

JESUS, THE DEATH BUSTER!!

(Easter - 2018)

(Scripture: John 11:21-27)

Introduction:

Happy Resurrection Day! Everyone! My prayer today is that everyone should understand and taste the Resurrection power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fear for death should be completely gone! Our God can turn our mourning into gladness. It is true, we may have to walk through the valley of shadow of death at some point in life. There is no escape from that. For many of us, death is a permanent nothingness. It is a sorrowful experience because we may never see that person again. But it does not have to be a complete mourning! Jesus Christ, our Lord, came to prove just that. Yes, there can be gladness, and dancing beyond death!

He can indeed turn our mourning into gladness.

He can indeed deliver us from the jaws of death, because He is not only our God of life, but also our death. He can turn our funeral of mourning into gladness through His resurrection power! Jesus is indeed a death buster and funeral spoiler.

The Word death has a different kind of meaning when Jesus speaks about it. Let us see some of those incidents where we can see Jesus' attitude toward death, and how He loves to become a funeral disrupter!

I. Death is nothing but sleep for Jesus. Let us look into the story of Jairus' daughter.

Mark 5:35, 36.

35 While He was still speaking, they came from the house of the synagogue official, saying, "Your daughter has died; why trouble the Teacher anymore?"

36 But Jesus, overhearing what was being spoken, said to the synagogue official, "Do not be afraid any longer, only believe."

Jairus was a big shot in his town. He was the ruler of the synagogue. He wanted Jesus to come and heal his 12 year old daughter because she was really sick unto death.

As Jesus was listening to the ruler's petition, the servants came and told the ruler not to bother Jesus, because his daughter already passed away. Jesus heard them saying those words, and he immediately encouraged the ruler, not to be afraid, and just believe!

Mark 5:38-40.

38 They came to the house of the synagogue official; and He saw a commotion, and people loudly weeping and wailing.

39 And entering in, He said to them, "Why make a commotion and weep? The child has not died, but is asleep."

40 They began laughing at Him.

As they came to the house of the ruler, Jesus saw a great commotion! Probably, professional wailers quickly joined the real mourners and started weeping and wailing loudly! Jesus went near them and questioned them, "why do you make such a huge commotion and weep? The child has not died, but is only asleep." When the people heard that, they started laughing. They must have wondered if Jesus was joking! It must have sounded like a crazy, ill-timed joke!

But Jesus was dead serious! (Excuse my pun!). He describes death accurately! It is a temporary sleep, and everyone is awakened on the day of the Lord, when Jesus returns. The righteous will be resurrected unto life, and the wicked will be resurrected for condemnation. Death is temporary, and it is indeed a form of deep sleep that no one can wake that person up from sleep except God! Our body becomes motionless but our soul and spirit are alive. Of course our body dies and disintegrates, but our soul and spirit returns to our redeemer! Just like the space shuttle, when it takes off, the booster rocket burns and falls off, but the second rocket fires up and takes the shuttle up! Death is just an interim step between stage 1 life and stage 2 life beyond death.

Mark 5:41, 42.

41 Taking the child by the hand, He said to her, "Talitha kumi!" (Which translated means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!").

42 Immediately the girl got up and began to walk, for she was twelve years old. And immediately they were completely astounded.

Jesus knew exactly what He was going to do. He took the hand of the little girl and said Talitha Kumi, which means, little girl, I say to you, get up! The girl immediately got up and started walking. People were stunned! Their mourning turned into gladness! The professional weepers came running to make some money. But Jesus busted their funeral commotion! They laughed at Jesus when He said that she was sleeping. But now He proved it that He could wake her up, and that death is never permanent! Guess who had the last laugh in that funeral? Jesus, the death buster! No one had ever conquered death, but Jesus did!

II. There is another beautiful story where Jesus turned the funeral procession into a dancing party!

Luke 7:11-13.

11 Soon afterwards He went to a city called Nain; and His disciples were going along with Him, accompanied by a large crowd.

12 Now as He approached the gate of the city, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a sizeable crowd from the city was with her.

