

Miracles over Death

Passages: Mt 9:18–26; Mk 5:21–43; Lk 8:40–56; 7:11–17; Jn 11:1–45

Memory Verse

“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.’” (John 11:25)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Work [Behavior]
1. God is never late. 2. Jesus has power over life and death.	1. Jesus is the Messiah. 2. Jesus is the comforter. 3. Jesus is the conqueror.	1. Trust in the Lord. 2. Cast all your cares upon Him. 3. Never lose hope in God.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

Introduction: Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life

- A. Miracles over Death
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 - 1. God has His way and His time.
 - 2. Jesus is the Messiah.
 - 3. Jesus is the comforter.
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Life Application: God is Never Late

- 1. Trust in the Lord (Prov 3:5–6)
- 2. Cast all your care upon the Lord (1 Pet 5:7)
- 3. Never lose hope in God (Jer 29:11)

Memory Verse

Conclusion: Jesus can not only offer us resurrection after our death, but also has the power, compassion, and love to care for us while we live on this earth as well.

Introduction: Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life

Do you fear death? As humans, it is only natural for us to fear death, as God did not create us to die. He had eternity in mind for us from the beginning. We were meant to live forever, but sin and death entered the picture. Then Jesus came to the world to fulfill our hopes for eternal life. He gave us life when we were born, and He has the power to give it again at the resurrection.

A. Miracles Over Death

Miracle	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Jesus raises Jairus' daughter to life*	9:18–26	5:21–43	8:40–56	
Jesus raises a widow's son in Nain			7:11–17	
Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead				11:1–45

*See Year 1 Book 1 Lesson 8

The most profound of all the miracles Jesus performed during His earthly ministry are those where He resurrected the dead. The New Testament records three of these miracles: the raising of Jairus' daughter, of a widow's son, and of Lazarus. Today, we will focus on the latter two miracles.

1. Raising A Widow's Son

The Gospel of Luke is the only gospel that records this miracle. Let's turn to Luke 7:11–17. Jesus "went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd." As they approached the town gate, the dead son of a widow was being carried out in an open coffin. Upon seeing the widow, Jesus had compassion on her and miraculously brought the young man back to life, returning him to his mother.

Let's ask ourselves the following questions:

a. How did Jesus come to perform this miracle?

First, He knew all the specifics of the case. He understood the circumstances surrounding the funeral procession. He knew that the deceased was a young man, the only son of his mother, and that she was a widow.

Second, He did not wait for anyone to request His help. Isaiah prophesied, "I was sought by those who did not ask for Me; I was found by those who did not seek Me" (Isa 65:1). Sometimes, God answers before we even call for help (Isa 65:24; Dan 9:20–23). What a special blessing that is!

Third, when He saw the widowed mother, Jesus had "compassion on her." His concern was apparent in His expression of mercy and tenderness. He said to her, "Do not weep," to comfort and encourage her. Even when performing the miracle and presenting her son, Jesus Christ did not use any grandiose or pretentious gestures. He simply touched the coffin, and tenderly gave her son back to her. It is clear that this act was purely out of love and compassion for the widow, and was not for any other purpose than to help.

Fourth, Jesus Christ offered hope to the widow when none could be found. Her son was dead, and there was nothing anyone could do to change the situation. But God's power and love are so great that even in such dire circumstances, there is always hope to be found in Christ (Lam 3:26;

Jer 17:7).

b. What was Christ's main purpose in performing this resurrection?

Though the miracle caused fear in those who witnessed it, this fear turned into a deep awe for His compassion and power. As a result, Jesus Christ's renown among the people grew. However, His primary purpose was to glorify God. The people glorified God when they said, "A great prophet has risen up among us," and "God has visited His people." The tragedy in this situation is that, though a number of people looked upon Jesus as the promised prophet, few gave Him much devotion.

