

Lesson 8**THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE
(John 11)**

In our Journey through the Gospel of John we have been learning who Jesus Christ really is. So far we have learned that He is...

the God-Man
the Water of Life
the Bread of Life

the Light of the World
the Door of Salvation
the Good Shepherd

In John 11:25 we find another great "I AM" verse which helps us to better understand who Jesus Christ really is:

**"I am the _____ and the
_____: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead,
yet shall he _____"**

Let us now study the chapter in which this verse is found:

Outline of John Chapter 11

- 1A. The Sickness and Death of Lazarus (John 11:1-16).
- 2A. The People Weep and Jesus Groans (John 11:17-38).
- 3A. Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead (John 11:39-44).
- 4A. The Enemies of Jesus Make Their Plans (John 11:45-57).

In John chapter 11 we are going to learn about one of the most amazing miracles that Jesus performed. Jesus did something that no one else had ever done in all of human history! A man who had been dead for _____ days (John 11:39) was raised up from the dead! In Old Testament times God worked in special ways through His prophets Elijah and Elisha and these men even raised dead persons (see 1 Kings 17:17-24 for Elijah and 2 Kings 4:1-37; 13:20-21 for Elisha). But these people had not been dead for four days.

The great miracle that we learn about in John chapter 11 was not the only time that Jesus had raised up a person who had died. He had raised the daughter of Jairus, who had been dead a short time (Luke 8:41-56). He also raised a widow’s son who must have been dead no longer than one day (Luke 7:11-16). But the miracle we read about in John chapter 11 was the greatest of the three and it was the miracle that really caused a stir among the Jews (John 11:47-48; 12:9). We are now ready to go to John chapter 11 and see what we can learn:

THE SICKNESS AND DEATH OF LAZARUS

In John 11:1 we learn that Lazarus was S _____. How sick was he? A few days later we learn that Lazarus was _____ (John 11:14). His sickness brought him quickly to the grave.

Lazarus lived in the city of _____ (John 11:1), a city which was nigh (near) to the great city of _____ (John 11:18--a furlong equals about 1/8 of a mile, and thus Bethany was a little less than 2 miles from Jerusalem). Can you find Bethany and Jerusalem on a Bible map?

What were the names of the two sisters of Lazarus (John 11:1)? _____ We can also read about these two sisters in Luke 10:38-42. In John 11:2 we learn about something that Mary did for Jesus. We will learn more about this in John 12:1-8.

Mary and Martha sent a message to Jesus (John 11:3). They wanted Jesus to come right away and heal their brother. They thought Jesus would do this because of his love for Lazarus. Did Jesus really love Lazarus (John 11:5)? _____ Did Jesus come to Bethany right away (John 11:6)? _____ We need to remember that God does not always do what we want Him to do or what we think He should do! God always does what is best! Does He know what is best or do we?

When Jesus heard the news about Lazarus being sick He said, “This sickness is not unto _____” (John 11:4). What did Jesus mean by this? Was He saying that Lazarus would not die? This could not be what He meant because Jesus knew that Lazarus would die (John 11:14). Jesus was saying that the final end of this sickness would not be death. Lazarus would die, but he would not end up dead! He would end up ALIVE! Here is what Jesus meant:

“This sickness is not unto death”

If the sickness had been unto death, then death would have been the final result:



“This sickness is for the glory of God”

This sickness would result in death but death would not be its final result:



God had a purpose for allowing Lazarus to die, just as God had a wonderful purpose in allowing a man to be born blind (see John 9:1-3).

*Note: As we think about what Jesus would do for Lazarus, we need to make an important difference. The **final resurrection of believers** is much different than that which happened to Lazarus. It is true that Lazarus was "raised from the dead" (John 12:9), but this is not the same thing that will happen to believers when they are "raised up at the last day" (John 6:39, 40, 44,54).*

Lazarus was REVIVED (given life again). Lazarus was restored to life. Lazarus was really dead (John 11:14) but by the power of God he was given physical life again. But Lazarus was not given a new body that would never die. Even though he was no longer dead and no longer sick, he was still in his same physical body and someday he would die again! What Jesus did for Lazarus was wonderful, but it was only temporary, not permanent.

In the future when Jesus raises up believers He is going to do a permanent work! At the time of the resurrection believers will receive new bodies which will be immortal and incorruptible (1 Corinthians 15:51-54). This means they will have bodies that will never grow old, never become sick and never die! They will have bodies that have been prepared to live and to last for all of eternity! Someday even Lazarus will get a new. resurrection body!

Resurrection is something that will happen in the future for ALL MEN (see John 5:28-29). There is a RESURRECTION OF L_____ (John 5:29). These people will live in their new bodies and enjoy fellowship with Christ throughout eternity. There is also a RESURRECTION OF D_____ (John 5:29). These people will be given a new body which will be designed to last forever in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15). They will be separated from God throughout eternity. There will be a good resurrection (for the saved) and a bad resurrection (for the unsaved). Which resurrection will you be part of? The choice is yours!

