

## Lazarus: Come Out

We have seen in our two previous studies in John 11 that Jesus allows His best friends to suffer, and that He does so for two particular reasons: 1) for the glory of God, and 2) for the strengthening of our faith. The question that resounds throughout this chapter is the one Jesus asks Martha, “Do you believe this?”

In our text today, we see three more key principles in our sufferings.

### John 11:28-57

**28** When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.” **29** And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. **30** Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. **31** When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. **32** Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” **33** When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. **34** And he said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” **35** Jesus wept. **36** So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” **37** But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?”

### Jesus Raises Lazarus

**38** Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. **39** Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days.” **40** Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?” **41** So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. **42** I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.” **43** When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out.” **44** The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

### The Plot to Kill Jesus

**45** Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did, believed in him, **46** but some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. **47** So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, “What are we to do? For this man performs many signs. **48** If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.” **49** But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all. **50** Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.” **51** He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, **52** and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. **53** So from that day on they made plans to put him to death. **54** Jesus therefore no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there to the region near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim, and there he stayed with the disciples. **55** Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. **56** They were looking for Jesus and saying to one another as they stood in the temple, “What do you think? That he will not come to the feast at all?” **57** Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was, he should let them know, so that they might arrest him.

### I. Jesus enters into our sufferings (vv. 28-37)

Notice that Jesus fetches Mary by sending Martha to let her know that she is being called by the Teacher. Jesus takes the initiative in identifying with our sorrows. But when He observes the weeping of Mary and those accompanying her, He was “deeply moved,” which could also

be translated “angry.” He was also “greatly troubled” or “stirred up.” Then we are told, “Jesus wept.” What sorrows our Savior experiences on our behalf! He may be distressed and angry because of Mary’s partial faith, but, more likely, He is irate at the evil and death that afflicts His dear people.

## II. **Jesus eliminates our sufferings (vv. 38-44)**

Jesus had made an extraordinary promise regarding Lazarus in verses 25-26. He claims to be “the resurrection and the life.” Now is crunch time. Can He really perform? Jesus commands the stone be taken away and offers a prayer to the Father (on account of others who will then believe the Father sent Him), and then He commands with a shout, “Lazarus, come out.” What happens next will determine the course of world history. If Lazarus doesn’t come out, all of Jesus’ claims are now null and void; if, however, Lazarus actually comes out of the tomb, the world shall know that Jesus is sovereign Lord, even over death itself. We are told that “the man who had died” came out of the tomb alive! Our Lord eventually eliminates all of our sufferings.

## III. **Jesus eliminates our sufferings by suffering for us (vv. 45-57)**

In verse 45, we see that Jesus’ mission is accomplished: “Many of the Jews...believed in him.” His seventh sign performed for us in John 11 accomplished the goal of gathering new saints into the Kingdom. In verses 46-53, however, we see the heart of evil, as others rumble about the great things Jesus has done. But through this evil, we also see the hand of God working to prepare for the crucifixion of His own Son. It is precisely through this agonizing crucifixion, this profound suffering by our Savior, that we are delivered from our sufferings.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Why are Martha’s words to Mary in John 11:28 so special to us?
2. Why was Jesus “deeply moved” in verses 33-35? How are you encouraged by His reaction to this situation?
3. Why is the raising of Lazarus such a momentous occasion? How does this event affect our lives today?
4. What word do you see repeated in John 11:14, 25-27, 40, 42? How do these verses help us to understand the significance of verse 45?
5. What is ironic about verses 46-53? What do these verses teach us about God?

### **Going Deeper**

1. When have you ever experienced suffering that made you wonder if Jesus really cared for you? What did you learn from John 11 that helps you see that situation differently now?
2. What lessons about suffering and death in John 11 do you most urgently need to apply in your own life?