2. Raising Lazarus

Let's continue by studying John 11:1–53. John opens this passage with mention of a man named Lazarus being sick. Lazarus was the brother of Mary and Martha. This was a family that loved God and was loved by God, with whom Jesus had a special relationship. Their relationship, however, did not prevent tragedy reaching their home.

Sickness struck Lazarus, so the sisters sent word to Jesus. This was their desperate attempt to deal with a situation that was beyond their control. Jesus' response, however, was not to take immediate action. He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it" (v. 4). He then did not immediately travel to Judea. Rather, He stayed where He was for two more days, and then told His disciples, "Let us go back to Judea." However, the disciples were hesitant to return because the Jews had attempted to stone Jesus the last time He was there. Still, Jesus remained resolute in His decision, as raising Lazarus was for God's glory.

Let's ask ourselves the following questions:

a. Why did Jesus wait?

The first clue is found in John 11:4. Jesus' response unveiled the purpose behind the problem and also proclaimed a promise: its purpose was to glorify, and the promise was that Lazarus would live.

When the disciples hesitated upon returning to Judea, Jesus told them why He needed to return: "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up" (v. 11). His disciples replied, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well." His disciples once again misunderstood Him. So Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead." He continued by telling the disciples: "And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him."

This passage unveils another purpose to Jesus' decision. This miracle aids the disciples in their journey from doubt to belief when Jesus did the impossible and brought Lazarus back to life. When we feel like we have hit rock bottom, with no solution or end to our problem in sight, God never turns away! All we have to do is trust in His promises and wait on His answers to our prayers, for God never goes back on His word. Always remember: God's delay does not mean God's denial!

One last essential—yet not immediately noticeable—purpose to this miracle was its effect on the Jewish leaders. Lazarus' resurrection and the resulting increase in Jesus' followers spurred them into action; Jesus could not be permitted to work His miracles any longer (Jn 11:45–53). In the end, despite their antagonism towards Christ, God turned the Jewish leaders' hatred towards His own purpose, resulting in Jesus' death and, ultimately, victory over death.

b. What was Jesus' reaction when He saw Mary and the Jews weeping?

When Jesus finally arrived at Bethany, Lazarus had been dead for four days. His death was now legally recognized. When Jesus saw Mary and the other Jews weeping, He was deeply moved within His heart and also began to weep (Jn 11:35).

Jesus wept as we weep. He shed tears as we shed tears. He was moved as we are moved. Our God is neither distant nor detached. We serve a God who came down and lived as a human so that He could meet us where we are. He worked, sweated, slept, and ate as we do. But He also hurt as we hurt. So we must not be afraid to take our concerns to God. He is full of mercy and grace, and understands our fears.

c. How does Jesus express death to show that it is temporary (Jn 11:11)?

As Jesus leaves for Bethany, He gives those around Him a different description of death, saying, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up" (Jn 11:11). To humans, death is final, but to Jesus it is merely temporary. Jesus Christ has power over life and death, and He was willing to resurrect Lazarus from death to glorify God and identify Himself as the Messiah, the Savior of mankind.

The lesson of this breathtaking miracle is that Jesus Christ can resurrect the dead, spiritually and physically. He brought Lazarus back to life, and He is able to regenerate the hearts and minds of those who are spiritually dead in sin.

B. Spiritual Teachings

1. God has His way and His time.

God follows His divine plan. Though it may not always seem like it, His healings and His miracles are never early or late. Many times, we feel as if God is running late or as if He, in the silence, has forgotten about us. That was how Mary and Martha felt. But Jesus was right on time according to His divine plan. Jesus deliberately chose to wait, to let Lazarus die, and to delay meeting the two sisters whom He loved dearly.

2. Jesus is the Messiah.

The Bible tells us that Martha ran to meet Jesus. Through the words she spoke, she seemed to have a deep understanding about 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." 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."

(Jn 11:21–27)

This is the central focus of who He is—the Son of God, living and powerful, who does amazing work among us. Because Jesus is the Messiah, we have great hope! He is the Messiah, and as such is the way, the truth, and life.

