

1,2,3 STORY TIME !

THE RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS?

Do you remember Martha and Mary, these two sisters who so loved to receive Jesus in their house? While Martha was preparing food, Mary was sitting at the feet of Jesus to listen to him. In this family there was also Lazarus, their brother; all three were close friends of Jesus and yet, one day, a great misfortune befell them. We will find out together what happened and how Jesus made them wait before coming to see them. You will find this account in chapter 11 of the Gospel of John. Listen carefully and you can answer my question:

- Why did Jesus wait before answering Martha and Mary's call?

WHY DID JESUS WAIT BEFORE ANSWERING?

Martha, Mary and their brother Lazarus live in the small village of Bethany. They like Jesus very much and are always very happy when he comes to see them.



One day, Lazarus falls ill, he is very seriously sick. It looks as if he's going to die:

- If Jesus were there, he would heal him; say Martha and Mary very worried.

They send someone to let him know:

- Lord, our friend Lazarus, the one you love, is sick

When Jesus hears the news, he says to his disciples:

- This disease will not end in death but it will serve to glorify God, it is an opportunity to manifest the glory of the Son of God.

And, although he is very attached to this family, he remains there another two days.

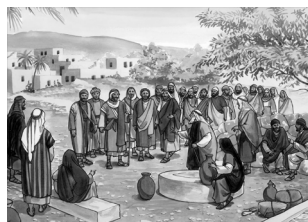
On the third day he says to the disciples:

- Our friend, Lazarus, has fallen asleep; I will go and wake him up!

- Lord, if he's sleeping, he's already on the way to his recovery!

In fact, Jesus wants to tell them that Lazarus is dead, but they understand that he is talking about ordinary sleep.

- Lazarus is dead! He tells them clearly, and I am happy, because of you, that I was not there. It'll strengthen your faith. But now let's go to him!



They set off.

When they arrive in Bethany, they discover that their friend has been in the tomb for four days. Many Jews came to Martha and Mary to console them for the death of their brother.

When Martha learns that Jesus is approaching the village, she goes to meet him:

- Lord, she says, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

But I know that, even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant it to you:

- Your brother will come back to life! Jesus says to her.

- I know, Martha replies that he will come back to life on the last day, during the resurrection of the dead.



- I am the resurrection and the life, Jesus says to her, and whoever believes in me, will live, even if he is dead. Can you believe it?

- Yes, Lord, she replies, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of God, the announced savior!

With those words, she leaves. Then secretly, she calls her sister and says in her ear:

- Mary, Jesus is there and he asks you to come!

With a bound, Marie gets up and runs towards him. Her friends follow her:

- We are not going to leave her alone, she will surely go to the tomb to cry there, they say.

As soon as she sees Jesus, Mary throws herself at his feet, and says to him:

- Lord, if you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died.

When he sees her cry, along with all the Jews accompanying her he is deeply upset, his emotion is great.

- Where did you put him? he asks.

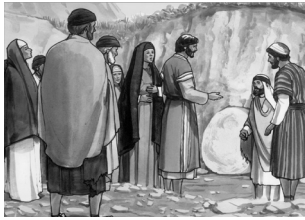
- Come, Lord, and you will see.

Jesus has immense compassion for his mourning friends and for all those people in grief. He is deeply moved by so much pain, he starts to cry.

- See how he loved him, some say while others point out:

- He who restored sight to the blind, Couldn't he have prevented Lazarus from dying?

Jesus is very upset when he sees the tomb.



It is a cave whose entrance is closed with a large stone.

- Remove the stone! command Jesus.

Martha is frightened:

- Lord, she says, don't do that he's been here for 4 days, he must already smell bad!

- Martha! Didn't I tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?

So they roll this stone. The tomb is dark. Jesus looks up to heaven:

- Father, he says, thank you for answering my prayer. For me, I know that you always answer me, but I speak this way because of all these people around me, so that they believe that it was you who sent me.



Then he calls out in a loud voice:

- Lazarus, comes out!

The crowd is stunned... here appears the dead man, his feet and hands wrapped in strips of cloth and his face covered with a towel.

- Take the cloth off him, and let him go! says Jesus.

Lazarus walks, he breathes, he looks around, he speaks, he is very much alive; Jesus has woken him up from the deep sleep of death. He is risen!

Many of the Jews who witnessed this great miracle began to believe in Jesus, they recognized that He is indeed the Son of God.

In the family, tears and mourning give way to joy and gratitude. Martha and Mary are together with their brother again! As Jesus told them, they see the glory of God!

1, 2 3, 4 AND YOU AND ME!



Back to our question. Why did Jesus wait to answer the call of Martha and Mary? If He had come quickly, He could have healed Lazarus, but He had another plan. He wanted to bring out the glory and the power of God; resurrecting a dead man is more awe-inspiring and glorious than curing a sick person. So he waited several days, so no one could doubt Lazarus' death, people had seen his dead body and they had put him in the tomb. By resuscitating him, Jesus manifested in the eyes of all that He is truly the Son of God.

4, 3, 2, 1 AND WE PARENTS!



*In this passage of the Gospel, we can find teachings about death with its consequences, but also valuable advice to help us cope and be close to those who are going through this tragedy. Everything is presented there, the pain of separation, the tears, the consolation of friends, the reality of the resurrection of the dead on the last day, the immense compassion of Jesus and finally the glorious manifestation of his divinity. Even if our children do not understand everything, it is important that they know that Jesus is the resurrection and the Life. Why not have them memorized this verse: **"Jesus is the resurrection and the Life"** It would be planting a good seed in their hearts.*