

### 43. Jesus Told Martha Lazarus Would Rise Again

We saw in our last topic that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn how to explain that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. We also saw that the book of John records the miracles that it does to show that fact. In our topic today, we are going to see that Jesus promised Martha that her brother would rise again.

Jesus came to Bethany after he heard about the sickness of Lazarus and knew that he had died. John 11:20-22 says, “Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. Now 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.’” Here, we see that Martha hurried to meet Jesus even before he arrived at their house. In contrast, Mary just stayed at the house. This shows that Martha was very anxious to tell Jesus what had happened to her brother.

Martha used the very same words to talk about her brother Lazarus that her sister used a little while later as she began to talk to Jesus. In John 11:32, we read, “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.’” Here, we see that both sisters said exactly the same words. Both women showed that they knew that Jesus would have healed their brother if Jesus would have been there at the time. However, we also see another important lesson from their words. Many people want to talk about the one who has died and want someone to listen. Both Martha and Mary knew that Jesus would listen to them. Many people are uncomfortable when a person tries to talk about the one who has died and immediately want to change the subject.

We also see that there was a great difference in the responses of the sisters. Martha showed that she had confidence that Jesus could turn even this time of sorrow into a time from which good would come. In contrast, we see that Mary was much more focused on her present grief. Christ understood the needs that both women had and served them by showing His love. Luke 10:39-40 shows how different these women were by what those verses say, “And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, ‘Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.’” On that earlier visit, Mary just wanted to learn from Jesus while Martha wanted to serve Jesus.

Martha said, “But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.” Here, we see that Martha expected Jesus to pray and knew that God would turn this death into a time when their needs would be met. She understood that Jesus was the Son of God and that He could pray to the Father and the Father could bring something good even out of a very sad event in the life of Martha and her sister. We also see that Martha had a hope for the future. John 11:23-27 says, “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.” These verses show what gave Martha hope.

Jesus told Martha that her brother would rise again. Martha said that she knew what Jesus said was true. She knew that there would be a resurrection in the future and that Lazarus would be raised back to life at that time. Martha had the same understanding that Job and many others in the Old Testament had shown. Job said in Job 19:25-27, “For I know *that* my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this *I know*, that in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. *How* my heart yearns within me!” Job was confident that He would physically see His Redeemer in a future day. Martha had this same confidence.

Then, Jesus told Martha that He is the “I AM” as He gave His fifth “I AM” in the book of John. Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life.” Here, Jesus stated that He is the One who has had the power to raise the dead in the past, the present and the future. He is also the One who gives everlasting life. Daniel 12:2 says, “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt.” Some will be raised to everlasting life and others will be raised to everlasting judgment.

Jesus then said that He is the One who gives life to those who believe in Him. In these statements, Jesus made it clear that there is both physical life and spiritual life. A person who has both physical and spiritual life may experience physical death but He can look forward to the fact that He will live forever. Each person who believes in Jesus and receives Him becomes a child of God. John 1:12-13 says, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” Jesus said that those who believe in Him will live because they receive spiritual life at the moment of salvation.

Then, Christ explained further, “And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.” Here, we see that each person that has a true belief in Jesus will never experience death. That is due to the fact that each person who believes is given spiritual life. 2 Corinthians 5:6-8 says, “So *we are* always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent, from the body and to be present with the Lord.” Every person who believes in Jesus and receive Him can be confident that he or she will never die. Instead, at the moment our body experiences physical death, our soul and spirit are immediately present with the Lord. Jesus asked Martha if she believed that.

Martha did not fully understand and so she answered, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.” Here, we see that Martha expressed the fact that she believed that Jesus is the Christ. She also said that she believed that He is the Son of God. John 20:30-31 says, “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.” Martha could know that she

personally had eternal life because of what she said that day. That could give her great hope and peace even at a time when her brother had just died because she knew that he had that same belief; and even though he had experienced physical death, they both had eternal life. That is why 1 Thessalonians 4:13 says, “But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.” Martha had physical sorrow but Jesus reminded her that she also had that confident hope.

We see that once Martha was reminded of the confident hope that we have because of the resurrection she went to call her sister. John 11:28-30 says, “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.” Martha was encouraged just to see Jesus and she knew that would also be an encouragement to Mary. As a result, she quickly returned to their home and called Mary aside so that she could tell her privately that Jesus had arrived and was now near the edge of their town.

Martha had an important message for Mary. Martha said, “The Teacher has come and is calling for you.” The word translated “Teacher” means *one teaches the things of God*. When this word was used to speak of Jesus, it was usually translated “Master”. John 13:13-14 says, “‘You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, *your* Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.’” In these verses, we see that the word is twice translated “Teacher”. Martha let Mary know that Jesus had come to their town. However, she also said that Jesus was calling for Mary.

Mary immediately left their home and quickly hurried to the place where Jesus was. Here, we see that Mary was also anxious to see Jesus and talk to Him. She had a great love for Jesus. One of the times that Jesus had stopped at their home Luke 10:39 says, “And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word.” Just a few weeks after the visit of Jesus mentioned here in the book of John, we read in John 12:3, “Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.” The value of the oil of spikenard that Mary poured on the feet of Jesus had the value of a year’s wages.

Jesus was still outside of the town when Mary reached Him. This was probably due to the fact that other people had seen Jesus talking with Martha and had also started talking with Him because Jesus was still at the same place where Martha had met Him. These people had probably followed Martha when she left her home and started talking to Jesus when Martha went to get Mary. We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand the reminder to Martha that she would see her brother at the time of the resurrection was a great encouragement to her. May the Lord bless you richly as you help your children learn that this same message will comfort many Christians.