

The Seventh Sign: The Raising of Lazarus, John 11:1-44

1. Jesus raised the son of the widow of Nail (Lk 7:11-15), the daughter of Jairus (Lk 8:41-55), and likely others. How is this account different?
2. When Jesus saw Mary and the mourners weeping he was “deeply moved” (Mounce, NIV, NASB; “greatly disturbed” in the NRSV). The Message actually does a far better job by translating *embrimaomai* as “a deep anger welled up within him”. The word in question connotes “anger, outrage or emotional indignation” (Carson). It is used elsewhere of stern warnings (e.g. Mk 1:43, 14:5; Mt 9:30), and in extra-biblical literature even refers to the snorting of warhorses preparing for battle (Aeschylus, *Seven against Thebes*). What it is *not* is sympathetic emotional stirring.

If you want to know someone, ask what provokes him or her. The Jesus of the gospels is *impressed* by the Centurion’s faith (Mt 8:5-13); he is *sympathetic* when preparing for his disciples before his death (Jn 14); he is *compassionate* when he sees the multitude without a shepherd (Mt 14:14); and he feels *love* for the rich man who can’t quite let go of his wealth for the kingdom. What *angers* Jesus is elevation of the law to the point where people suffer (Mk 3:1-6), exclusion of Gentiles from the temple (Mk 11:15), and we can infer from tone and language that he is angered by religious leaders who lead others astray.

- a. Why is Jesus angry here? The unbelief of the mourners (Origen), Satan (Brown), himself for delaying (Story), or death itself (Carson)? What does this tell us about the Father’s attitude toward the deaths of those loved ones you have lost?
 - b. What makes you angry? Are you provoked by the same things Jesus is?
3. Upon feeding the multitude, Jesus taught that he is the bread of life (6:35, 48). Upon healing the man born blind, Jesus taught that he was the light of the world (8:12; 9:5). Note that Jesus doesn’t say he is like Moses, who gives bread to his people. Rather, he *is* the bread of life, and only those who eat his flesh and drink his blood have life—i.e., only those who embrace his words (6:57, 63). Similarly, Jesus doesn’t just bring light, he *is* the light of the world, and Jesus’ righteous life casts the light which either draws people toward or repels them from God (8:39; see also Mt 5:15).

Jesus doesn’t just raise his followers on the last day, he *is* the resurrection and the life (11:25-26). What does that mean?

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Fun fact: This passage is the crux of a minority argument in favor of Lazarus as the author of the fourth gospel. A few of the reasons include (a) The author is referred to as the beloved disciple, and only Lazarus, along with Mary and Martha, are called out as being loved by Jesus (11:3, 5, 36); (b) Lazarus’ home in Bethany is consistent with the Jerusalem focus of this gospel; (c) that the authorities knew of Lazarus’ raising suggest some were among the mourners—and these connections help explain how the author has access to the high priest’s house; (d) it is consistent with the high Christology and realized eschatology of the fourth gospel; etc. (See <http://benwitherington.blogspot.com/2007/01/was-lazarus-beloved-disciple.html>.)

Extra questions and observations:

1. ...

Leader's Intro:

Background:

- The previous chapter says that Jesus is where John was baptizing. A good argument can be made (Carson) that this was not the same "Bethany" that L&M&M are from, but is "Batanea", across the Jordan (see 1:28), in which case there would be a travel time of about 2 days.
- The Jews believed that someone wasn't *really* dead until over 3 days. (Carson)

List the signs so far. This sign gives us an amazing window into Jesus at the time of life when we all must cross alone.

It is said that we all die alone. In some ways, that is exactly what we see here. But at...

Notes

I. Background

a. ...

II. Words and Phrases

a. ...

III. Themes

a. ...

IV. Observations

a. ...

V. Questions

a. ...

VI. To do

a. ...