13 When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, "Do not weep."

Perfect timing of Jesus' arrival!! Had Jesus come a little later, they would have buried this young man. Sometimes, what we ask, never comes through, but when our dream dies completely, Jesus shows up to revive that dream! Timing is in God's hand, and He knows the best time to show up. I have more to say about it when I talk about Lazarus! Some of you are very frustrated about God not responding to your petitions. Your dreams are just dying within you, and you are giving up. Don't! Jesus may show up anytime! As long as we have the last breath, we can live for our dreams. But what can we do if we lose our last breath also and die? Don't lose hope. Jesus can still come and breathe you new life! Just think about this poor widow. Her husband died, and now her only hope of life, her only son was gone too! Death can try to have the last laugh in our life, but don't be discouraged. If Jesus comes to us, we will have the last laugh.

There is another interesting point. Great emotional support given by the village people! Death is not all negative. It is not just one or two family members showing love to this person, but the whole village participating in the funeral.

Jesus moved with compassion! When it comes to death, even the Lord of the universe moves! He said, don't weep. In other words, Jesus seemed to say, "don't weep, lady. Your sorrow has come to an end! Look! I am in charge of life and death. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the very beginning and the end of life. I will bring your son back to you!"

Luke 7:14-16.

14And He came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise!"

15The dead man sat up and began to speak. And Jesus gave him back to his mother.

16Fear gripped them all, and they began glorifying God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and, "God has visited His people!"

The perfect touch. According to the Law of Moses, if you touch a dead body, you will be unclean for 7 days, yet Jesus touched boldly! He knew already what He was going to do. He was determined to snatch the young man from the jaws of death!

He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise!" The dead man heard His voice, he sat up, and began to talk! Jesus turned their mourning into dancing within a minute. Jesus is indeed a funeral buster! Funeral homes may not want Him to attend their funerals at all.

He came at the perfect time, He made a perfect, touch, and He gave a perfect gift for that widow of Nain, her own son!

There was great fear among the crowd! They glorified God and said that a great prophet has risen, and God has visited them. They could have easily called Him Immanuel, God with us! But they had yet to realize that He is the Lord of Lords, and God among the gods!

The crowd could have easily sung this song from Ex.15:11

Who is like unto thee, o Lord among the gods, Who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises doing wonders, who is like unto thee!

Let me share one more familiar story where Jesus conquers the death, and spoils the funeral mourning. I would really like you to focus on Jesus' attitude toward death in this story!

III. Lazarus story:

John 11:11-15.

11This He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep."

12The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover."

13Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep.

14So Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, 15and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him.

Lazarus was sick unto death. Mary and Martha sent messengers to bring Jesus to them. But Jesus said that this sickness is not unto death but for the glory of God. After saying that, He stayed two days longer! Then He called the disciples to come with Him to Judea. But it was a dangerous move. The Jews were ready to kill Him. Then Jesus explained that Lazarus was asleep, and He had to wake Him up! The disciples thought that Lazarus was still alive, and if he sleeps, it was good for him, and he could rest better. But Jesus used the word sleep for death. He used the same word also with the little girl. For Jesus, death is nothing but sleep and He has the authority to wake them up! He told them plainly that Lazarus was dead, and He was going to awaken him. When He went to Bethany, Mary stayed back, probably, she was angry with Jesus, but Martha went out to meet Him.

John 11:21-23.

21Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.

22"Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."

23Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

Martha lamented. Lord if you were here, my brother would not have died. She then displayed her terrific faith! Even now, whatever you ask, God will give you! Jesus promised," your brother will rise again! This promise came after 4 days of her brother's death! Who could have believed such a promise! Please note: This miracle was not to be performed based upon Martha's faith. This miracle was purely based on what Jesus wanted to do. Don't let the evangelists put the blame on you that you don't have enough faith. If they tell you that, just tell them," Actually, you don't have enough power to heal!"

John 11:24-26.

24Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

25Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,

26and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

Martha replied, that yes her brother will be resurrected on the last day, on that day of the Lord. But Jesus emphatically replied, "I am the resurrection, and life. If anyone believes, though they die, they shall live! If anyone lives and believes, they shall never die!

For believers, death is nothing but a transformation process. It is nothing but the separation of spirit and the body. The body falls to the ground but the spirit returns to its creator. Yes, the body dies, but the spirit moves on! There is no death for the believers! If anyone believes and lives, he shall never die!

John. 11:32-36.

32Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

33When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled,

34and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." 35Jesus wept. 36So the Jews were saying, "See how He loved him!"

