

Bible Verse: John 11:43b (NIV)

Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

In this week's miracle story, Jesus brings a dead man back to life. The man's name is Lazarus.

Lazarus is a special friend of Jesus. Lazarus lives in a town called Bethany with his sisters Mary and Martha. Jesus often visits Bethany and he often stays with Lazarus and his sisters. He loves them a lot.

Martha is a busy person. She cooks for Jesus and cleans the house so Jesus will feel comfortable and welcome. Mary is quieter. She prays with Jesus and washes his feet, and just sits with him. You can imagine why Jesus spends time with these friends- they let him rest and relax.

So when their brother Lazarus gets sick, Mary and Martha just take care of Lazarus. They all know that Jesus would come and heal him if they asked, but it doesn't seem that bad, and Jesus is a long way away. They won't bother Jesus.

But Lazarus isn't getting better. He keeps getting sicker. So finally, Martha and Mary send for Jesus. When their message gets to Jesus, he doesn't start out right away for Bethany. He waits for two days. Finally, Jesus tells his disciples that they need to go. They need to bring the Light of God to help his friend Lazarus. Jesus tells the disciples that Lazarus is already sleeping in death, but they will be able to see Lazarus rise again.

Now the disciples believe that Jesus brings eternal life, so they are not surprised to hear that Lazarus will rise again. They expect to meet Lazarus in heaven. But they don't expect to meet Lazarus again on earth.

When they come near to Mary and Martha's house, Martha runs out to tell them that Lazarus died four days ago and is already in a stone tomb. She is sorry Jesus could not come sooner to save him, but she still believes in Jesus' power and love. Jesus tells Martha to get Mary so they can visit Lazarus' tomb. Mary kneels in front of Jesus. She says she knows that if Jesus had been there, Lazarus wouldn't have

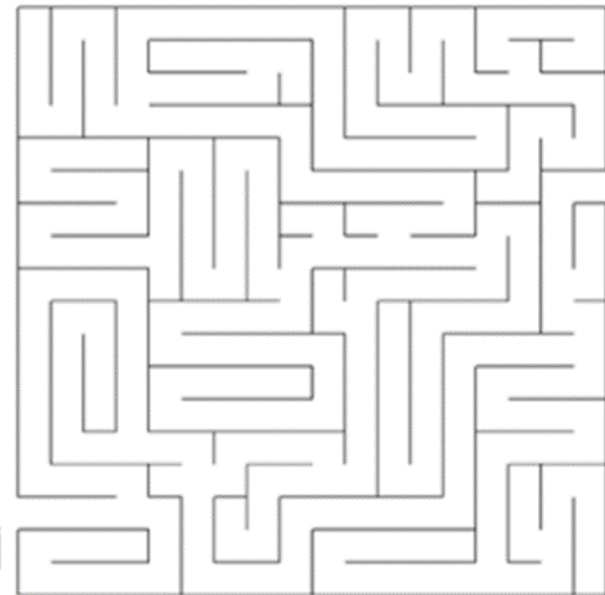
died. Jesus cries with Mary and Martha. He joins their suffering and sadness.

Then Jesus goes to the tomb with Mary and Martha and a group of their friends. Jesus tells them to open it up and roll away the stone door. Martha reminds Jesus that it is already too late to save Lazarus. Jesus tells them to keep believing and to expect the Glory of God. Jesus calls into the open tomb, "Lazarus, come out." And Lazarus does- still wrapped in burial cloths, but alive again after four days in death.

Now even more crowds of people come to follow Jesus and to see Lazarus too. Lazarus is living proof that Jesus is stronger than death.

During Lent, we especially remember that Jesus suffers with us and brings us out of death into eternal life.

Wonder Question: How do you think Lazarus felt after being dead for 4 days?



HELP THE BLIND MAN FIND JESUS

