

thank thee. In his eager and anxious desire for the revealing of God's power, he did not forget to be thankful for answers to former prayers. The spirit of true prayer is a very thankful spirit (Phil. 4. 6).

42. Because of the multitude which standeth around I said it. The prayer is to God for the people. It is right to consider the needs of the people as well as the will of God. True prayers, like the miracles of Christ, are intended to reunite lost souls to the divine Father. We cannot conceive of Christ performing a miracle for any mere pride of display; so nothing is so incongruous in Christian worship as manifestation of pride, pedantry, conceit, or vanity.

43. He cried with a loud voice. The voice of earnestness and authority, and also for the sake of the multitude, that all might be impressed with the fact that Jesus had been sent of God to be the Prince of life to all believing in him. His sheep hear his voice even in the depths of the tomb (John 10. 3). **Lazarus, come forth.** Coincident with this call, divine power arrested the decay of the body, set the mechanism of life in motion, and restored the spirit to its wonted place in receiving impressions and directing the activities of the physical, intellectual, and moral nature of the man raised from the dead.

44. He that was dead came forth. The joy of the sisters and the terror of the stubborn and hostile Jews and the excitement of every observer must have been extremely intense. **Bound hand and foot.** The limbs were bound separately and then loosely wrapped in a winding sheet. **Loose him, and let him go.** Another opportunity for close observation and co-operation on the part of the disciples. Another incident to mention in establishing their testimony.

45. Many, therefore, of the Jews believed on him. The immediate effect was tremendous. The triumphal march into Jerusalem could only be made possible by such a miracle. John is the only evangelist who gives an account of the raising of Lazarus, but all the evangelists give an account of its great result, the ovation of the people as Jesus rode into the city. A reaction followed this demonstration which culminated in the crucifixion.

The Lesson Council.

Question 1. In what respects did the resurrection of Lazarus differ from that of Jesus? How is the latter a clearer pledge of our resurrection than the former?

Lazarus was raised; Jesus had "life in himself." The instrumentalities used for Lazarus—faith, prayer, "loud voice"—were not needed for Jesus. The first glimpse of the risen Lazarus showed

him helpless in grave bandages; of Jesus, teaching and comforting a disciple. Lazarus's after life was apparently insignificant; Jesus inaugurated the mightiest movement in history. Lazarus died again; Jesus tasted death once.

The raising of Lazarus only postponed the apparently ultimate triumph of death. Jesus's rising, a decisive and permanent victory of humanity through union with divinity, shows that the grave cannot hold anyone whose life is hid with Christ in God.

Question 2. Was the resurrection of Lazarus like that to which we look forward—the same in kind and substance?

The resurrection of Lazarus was not intended to teach anything about our resurrection. It was intended primarily to teach the Sadducees, and through them all humanity, that death does not end all. Man is a spirit and has a body. The body is no more a part of the real man than the clothing which he wears is a part of his body. In this material world such a body is useful and necessary to him; in the spirit world it would be a hindrance and an injury to him. The lesson which Christ would teach the world by this event, and which he more fully demonstrated by his own resurrection, was that death does not kill the man, it only removes his body. He says, He that believeth on me does not die at all, and he called Lazarus back to prove the truth of his assertion.

Question 3. Was the Mary of this lesson Mary Magdalene, or "the sinner" of Luke 7?

It is neither in harmony with the spirit nor letter of the Gospel to suppose that Mary, the charm of the home of Lazarus, where Jesus so often went for rest and companionship, was the Mary "which was a sinner" (Luke 7. 37), or Mary Magdalene, "out of whom went seven devils" (Luke 8. 2). The breaking of the alabaster box, very precious, is a perpetual memorial of the beloved Mary, and the incidents connected with the other Marys were in harmony with their characters only. In view of the brevity of the Gospel record and the fact that multitudes of important events go unmentioned, it but adds confusion to attempt to identify persons and incidents not necessarily connected.

Question 4. Did Martha's faith in the resurrection of Lazarus represent the average Jewish belief of the time?

Martha's was simply the traditional belief of her people. Some rabbis taught that all Jews would be raised; others that the Jews and godly heathen who had kept the seven commands of the sons of Noah; others that only those who had kept the precepts of the rabbis would be raised.