

The Resurrection of Lazarus

John 11:1-57

- I. THE SICKNESS NOT UNTO DEATH (John 11:1-10)
 - A. The Sickness of Lazarus (John 11:1-2)
 1. The city of Lazarus (John 11:1) – Bethany
 - a. On the backside of the Mount of Olives (Mark 11:1)
 - b. The home of Simon the leper (Matthew 26:6)
 2. The family of Lazarus – Mary and Martha (John 11:1; Luke 10:38-42)
 3. The identity of Mary (John 11:2; John 12:1-3)
 - B. The Message of his Sickness (John 11:3)
 1. The sisters sent for Jesus.
 2. The sisters appealed to His love for Lazarus.
 - C. The Purpose of his Sickness (John 11:4)
 1. For the glory of God (John 11:4; John 9:3)
 2. For the glory of the Son of God (John 11:4)
 3. For the benefit of the disciples (John 11:14-15)
 4. For the benefit of Martha (John 11:21-23)
 5. For the benefit of Mary (John 11:32)
 6. For the benefit of the Jews (John 11:45)
 7. To reveal Christ’s power of resurrection (John 11:25-26)
 - D. The Delay of Christ’s Response (John 11:5-6)
 1. A delay of love (John 11:5; cp. 2 Corinthians 7:8-10)
 2. A delay of two days (John 11:6)
 - a. Jesus was beyond Jordan (John 10:40), probably two to three days journey from Bethany.
 - b. When He arrived in Bethany, Lazarus had been dead for four days (John 11:17, 39).
 - c. Therefore, Jesus would not have arrived before his death (humanly speaking) even if He had left immediately.
 - d. The leisurely pace of Jesus in coming to Bethany:

- (1) Demonstrates the confidence of the One who knew all things and could do all things. He, who knew all things and who did all things well, never needed to get in a hurry.
- (2) Prepares the scene for a greater miracle. There was less chance for accusation of simple swooning and recovery after four days. (*John 11:39*)

E. The Return to Judaea (John 11:7-10)

1. The danger of returning (John 11:7-8)
2. The daytime ministry of Christ (John 11:9-10)
 - a. The twelve hours of the day (John 11:9)
 - b. He who walks in the day (John 11:9; Ephesians 5:8, 14; 1 Thessalonians 5:5-8)
 - (1) He does not stumble (1John 2:10).
 - (2) He sees the light of this world.
 - c. He who walks in the night (John 11:10)
 - (1) He stumbles (Proverbs 4:18-19).
 - (2) There is no light in him (Luke 11:34-35).

II. THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS DEATH (John 11:11-16)

A. The Sleep of Lazarus (John 11:11)

1. Sleep is a biblical synonym for the death of a believer (1 Corinthians 11:29-30).
2. This and similar passages do not teach soul-sleep (that the soul sleeps, or has no conscious knowledge of its existence from the time of death until the time of resurrection). See 2 Corinthians 5:6-8; Philippians 1:21-24.
3. The sleep of the believer is a picture of several things:
 - a. The peacefulness of their death (John 11:12-13; 1 Corinthians 15:6, 18; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
 - b. The temporary nature of their death (Mark 5:39-42; 2 Peter 3:4)
 - c. A change in state that does not destroy the identity of the person (1 Corinthians 15:51; 1 Thessalonians 5:10)

B. The Misunderstanding of the Disciples (John 11:12-13)

C. The Explanation of Jesus (John 11:14-15)

1. Lazarus is dead (John 11:14).
2. The death of Lazarus is good (John 11:15).
 - a. Because of the temporary absence of Christ
 - b. Because of the opportunity to increase the faith of the disciples

D. The Misunderstanding of Thomas (John 11:16)

1. He thought that Jesus referred to following Lazarus in death.
2. He proclaimed his willingness to follow in death also.

III. THE COMFORT GIVEN TO THE FAMILY (John 11:17-27)

A. The Comfort of Friends (John 11:17-19)

1. Four days after his death (John 11:17)
2. Fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem (John 11:18) – that is, about two miles
3. Many Jews were there to comfort Martha and Mary (John 11:19; Romans 12:15).

B. The Comfort of Christ's Presence (John 11:20-22)

1. The reaction of the sisters (John 11:20)
 - a. Martha went to meet Jesus.
 - b. Mary sat still at home.
2. The reasoning of Martha (John 11:21-22)
 - a. The presence of Jesus would have kept Lazarus alive (John 11:21, cp. John 11:32, 37; John 4:49; Luke 8:49).
 - b. The absence of Jesus does not destroy her faith in Him (John 11:22); this does not mean that she anticipated the resurrection of Lazarus at this time. She was simply affirming that the loss of her brother did not cause her to turn away from Christ.

C. The Comfort of the Resurrection (John 11:23-27)

1. The promise of Jesus (John 11:23) – “Thy brother shall live again.”
2. The understanding of Martha (John 11:24) – at the last day
3. The declaration of Jesus (John 11:25-26)
 - a. His identity as life (John 11:25)
 - (1) As the life (John 1:4; John 14:6)
 - (2) As the resurrection
 - (a) For Himself (John 10:17-18)
 - (b) For believers (John 6:40; John 14:19)
 - b. His offer of life (John 11:25)
 - (1) An offer to the dead (Ephesians 2:1, 4-6)
 - (2) An offer through faith (John 20:31)
 - (3) An offer to life (John 10:10; Romans 8:11)
 - c. His power in life (John 11:26)

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- (1) A life of faith (Romans 10:8-10)
- (2) A life in Christ (Ephesians 1:3; Colossians 2:9-10)
- (3) An everlasting life (John 5:24)
4. The faith of Martha (John 11:26-27)
 - a. The challenge of Christ (John 11:26)
 - b. The confirmation of Martha (John 11:27)
 - (1) He is the Christ.
 - (2) He is the Son of God.
 - (3) He is the One who should come into the world.