

**GOSPEL OF JOHN
RESURRECTION DILEMMA
JOHN 11:43-53**

Introduction

The last time we were in the *Gospel of John* was just before Easter Sunday! We dealt with the first **44 verses** here where **JESUS** raised **LAZARUS** from the dead after **LAZARUS** had been in the grave for FOUR days!

Of all the miracles that we've seen in this Gospel up to this point, this was by far the most telling of the miracles as to Who **JESUS** is!

The selection of miracles or signs that John tells us about are intended to help us see **JESUS** as the **PROMISED MESSIAH** or the **CHRIST—the One Who has authority over every realm of life!**

So, What Have We Seen Thus Far?:

- 1. He Changed Water Into Wine! (2:1–11)**
- 2. He Healed A Person Who Was Not Even In His Presence Just By Speaking! (4:56-54 – The Centurion's Servant)**
- 3. He Healed A Man Who Had Been Disabled By An Infirmary For 38 Years! (5:1–18 – The Impotent Man)**
- 4. He Multiplied Five Loaves And Two Fish To Feed 5000+! (6:1–14)**
- 5. He Walked On Water During A Wind Storm! (6:16–21)**
- 6. He Gave Sight To A Man Who Had Been Born Blind! (9:1-41)**
- 7. And Now He Has Raised A Man, LAZARUS, Who Had Been Dead And Buried For Four Days! (11:1-44)**

Together, these miracles give a strong and clear indication that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, Who has authority over every realm of life!

All seven of these signs point to the ultimate miraculous sign that Jesus would manifest shortly after this seventh sign!

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That sign would be HIS own resurrection from the dead as HE completed the work that He came to do as the LAMB OF GOD!

Both here in *John 11*, and later in **HIS** own resurrection, which was just days away at this point, **JESUS** demonstrated **HIS** power over Satan and over death and the grave—i.e. the curse of sin!

The raising of LAZARUS was just a prelude to JESUS' own death and resurrection! But we see what I call the **RESURRECTION DILEMMA**—and that is this, **WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH IT?**

- I. NOTICE THE DIVERSE REACTIONS OF THOSE WHO ACTUALLY WITNESSED THIS MIRACLE! (Vs 45-46)**
 - A. There Were Many Who Believed On Jesus! (Vs 45)**
 - 1. That Was The Very Reason That JESUS Waited For So Long To Come To Bethany In Response To Mary And Martha! (Vs 4; 15; 40; 42)**
 - 2. These Jews That Believed Had Been With Mary And Martha In Their Grief! (Vs 45; 19; 31; 33; 36-37; 42)**
 - B. That Means There Were Some Who Remained In Unbelief!** It said that "**many**" believed in Vs 45, NOT "**all**"!

Can you imagine a man who you know has been dead and in the grave for four days coming back to life again? And he not only came back to life, but he was in every way whole again!

And yet that didn't convince some that **JESUS** is Who **HE** has claimed to be all along!

Understand that the same miracles of **JESUS** that **convinced and encouraged folks THEN and NOW to believe on HIM** are the very same miracles that more deeply entrench those who **willfully and wholeheartedly remain in their unbelief!**

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In that respect, **JESUS'** miracles as well as **HIS** parables have similar results! To some those parables taught truths and brought belief in their heart!

To others, those same parables just bounced off of their hardened heart and did not penetrate them at all! They remained in their unbelief!

C. The Reaction Of Some Was To Run To The Pharisees To Tell Them What JESUS Had Done! (Vs 46)

Nobody likes a *tattle-tell!* But here we have some *“informers”* if you will, who were **eye-witnesses of this incredible, undeniable miracle! (Think about it!)**

But apparently these were just **watching** or **observing JESUS** with **hardened, unbelieving hearts and minds** that were set only on **tattle-telling** the latest **JESUS** news to the Pharisees, whom they knew to be the enemies of **JESUS!**

There is **no indication here of belief on their part!** There is only a **willingness** and even a **haste** to go and tell on **JESUS** to the council of Pharisees whom we have seen were constantly looking for a reason to arrest and even kill Jesus!

What did these **tattle-tells** think of Jesus? Did they think of Him as some kind of a magician who was tricking or deceiving people with slight of hand? We are not told!

But there was **NO WAY** this could have been a magic act on Jesus part! **LAZARUS** had been sick, he died and had been buried in the tomb for four days!

Jesus was not in town for **LAZARUS** death or burial! **LAZARUS'** sister **MARTHA** tried to dissuade **JESUS** from removing the stone on **LAZARUS'** tomb because of the awful stench of death that she expected if **HE** did so! (Vs 39)

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SO, WE SEE THESE DIVERSE REACTIONS OF THOSE WHO WITNESSED THIS MIRACLE! (Vs 45-46)

II. WE SEE THE REACTIONS OF THE PHARISEES TO THIS MIRACLE!

A. We See The Pharisees Selfish Concern! (Vs 47-48)

The concern of the highest Jewish leaders in the land was **NOT** for their people, but rather for themselves!

We see here that they were concerned that by **JESUS causing such a stir and following among the Jews, the Romans might take away THEIR authority and rule!** And they certainly couldn't have that happen!

1. The Pharisees Were Astonished At JESUS' Even When He Was A Child!

When **JESUS** was just twelve years old and left behind at the Temple by Mary and Joseph, Scripture says: ***Luke 2:47–“And all that heard him were astonished at his answers.”***

2. The Pharisees Had To Be Dumbfounded When Jesus Was Baptized By John the Baptist!

John the Baptist was preaching and baptizing folks in the Jordan River. The Pharisees would come out to observe him! (***Matthew 3:7-13, 16-17***) They were oblivious to John The Baptist's role!

