

JESUS RAISES LAZARUS FROM DEATH

FAMILY DEVOTION

38 JESUS, ONCE MORE DEEPLY MOVED, CAME TO THE TOMB. IT WAS A CAVE WITH A STONE LAID ACROSS THE ENTRANCE. 39 "TAKE AWAY THE STONE," HE SAID. "BUT, LORD," SAID MARTHA, THE SISTER OF THE DEAD MAN, "BY THIS TIME THERE IS A BAD ODOR, FOR HE HAS BEEN THERE FOUR DAYS." 40 THEN JESUS SAID, "DID I NOT TELL YOU THAT IF YOU BELIEVE, YOU WILL SEE THE GLORY OF GOD?" 41 SO THEY TOOK AWAY THE STONE. THEN JESUS LOOKED UP AND SAID, "FATHER, I THANK YOU THAT YOU HAVE HEARD ME. 42 I KNEW THAT YOU ALWAYS HEAR ME, BUT I SAID THIS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE STANDING HERE, THAT THEY MAY BELIEVE THAT YOU SENT ME." 43 WHEN HE HAD SAID THIS, JESUS CALLED IN A LOUD VOICE, "LAZARUS, COME OUT!" 44 THE DEAD MAN CAME OUT, HIS HANDS AND FEET WRAPPED WITH STRIPS OF LINEN, AND A CLOTH AROUND HIS FACE. JESUS SAID TO THEM, "TAKE OFF THE GRAVE CLOTHES AND LET HIM GO."

JOHN 11:38-44

A little background to our story is that Jesus was friends with Lazarus. He loved him. When he was sick, Lazarus's sisters asked Jesus to come and heal their brother. However, when Jesus arrived, Lazarus was already dead. The sisters questioned why Jesus didn't heal him. They have seen the healing Jesus can bring. We often have this question of God as well. Why do bad things happen? This is a very hard question to answer. Grown ups have been fighting about it for years and years. Stories like this one give us a little reminder that God intends beautiful things for his people, even if we can't see the outcome.

WHAT ARE SOME DIFFICULT SITUATIONS YOU HAVE HAD TO GO THROUGH?

Maybe your friends weren't very nice at school, maybe you got a bad grade on a test, or maybe you have an illness in your family. All of these are times where we would like to ask God to change the outcome. In times like this, it is important to trust in God's plan for humanity. Although the world is not perfect, God loves us, carries our burdens and intends to restore order to our lives.

DOES THIS MEAN IT IS BAD TO BE SCARED?

Being sad or scared or mad is a natural human emotion. It is important to recognize this and be easy on ourselves in times when we don't feel happy or at peace. That is okay. Being scared or sad does not mean you don't love God. Trusting in God simply means that we always have hope he is taking us somewhere good. Even when we are uneasy, we know beyond a doubt that God is with us. That hope is rooted in a love of God and a belief in his faithfulness.

In our story, Jesus assured Lazarus's sisters that the glory of God will be shown through his death and he will be healed. And he was healed. Even though the sisters had to go through the death of their brother, they saw God's purpose in his resurrection. Think of it as a long winter, finally renewed by springtime! Just like creation goes through seasons of disorder and reorder, as does our lives. And God is faithful in all times.

DEAR LORD, THANK YOU FOR ALL SEASONS. THANK YOU FOR ACTING FOR THE GOOD OF YOUR PEOPLE. HELP US TO BE AT PEACE. AMEN.