

General Church Education



Raising Lazarus

John 11:2-45

Lesson 20

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 1: The Lord Is Our Creator

For ages 6-7 years

RAISING LAZARUS

JOHN 11:2-45

The miracle in our story today, raising Lazarus from the dead, is the last great miracle before the events that lead up to the first Easter. This miracle solidified the determination of the Jews to find a way to kill Jesus.

This miracle also was a powerful way to reinforce the lessons of earlier resurrection miracles the Lord performed. It helped prepare the Lord's followers to better understand His rising on Easter Day.

IDEAS FOR PARENTS & TEACHERS

- We know from the Writings for the New Church that when the Lord speaks of eternal life, He is not talking about the resurrection of the body, but the promise of the blessed, angelic life given to all who have true, active faith in Him.
- "Jesus wept." (John 11:35) This is a touching picture of the sorrow the Lord feels when ignorance about spiritual realities leads to suffering. In the case of Mary and Martha, they grieved that their brother was to lie in the grave until the "last day." The Lord's intention with this miracle was to bring hope and give faith in life eternal to all people in every age.
- The raising of Lazarus after four days brings home the essential idea of the Lord's power over life—all life.

FROM THE WRITINGS

There are two realities which compose the life of heaven with a person, namely the truth of faith and the good of love. The person receives this life from God, and nothing at all of it has a human origin. Therefore the chief feature of the Church must be to acknowledge God, believe in God, and love Him. *Arcana Coelestia* 10816

The question is asked today why miracles do not happen as they once did; for people think that if they took place, everyone would acknowledge them in his heart. The reason why miracles do not take place at the present time as they did formerly is that they compel and take away free will in spiritual matters, turning someone from a spiritual person into a natural one. Everyone in the Christian world since the Lord's coming has been able to become spiritual; and the only way to be made spiritual is by Him through the Word, and the ability to undergo this would be destroyed, if he were brought to believe by means of miracles. *True Christian Religion* 501

RAISING LAZARUS

IMPORTANT IDEAS

The Lord has all power, and therefore He has power to raise the dead.

The Lord promises eternal life to all people.

The Lord had twelve disciples who were His special followers. He also had many other friends and followers who loved Him. Mary, Martha and Lazarus their brother, were three of the Lord's best friends. (The Mary in our story was not the mother of Jesus.) We know that the Lord loved them. Sometimes He visited Mary and Martha in their home in Bethany, a town in Judea near the city of Jerusalem.

One day Lazarus became very sick. Mary and Martha worried he might die and sent for the Lord to come heal him. But the Lord stayed where He was for two days and didn't hurry because He wanted to show His power to raise people so everyone would know that He has power over life and death. Read John 11:1-7.

The disciples called the Lord "Rabbi" which means "Teacher." The disciples were worried about the Lord's safety. Leaders in the land had turned against the Lord. They were jealous of His power, and of the crowds who followed Him. They were worried that He was becoming so popular that He might become king, and then they would have no power at all. They didn't understand the beautiful truth that the Lord is the King of heaven and earth. He did not come to sit on an earthly throne.

The Lord told the disciples that Lazarus was sleeping. The disciples thought He meant that the sickness was gone and Lazarus was resting comfortably. The Lord then told them, "Lazarus is dead." Listen as we read the story. Can you see why the Lord waited to go to Lazarus until after he died? Read John 11:8-15.



The Lord told His disciples that He had waited so their belief would be made stronger. Thomas encouraged the disciples to go with Jesus, even though there was danger. When they came near Bethany it seemed as if were too late. Lazarus had been buried in the tomb, for four days.

Martha came to meet the Lord. Even though Lazarus had been dead for so long, she showed her trust in the Lord. She knew the Lord could still do a great miracle. The Lord told Martha, "Your brother will rise again." As we read, listen for the words the Lord said to Martha to comfort her. Read John 11:16-27.

Martha hurried to bring her sister, Mary, to where Jesus was. Mary was very sad. We read that the Lord "groaned in the spirit and was troubled." "Jesus wept." People who were nearby thought the Lord was sad because Lazarus, whom He loved, was dead. They too wondered why He hadn't come sooner to perform a miracle of healing and to save His friend. Read John 11:28-38.

