

# WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

## Culmination of the Ministry

### *The Initiation of Lazarus (Cont.)*

Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people that stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.—John 11:1-44.

The most highly advanced of the followers of Christ was chosen to receive the new form of Christian Initiation. This was the disciple best beloved of the Master whose initiatory name was Lazarus. The name Lazarus means "whom God assists." It was the high status of his development that enabled him to respond to the initiatory summons: "Lazarus come forth."

It was the bridging of the Old and the New that took place in the raising of Lazarus which brought such great rejoicing to the people when Christ Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the day following the Initiation of Lazarus.

*Lazare deuro exo*—Lazarus hither out: "Loose him and let him go." These mystic words bear the message of the spiritual victory of Lazarus. The Pharisees and chief priests were cognizant to some extent of the deeper mystic teachings. Unlike adherents to exoteric religion of the present time, they did not deny that such

truths existed, nor that they were taught and demonstrated by those who lived the life requisite for such attainment; but not being willing to follow the humble, sacrificial path of service and purity in order to attain, they were suspicious and filled with bitter hatred toward those who did follow the higher way. Hence the persecution of Christ Jesus and His followers. Fearing that the raising of Lazarus would so increase His popularity as to cause Him to become great enough to jeopardize Temple interests, they began on this same night to plot His destruction.

Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and our nation.

And one of them, named Caiphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation.

And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews: but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

—John 11:45-54.

This was man's reaction to the heritage of eternal life and light which the great Teacher brought to Earth. And though nearly 2000 years have passed, only the few have as yet any true conception of what this eternal life really is, or the process that leads to its realization.

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