3. The Pharisees Were Unable To Match JESUS' Profound, Authoritative Teaching In His Ministry! Beginning at Nazareth in His hometown...

Luke 4:22–“And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.”

(That was just after Jesus spoke about Himself and the ministry He was sent to do from Isaiah 61:1-2...and just before He preached to them about themselves!)

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Continuing on to Capernaum afterward ...

Luke 4:32–“And they were astonished : for his word was with power.”

Luke 4:36-37–“36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. 37 And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.”

Later when Jesus preached His Sermon on the Mount...

*Matthew 7:28–29–“28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, **the people were astonished at his doctrine:** 29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”*

Who Jesus was should have been apparent to them...

Deuteronomy 18:18–19–“18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. 19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.”

But the whole time Jesus taught, **the Pharisees saw Him as a threat!** Their pride kept them from the truth! The people were listening to Jesus rather than listening to them! That hurt their ego! They couldn't have that! Jesus had to go!

Listen to me, human pride **WAS** and **STILL IS** one of the greatest fuels that feeds human unbelief!

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4. The Pharisees Were Unable To See That By The Power Of God Jesus Did The Miracles He Did!

In Matthew's Gospel it is recorded that Jesus fame was spread continuing to spread because of the miracles that he did. Some folks brought Jesus a dumb man who was possessed with a devil.

Matthew 9:33-34–“33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel. 34But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.”

Matthew 12:22 records that another man was brought to him that was possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb. Jesus healed him and **verse 23** says, “*And all the people were amazed and said, Is not this the son of David?*”

Matthew 12:24–“But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.”

(And, by the way seeing the works of God and then attributing the works of God to the devil is the sin of blasphemy of the Holy Ghost! See **Mark 3:22-30**)

We See The Pharisees' Selfish Concern...

B. We See The High Priest's Startling Prophecy! (Vs 49-52)

Did you know that some spoke prophecies that they did not completely understand! That is what Caiaphas did here!

Let's examine the Prophecy of this High Priest...

Caiaphas was not only the high priest “*that same year*” (speaking of the year of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection), but he actually held the office from A.D. 18 until A.D. 36. Caiaphas, would be instrumental in endorsing the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus!

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1. Notice His Monumental Arrogance! (Vs. 49)

“Ye know nothing at all...”

i.e. “You don’t know what you are talking about!”

The pompous and arrogant nature which the Pharisees and Sadducees were known for comes through that comment of Caiaphas!

These leaders, especially the High Priest were to be servants of God and mediators for the people!

But even as the prophets of old had repeatedly warned and taught, they did not serve the people with love and devotion, pointing them to the Lord God, but they served themselves and their own prestigious positions.

2. Notice His Misunderstood Prophecy! (Vs. 50)

The words that he speaks here were spoken in a different respect than what the LORD’s intent was!

Caiaphas was speaking of what was profitable or advantageous for the Pharisees!

The LORD meant it to be what was advantageous for us as well as the whole world!

Caiaphas thought he was showing his political prowess and his pragmatism but God was using the office of Caiaphas to proclaim His own providential plan of redemption, which had been in His Providential plan even before time began!

Caiaphas’ language is sacrificial in nature even though he had no Christian conception in mind. His intent was purely political and his expediency was no doubt based on self-preservation.

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Justice for Jesus would be sacrificed for the self-preservation of the religious leaders! He thought he was being clever with his words!

Not knowing that, through their sinister plan, they would be accomplishing the plan of redemption for those who would believe, but also, in reality, they would be judging themselves in trying to preserve themselves.

The imagery which Caiaphas uses reminds us of the Old Testament scapegoat, given to spare the sins of Israel on the Day of Atonement.

That practice in the Old Testament pointed to the reality of what the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God, would do for His chosen People. He would be taken outside of the city and the sins of mankind would be placed upon Him. He would vicariously suffer the wrath of God to pay for the sins of all mankind!

Ironically, this one Man, Jesus, the God-man, DID die for the nation! But His death did not save Israel from destruction. Actually, Jesus’ death set in motion events which led to the destruction of Israel, Jerusalem, and the Temple and its people!

John 1:11–12–“He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:”

In *verses 51-52* the irony of Caiaphas’ words is expounded upon.

Caiaphas no doubt thought that he was being so knowledgeable and controlling in his plan to make Jesus the *“scapegoat”* but he was not speaking of his own accord.

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He didn't speak of himself but out of his high priestly office!
The message he was speaking, whether he was aware of it or not, was God's message that he was delivering!

Jesus indeed was the One promised in the Old Testament who would die "*on behalf of the nation.*" He had been promised by God to Israel; He was born through David's lineage, and He would indeed be sacrificed in Israel for ALL of Israel, those who were dispersed, but also those who would become part of spiritual Israel, sharing in the community of the Messiah and of His Kingdom.

We See The Pharisees' Selfish Concern...
We See The High Priest's Startling Prophecy...

C. We See The Council's Savage Plan! (Vs 53)

These leaders of the Jews set their wills to make killing Jesus a priority!

The only thing that remained was for them to make a plan and carry it out! And that they did!

When they should have been about ministering the Word to the Jewish people, they were conspiring and planning Jesus' demise! But they still couldn't touch Him before the time that God had set for it to be accomplished!

Conclusion

So, we have the resurrection of Lazarus here and the resurrection of Jesus! They both happened! There were plenty of witnesses to both! So, here is the **RESURRECTION DILEMMA...What will you do with it?**

Have you believed on it? I hope that you have, but if not:

- 1. Will You Believe It Unto Salvation? (Romans 10:9-10)**
- 2. Will You Remain In Unbelief And Die In Your Sin?**
- 3. Will You Adamantly Deny It And Fight Against Christ!**