3. Jesus is the comforter.

This miracle reveals so much of Jesus' heart and emotions. The Bible says, "Jesus wept." He wept alongside the people He loved, and felt the same pain, agony, grief, and loss that his friends carried.

This is evidence of the depth of His love. But our Lord does not merely sympathize with us. He also has the power to comfort. There are times when we do not understand God's plan and His purpose. But even so, God wants us to come to Him, whether in anger, tears, pain, or confusion. We can weep in front of God. We can pour out all our frustrations to Him. Just as He comforted Mary and Martha, He will comfort us, and we can be assured that although we may not understand what His plan is, He is still in control.

4. Jesus is the conqueror.

Upon Jesus' command, Lazarus walked out of the tomb, still wrapped in graveclothes. This miracle is proof of the power He wields over life and death and is merely a precursor to Jesus' own resurrection. Humans fear death; we struggle to avoid it in any way we can. But Jesus has already conquered death! He is the resurrection and the life, and He who believes in Him will live, even if our physical bodies die. After we are baptized and have received the Holy Spirit, we are saved from eternal death. Paul wrote, "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" (1 Cor 15:55). Because of Jesus, death is not an end. There is eternal life.

Check for Understanding

1. **Did anyone request Jesus' help for the widow from Nain? How did He come across the widow and her dead son?** No one asked Jesus; He happened to see the funeral procession for the son upon approaching the gates to the town of Nain, with His disciples and His followers behind Him.
2. **What are three reasons Jesus chose to wait until Lazarus had died?** To glorify God; to aid the disciples in their journey from doubt to belief; and lastly to spur the Jewish leaders into action against Him, so that He may eventually be crucified and resurrect.
3. **What was Jesus' reaction when he saw Mary and the Jews weeping? What does this teach us about God?** He wept as well. This teaches us that our God is neither distant nor detached; He lived as a human, and therefore knows what we are going through when we are in pain.
4. **How does Jesus refer to death in this passage?** He uses a different description of death, saying that Lazarus is merely sleeping.
5. **Why is Jesus a conqueror?** He wields power over life and death, and in His own resurrection conquered death for all of us, so that as long as we believe in Him we will be given eternal life.

Life Application

God Is Never Late

Sometimes we may pray for a long time before receiving an answer. God's silence can lead us to question why He is not listening, or why His reply is taking so long. But we need to firmly believe in His will. He is still listening to our prayers and guiding us. But while we may want an immediate response from God, His timing is unlike ours; it is perfect, and purposeful. God is never early or late in His actions. He is always on time.

While we are waiting for God's perfect timing, what should we do?

1. **Trust in the Lord (Prov 3:5–6)**

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."

We may not be able to understand it, but God really has His own timing: "With the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Pet 3:8). To trust in the Lord is to have faith that He will act in His own time and way. All we need to do is to obey His words and

serve Him diligently. He has also promised that He will not allow any trial to be so great that we cannot bear it (1 Cor 10:13). He will never let us fall, as He promised in Psalm 55:22, "Cast your burden on the Lord, And He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved."

2. Cast all your care upon the Lord (1 Pet 5:7)

"Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."

God has not forgotten us in the midst of our troubles; He still cares for us even if we feel like we are completely lost. He is able and willing to be our strength and support mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. He has the power to take everything that threatens to overwhelm us and turn it to our benefit. But we must learn to bring our tribulations to Him and fully trust in His care.

3. Never lose hope in God (Jer 29:11)

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."

Being a Christian does not mean that we will never experience tribulation or trials. During those times, when we feel unable to handle a situation or do not know how to solve a problem, we must not stop praying to God even when it feels like He is not listening. He already knows everything that has happened and will ever happen to us. Whatever He permits to enter the arena of our lives has a purpose, for He has promised that "all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom 8:28).

