began. Then it took its flight. Jesus was therefore raised from the dead before the fourth day because it was prophesied in Psalm 16:10 that He should not see corruption. Perhaps Jesus waited until the fourth day to resurrect Lazarus to show that He had the power to bring back someone from Heaven and perhaps those wishing Jesus harm left after the third day believing that it would be impossible for Jesus to raise someone after three days.

PART TWO-VERSES 45-57

45. Then many of the Jews, which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on Him.
46. But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees and told them what things Jesus had done.
47. Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council and said, What do we? For this Man doeth many miracles.
48. If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him, and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.
49. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

50. Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation perishes not.
51. And this spake he not of himself, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;
52. And not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.
53. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put Him to death.
54. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews, but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, in to a city called Ephraim and there continued with His disciples.
55. And the Jews' Passover was nigh at hand, and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves.
56. Then sought they for Jesus and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?
57. Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where He were, he should show it, that they might take Him.

This miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead made a profound impression in nearby Jerusalem but also brought the Sanhedrin, the 71-member supreme council of the Jews, to the conclusion that Jesus must be eliminated. Caiaphas prophesied this. This is a good reminder for us not to follow prophets but only Jesus. After this miracle Jesus goes to a wilderness region of Ephraim to quietly wait for the Passover and His final hours. You may be surprised that we are just in the middle of the Gospel of John and yet we are at the end of the public ministry of Jesus. His public ministry concluded when He raised Lazarus from the dead. At this point we are approaching the last week of the earthly life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What a Meeting in the Air

*Gloryland is not so far away, and we'll reach it some glad day.
Heaven's home is now my final goal. There to live while ages roll.
Wretched lives are oh so sad to see-Those who live in misery.
But in Heaven, no more grief or pain-crippled lives are whole again.
What a happy day 'twill be! What a glorious jubilee.
All of Heaven will be there! What a meeting in the air!*