The Lord came to the tomb. He told them to take away the stone cover. Martha didn't want to do that because Lazarus had been dead for so long. The Lord told her that if she "would believe," He would do a great miracle that would allow her to see the "Glory of God." Then the Lord gave a prayer of thanksgiving. He was thankful because the miracle that He was about to do would help people understand that He truly was God on earth. Read John 11:39-42.

As we read the last part of the story, imagine yourself standing near the tomb watching the Lord. What do you think happened after the Lord called out to Lazarus? Listen to the story to see if you are right. Read John 11:43-45.



DISCUSSION

- As we read the story of this miracle, we can remember that the Lord knows everything. He knew that Lazarus would be dead and buried when He arrived in Bethany. Do you remember why the Lord waited so long? (***He wanted to do a great miracle of raising the dead to show all people in all times that there is life after death.***)
- Our story says that the Lord wept or cried. People saw this and thought He wept because He was so sad that Lazarus was dead. However, since the Lord knows everything, He knew that He would raise Lazarus again. The Lord was not weeping because of the death of His good friend.
- So, why did the Lord weep? To understand the answer to this question it is important to remember that at the time of our story most people didn't know about the life of the spirit. They didn't know that everyone can live in heaven after the natural body dies. They had no hope for someone who died. They also had no hope for themselves.

The Lord wept because He was sad that people knew nothing about the happiness of eternal life for everyone. The Lord wants everyone to be happy. He is sad when we are sad. While the Lord was in the world He showed by what He taught and by His miracles that He is "the resurrection and the life." He taught that there is a wonderful life in heaven for those who live a life of true faith. The miracle in today's story helps people to believe in this. It is very powerful to bring back someone from the dead after four days.

- What kind of power did the Lord show in today's story of raising Lazarus? (***The power to raise the dead.***)



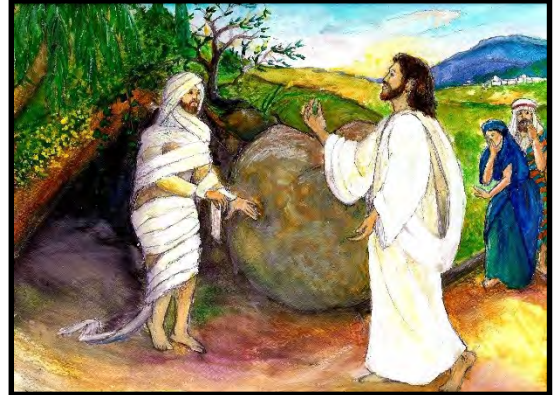
RAISING LAZARUS | Activities

Recitation

- Learn the recitation.

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live."

John 11:25



When the recitation has been learned, give children the recitation picture on the last page of this lesson, and a sticker, e.g. a star, to decorate it.

Song

- Heal Me
Listen at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-heal-me/>

Projects

- Clothespin Lazarus Doll
- Picture to color

Clothespin Lazarus Doll

Create a 2-sided Lazarus clothespin doll to remember that the Lord had the power to restore Lazarus to life after he was buried in the tomb for four days.

Supplies needed

- 1 clothespin
- thin tipped black permanent marker
- thin tipped red permanent marker
- "grave clothes" to wrap around the clothespin, e.g. gauze bandage, tissues cut into 1" (2.5cm) strips, toilet paper, white shoelace
- tape
- *Optional:* clothespin doll stand

Directions

1. Orient the clothespin so that two "legs" are facing you. Draw a "dead" face on Lazarus using the black and red permanent markers.
2. Turn the clothespin around so that two "legs" are facing you in the opposite direction. Draw a face that looks restored to life.
3. Wrap Lazarus in grave clothes starting at the top near his face. Secure the end in by wrapping a layer over it. Wrap to the bottom of the clothespin. Secure the grave clothes by tucking the end in, or taping it with clear tape.
4. *Optional:* put the clothespin in a clothespin doll stand so it stands upright.
5. Retell the story using the clothespin doll.





Recitation Award | Lessons 18, 19, 20