Now Mary complained the same way. Lord if you were here, my brother would not have died! A valid complaint. We came across Jesus' perfect timing in the story of widow of Nain. But what happened in this case? The timing was way off. We may have waited for something. But it never materialized. When we become exceedingly sorrowful, and we are ready to move on with our life, that is when Jesus shows up with what we really asked for. There are times we apply for our favorite job, but they hire someone else, and we are very disappointed. But lo and behold, the same job opens up again within @ month again, and this time you are chosen! Never give up. Don't close out anything too soon! Jesus will accomplish it in His own time! You will receive, if it is according to the will of God!

Mary and Martha felt that it is too late now! Mary wept. The crowd wept. Now it was all Jesus' fault. The biggest doctor of the universe could not come to heal Lazarus on time. The consequence? Death swallowed Lazarus. But they did not realize that they were standing next to the person who is a professional death buster, who can actually destroy death. When they groaned in their spirit, Jesus also groaned! He also wept!

He wept because of our craving for sin, and wages of sin is death!

He wept because, there is no way to escape it except through Him.

He wept because the very process of death, the very pain and agony every soul must go through.

He wept because He saw the vacuum created by Lazarus for the family and his friends.
He wept because He loved them dearly!
He wept because people lose hope beyond death.

Death is like a wall. We just cannot imagine going beyond that.

John 11:39-41.

39 Jesus said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days."

40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"

41 So they removed the stone.

Martha believed that Jesus could raise Lazarus on the day of the Lord, the Last Day, but she had her doubts about now. She raised her concerns by saying that he has been dead for four days, and there will be a stench. In other words, he would be decomposing by this time. Jesus rebuked her. Didn't I say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?

Never give up hope! Believe in Christ at all times! As long as you have Jesus by your side, He can do anything for you. Don't lose hope.

John 11: 41-44.

41 So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.

42 "I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me."

43 When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth."

44 The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

They rolled away the stone. Now Jesus looked up into heaven and prayed. He thanked His Father for always hearing! A real prayer warrior is the one who believes that God always hears his or her prayers. The person who doubts if God hears or not will not receive much from Him. Jesus cried out with a very loud voice, Lazarus come forth, and the dead man did walk out!

Jesus did it again. He became victorious over death. And pulled out Lazarus out of the jaws of death! He disrupted the funeral mourning, and turned the mourning into a celebrate evening!

IV. But something interesting here. Jesus could not bust out of His own death Himself!

There is a proverb that goes like this, "physician heal thyself!" Jesus could bust other people out of death. But He could not get out of His own death. His own Father cornered Him and made Him to be crucified on the cross. He would not come back to rescue His Son. Above all, He abandoned His own Son when He hung on the cross! The Son of God did die on the cross. Not because He did something wrong, but because of all our sins. He bore the punishment of our sins upon Himself! The chastisement of our sins was upon Him. He became the Lamb of God for the whole world. Those who believed in His sacrifice were sanctified by His cleansing blood.

None of us are righteous, we are all sinners. We can be justified only through this sinless Lamb of God. He promised, he who believes in Him shall never die! But Christ died. He died on a Friday. Then there was silence! His Father was silent, the disciples were silent. The entire Jewish nation was silent because of Sabbath. But then something happened early first day of the week, which is Sunday for us. He was not in

the tomb. The tomb was empty. He busted out of the tomb and He was alive, first seen by Mary Magdalene, then by the 11 disciples, and then by two other disciples who were walking toward Emma. Even Paul saw the light of the resurrected Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus did it again!

Yes, God, the Father busted His Son Jesus out of the grave, proving to the whole world that there is life beyond death, and death cannot keep us down forever. We see this resurrection power even today. Those who believe in Jesus, and surrender their life, they never die. They are safe in the arms of Jesus. Jesus is indeed a death buster!

Conclusion:

So in conclusion, how should we respond?

We can join with Paul and sing this chorus also:

- O death, where is thy sting!
- Jesus destroyed death
- Jesus delivered people from sin, death and hell
- Death is nothing but a transformation process
- Death is nothing but a temporary sleep
- Let our mourning turn into dancing because of CHRIST

This is a faithful saying: Anyone believes in Christ shall never die! They will be resurrected unto eternal life. This is the actual Resurrection day message for all! Amen!

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