Testimony

A fifteen-day-old baby boy had a fever. He was crying non-stop, and his belly was swollen and hard. The doctor diagnosed him with sepsis, pneumonia, and intestinal infection. The baby was admitted in the hospital for a few days without any improvements, and continued to cry non-stop while vomiting any milk and water that he drank. The first-time father was immensely worried. The first-time mother was under tremendous stress, and on the verge of a breakdown. They immediately contacted a pastor asking him to pray for them. The pastor encouraged them to "rely on the Lord Jesus wholeheartedly."

The baby was later transferred to two different hospitals, where he was diagnosed with Hirschprung's disease, which is an obstruction of bowel movement resulting from the absence of nerves in some part of the colon. This disease causes children to vomit and also causes a swollen belly. After several days in the hospital, there was no improvement. The doctors decided that surgery was the only way to treat the baby's condition. The doctors told the parents to prepare money for the operation as there was no other treatment except surgery. But the baby's illness had taken a toll on the family's finances, and surgery would incur a sizable expense. After weighing all the factors, the parents determined to discharge their baby from the hospital and entrust him to the almighty Jesus. The doctor strongly opposed that decision because it would put the baby's life in danger. But the parents were adamant.

After he was discharged, they headed straight to church. The whole church prayed earnestly for the baby and miraculously, through everyone's prayers of intercession, the baby with an extremely swollen and hardened belly, and whose voice was lost from non-stop crying, started to calm down. On the day the baby was scheduled for baptism, the baby started to cry and develop a fever again. The parents were worried again until the pastor encouraged them not to give up. They finally

allowed the baby to be baptized. After coming out of the water, when the pastor handed the baby to the mother, she heard her son release gas. When she was changing his clothes, she saw stools in his diaper. This was a miracle for a baby who had not had a normal bowel movement for many days. Through the grace of God, the baby finally received healing through water baptism.

– Anonymous

Discussion

- Which would you choose if you were the baby's parents: surgery or prayer?
- Have you ever experienced a time when God delayed in answering your prayers? If yes, share.

Memory Verse

"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.'" (John 11:25)

Meaning

1. Jesus has power over both life and death.
2. Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6). This is the basis of our hope: that Jesus, the giver of life, can offer us resurrection, which is a reversal of death.

Conclusion

No other religion can offer the empty tomb of its founder. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is everything to Christianity. But even before conquering sin and death, Jesus clearly demonstrated His command over life and death, a power that God alone can claim. He not only offers us resurrection after our death, but also has the power, compassion, and love to care for us while we live on this earth as well. He has given us every reason to trust in His power, place our hopes in Him, and live a life that is fully reliant on Him, with hope and confidence for our eternity with Him in heaven.

Lesson 12 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What does the memory verse teach us about Jesus' power and purpose?
Jesus has power over both life and death. He is the way, the truth, and the life, and He is the basis of our hope in eternal life.
2. How did Jesus come across the widow and her son? Did anyone request His help?
No one requested Jesus' help; rather, He came across the funeral procession as He, His disciples and His followers were entering the main gate into the town of Nain.
3. What were three reasons Jesus chose to wait until Lazarus had died?
To glorify God; to aid the disciples in their journey from doubt to belief; and lastly, to spur the Jewish leaders into action against Him, so that He may eventually be crucified and resurrect.
4. What does Jesus' weeping teach us about Him?
Our God is neither distant nor detached. We serve a God who came down and lived as a human so that He could meet us where we are. He felt pain as we do, and thus knows what we are going through, so we must never be afraid to take our concerns to God.
5. We learned that God works in His own time. But what can we do while we are waiting for Him?
*Trust in the Lord and have faith that He will act in His own time and way because He will never let us undergo a trial too great for us to bear.
Cast all of our cares upon Him and learn to bring our tribulations to Him.
Never lose hope in God because we know that everything He permits in our lives has a purpose.*
6. Have you ever felt like God was not listening to your prayers? After today's lesson, how will you act in the future if you feel this way again?
Personal answers.