

Lazarus

by [Samuel Smith](#) in the [May 14, 2014](#) issue

Perhaps you are perplexed to determine how two such disparate stories could be told about me. But the truth hides somewhere between and beyond these accounts—I was neither a poor beggar nor a wealthy intimate of God’s Son.

If in these tales I appear as a mere prop—a passive player in parables concerned with actors who wielded some form of genuine power—thus far you may credit each tale: I had no voice. Dumb from birth, the real miracle for me would have been to speak.

And yet this never seemed to me a curse or even a lack—I grew to love my silence, and in my early years I was thought to be simply shy as my maternal sisters supplied my voice in public encounters. Indeed, their ready reading of my intent was all the miracle I craved.

I neither anticipated nor needed any return from the grave—that was about his need, his purpose, not mine. And to be enfolded in the arms of Abraham like some Isaac or Ishmael, my sight simply a torment to some rich fool—what is that to me? To you?