

Grandma's favorite read aloud Bible stories ©: Lazarus

John 11:1-46

In a town called Bethany, there lived a man named Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha. Lazarus, Mary and Martha invited Jesus into their home many times. They were good friends and loved each other. They always had a good time together and Mary would sit and listen to every word Jesus would say.

But one day, Lazarus got very, very sick. Mary and Martha were so worried! They told someone to quickly find Jesus to tell him. They knew Jesus could help. But, when the man found Jesus and told him how sick his good friend Lazarus was, Jesus didn't seem worried! He even said, "oh – his sickness is not going to end in death...it is for God's glory!" And, he didn't come! As a matter of fact, He waited 2 more days!

Then, all of a sudden, Jesus said to His disciples, "Let's go!" Now the disciples were worried! They knew people were after Jesus! People who wanted to hurt him. They didn't want Him to go. But Jesus said, "No, Lazarus is asleep and I need to go and wake him up" (His disciples were really confused now and thought Lazarus must be resting after being so sick and this would help him to get better --but that is NOT what Jesus meant!)

Jesus knew what they were thinking, so, Jesus explained to them saying, 'Lazarus is dead.' The disciples were shocked! But, Jesus said, "No, I'm glad I wasn't there to help Lazarus, because NOW this will help YOU believe!" Thomas got so excited and said, "well, then let's all go die with him!" (He wanted to stick by Jesus no matter what happened!)

Jesus and His disciples walked a long, long way. When they got to the tomb of Lazarus, many Jewish people were already there comforting Mary and Martha and crying with them at their house over Lazarus' death. Lazarus had died 4 whole days ago! Martha was told that Jesus, their friend, was there and she rushed out without even telling her sister so she could talk to Him. She was so very glad to see Him. She said to Him, "Lord, I know if You had been here, my brother wouldn't have died. But, I also know whatever You ask of God, He will do" Jesus comforted her and said, "your brother will rise again." Martha nodded because she believed her brother would go to heaven, but Jesus said, "I AM the resurrection and the Life. He who believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" She said, "Yes!"

Martha ran to her sister, Mary and whispered in her ear, "The Teacher's here and asking for you". Mary jumped up to go and find her friend, Jesus! When Mary ran, the people crying with her went too because they thought she was going to Lazarus' grave. But, she went straight to Jesus and fell down crying at His feet saying, "My brother

wouldn't have died if you had come!" Jesus was so sad. He cried too. Jesus asked, "Where is he?"

The Jews felt Jesus' love for Lazarus. As they walked all together to Lazarus' tomb, Jesus overheard people saying 'that if Jesus had come, then Lazarus wouldn't have died '--- Jesus just groaned!

Now, Lazarus' tomb was actually a cave. They had put Lazarus' body inside it after he died and they put a big stone in front of it to close it up. When Jesus saw it, He said, "Take that stone away." But, Martha gasped, "Lord, he's been dead 4 days -- it will smell really, really bad!" Jesus looked at her and said, "Don't you remember what I said? That if you believe you would see what God can do ?"

So, they agreed to move the stone.

Jesus looked up to heaven and prayed, " Father, thank you, I know You always hear Me, but these people need to believe that You sent Me." Jesus stopped, looked toward the tomb and very loudly called to Lazarus saying, "Lazarus come out!"

All the people's eyes stared at the open tomb and as they watched, their jaws began to open silently and their eyes widen as Lazarus, their friend and brother----came walking out!! He was covered with the strips of cloth they had wrapped him up with when he died. Jesus smiled and said, "Unwrap him and let him go".

Mary and Martha ran to hug their brother! He was alive! People rejoiced! Some people ran to tell the Pharisees what had happened. But do you know what? Now, many people believed! God answered Mary and Martha's prayers and God answered Jesus prayer! He wanted them to believe that He was really God! And now....they DID!