

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #222

Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead

Jesus Withdraws to Ephraim

JN 11.54

54 Therefore Jesus no longer moved about openly among the people of Judea. Instead he withdrew to a region near the wilderness, to a village called Ephraim. He remained there with his disciples.

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

CONTEXT DIGEST	
Location	Ephraim, Near the Wilderness of Judea
Timeline	March (Month 38)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VII: Jesus' Ministry in Perea
	B. Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead
Title	7. Jesus Withdraws to Ephraim

COMMENT:

Today's short reading marks another key transition point in Jesus' ministry. The resurrection of Lazarus had crystalized the will of the official Jewish leadership--the Sanhedrin--to kill Jesus. He was now a wanted man. So Jesus moved back up to the north, away from Jerusalem, to the the small village of Ephraim. This was an unpopulated wilderness region that offered safe haven to Jesus and his large group of disciples. He remained there training his followers and enjoyed an interlude of fellowship with them, before beginning his final journey to Jerusalem.

This a good opportunity to review the sequence of main events in the Later Judean, and Perea Ministry. Here's an overview:

1. Jesus departs Galilee for the Feast of Tabernacles at the beginning of Sept. (LK 9.51-62)
2. Jesus ministers at the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem, in mid-Sept. (JN 7.14-10.21)
3. Jesus trains and sends out the 70 into Judea and Perea in Late Sept. (LK 10.1-24)
4. Jesus tours Judea with his disciples, Oct. through mid-Dec. (LK 10.25-13.25)
5. Jesus ministers at the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, Dec. 18th-26. (JN 10.22-39)
6. Jesus tours Perea with his disciples, late Dec. to the end of Feb. (JN 10.4-42; LK 14.1-17.10)
7. Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead, beginning of March. (JN 11.1-45)
8. Jesus withdraws to Ephraim with his disciples, early March (JN 11.46-54)
9. Jesus Makes his final journey to Jerusalem, March. (LK 17.11-19.27; MT 19.3-20.34; MK 10.2-52; JN 11.55-12.11)

On his final, climactic journey to Jerusalem, Jesus would first move from Ephraim all the way up north to the border between Samaria and Galilee. He was seeking to get as far away from Jerusalem and the Pharisee's plot to kill him as possible. Then he would cross the Jordan river into Perea for the last time, before heading back in to Judea. There he will travel along the main road through Jericho with other Passover pilgrims from Galilee on their way to Jerusalem.

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This final journey to Jerusalem is the next major portion of Jesus' life and ministry we will cover in the DAILY JESUS NEWS. As you can see above, it will blend portions from all four gospels, using Luke as our primary text. This journey covers many famous scenes in Jesus' ministry, such as the "rich young ruler," Zaccheus, and the anointing of Jesus in Bethany by Mary.

We will note that there is an increase in the reports of miracles in this period. This did not mean that Jesus was performing less miracles earlier--it was just that Luke was concentrating on recording Jesus' discipleship teaching content in that stage of Jesus' life (LK 9.51 to 19.27), more than his miracles.

APPLICATION:

Jesus life and ministry was moving to it's climax--just as the Old Testament prophets, and Jesus himself had foretold it. Everything in his life was the fulfillment of Scripture. This should also be true of us.

Everything in our life should be a fulfillment of Jesus' Word--a product of a command, promise, teaching, or example from him. This is what it means to be his disciple--he is our all, in all, so we abide in him and his word.

How focused on Jesus are you today?

What command, promise, teaching, or example of Jesus will you concentrate on today?