



## [John 11:43-53](#)

(43) Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" (44) And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go." (45) Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. (46) But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. (47) Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. (48) If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation." (49) And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, (50) nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish." (51) Now this he did not say on his own *authority*; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, (52) and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad. (53) Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death.

*New King James Version*

After His [prayer](#), [Jesus](#), in whom is life ([John 1:4](#)) and who is the Life ([John 14:6](#)), shouts to Lazarus with a strong, confident voice, and he walks from his grave alive. It is an almost incredible thing to read. Can we imagine the effect it had on those who witnessed it?

As the conclusion of the chapter shows, this miracle had diverse results. Many Jews believed in Him, but it only angered His enemies, making them more determined to rid themselves of Him. The high priest, Caiaphas, a dupe of Rome and a Sadducee, who did not believe in resurrection, suggests to the Council that they must kill Jesus rather than lose their positions. The words and works of Jesus divided light from darkness, the believing from the unbelieving. There is still division because of Him ([Luke 12:51](#)).

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The word John uses thirteen times for “miracles” in his gospel and in Revelation suggests “wonders,” “foreshadows,” or “signs,” and not “mighty works.” E.W. Bullinger explains it as

a signal and ensign, a standard, a sign by which any thing is designated, distinguished or known; hence, used of the [miracles of Christ](#), as being the signs by which it might be known that He was the Christ of [God](#), a sign authenticating Christ's mission; a sign with reference to what it demonstrates. (*A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*, p. 503)

As John sees them, Jesus' miracles are symbols, proofs, messages, and object lessons of spiritual [truth](#) embodied in the wonders themselves. They are living [parables](#) of Christ's action, embodiments of the truth in works. They are not merely signs of supernatural power, but dramatic indications of the goal of His ministry and of His own all-loving character. His visible works of power and [mercy](#) foreshadow the spiritual restoration of all things. Because of these elements, a lesson, discussion, or sermon usually follows them.

John recorded only eight of Jesus' miracles, choosing typical ones to elucidate while recognizing their greater extent: “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book” ([John 20:30](#)). In the next chapter, he provides a glimpse of the fullness of His ministry: “And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even [the world](#) itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen” ([John 21:25](#)).

— Martin G. Collins

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