What God did for Lazarus was something very special. He brought a man from a tomb and restored him to physical life. What God is going to do for you and for every other believer in the future is even more special (see Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 and 1 Corinthians chapter 15).

When Jesus heard the news that Lazarus was sick, did He hurry to Bethany right away (John 11:6)? _____ For how long did He stay in the same place where He was (John 11:6)? _____

_____ We need to remember that God is never late! He knows what He is doing and He does all things well. God may not do things as fast as we would want Him to, but He is never late! Because God is never late we need to learn to W_____ (Psalm 27:14).

After these two days Jesus said, "Let us go into _____ again" (John 11:7). Bethany (where Lazarus was) and Jerusalem (where most of Jesus' enemies were) were both located in the region known as Judea. Why were the disciples afraid to return to this region (John 11:8)?

_____ The disciples remembered what the Jews tried to do in John 10:31-33. He escaped then (John 10:39) but would He escape again?

Jesus answered the disciples and told them that He could walk in safety while it was day (John 11:9-10). He knew that the hour of His death had not yet come. Jesus knew that God had given Him a certain amount of time to do God's will on earth. He knew that His enemies could not shorten this time (John 10:18). He knew that He could not die until His work was done. The same is true for us. When a believer is walking in the light and fulfilling God's plan for his (or her) life, there is nothing that he (or she) needs to fear. God protects His servants! Do God's servants need to fear what man will do unto them (Psalm 118:6; Psalm 27:1; Hebrews 13:6)? _____

Jesus then told His disciples something which they did not understand: "Our friend Lazarus _____; but I go, that I may _____ him out of his sleep" (John 11:11). When Jesus said, "Lazarus is sleeping" what did He mean by this (John 11:13)? _____ What did the disciples think that He meant by this (John 11:12-13)? _____

_____ In John 11:14 Jesus cleared up the confusion. Lazarus was sleeping the sleep of death! When Jesus spoke about awaking him out of his sleep (John 11:11), what do you think He meant?

The Bible often uses the term "sleep" to describe death (see 1 Kings 2:10; Matthew 27:52; Luke 8:52; 1 Corinthians 15:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:14). One example is found in 1 Corinthians 11:30: "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many SLEEP." This does not mean that there were some that were weak and sickly and there were others who took a nap! No, it means that some were sick and some actually DIED!

If you were to go to a funeral home and look at the body of a dead person, the body lying there almost looks like a person sleeping! It looks as if the body is resting. When a person dies their body IS PUT TO REST. But it will not rest forever! Someday something is going to happen to that body!

When a person is SLEEPING we know that he will not keep on sleeping forever! The time will come when he will WAKE UP! The same is true for the body which sleeps or rests in the grave. In Daniel 12:2 we read this: "And many of them that _____ in the dust of the earth shall _____ some to everlasting _____, and some to shame and everlasting _____." Who is the One who will wake up the dead (John 5:27-29)? _____

The disciples had enough courage to go with Jesus to Bethany, but what did Thomas think might happen (John 11:16)? _____ Thomas was wrong! It would soon be time for Jesus to die, but it would not be the time for the disciples to die. God had a perfect plan for His beloved Son and God had a perfect plan for each of the disciples.

THE PEOPLE WEEP AND JESUS GROANS

When Jesus arrived in Bethany, Lazarus had already been dead for _____ days (John 11:17). Many Jews had come to try to comfort Martha and Mary (John 11:19).

Which sister came to Jesus first (John 11:20)? _____ Did she think that Jesus could have prevented the death of Lazarus (John 11:21)? _____ Did she think that there was still something that Jesus could do (John 11:22)? _____

Jesus then gave Martha a wonderful promise concerning what He was about to do: "Thy brother shall _____" (John 11:23). Jesus was going to go and wake Lazarus out of his sleep (compare John 11:11)!

Did Martha know that Lazarus would rise again (John 11:24)? _____ Did she think that this would happen right away or did she think this would happen on some future day (John 11:24)? _____ She knew that at the last day there would be a resurrection just as Daniel the prophet said in Daniel 12:2.

Martha believed that the RESURRECTION was an event that would take place in the distant future. She needed to understand that the RESURRECTION was a Person and that this Person was standing right in front of her! Jesus said to Martha: "I AM the _____ and the _____" (John 11:25).

The word RESURRECTION means "rising up" or "standing up." When a person dies they "lie down" or they are put to rest in the grave. When a person is raised from the dead they "stand up" even as Lazarus did when he came out of the tomb (John 11:44). Jesus Christ does not have a problem with the grave and with death. HE IS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE! Death is man's great enemy (1 Cor. 15:26) but Jesus Christ has conquered this enemy! Because of her doubts and fears Martha somehow thought that death and the grave were greater than Jesus. She needed to realize that Jesus was greater than death and the grave. Jesus Christ is the "P _____ of L _____" (Acts 3:15).

Jesus said, "I AM THE RESURRECTION!" This is explained in the last part of John 11:25:

"He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live"

Physical death is no problem for the person who believes in Jesus Christ! When a believer dies, he does not lose but rather he gains (Philippians 1:21-23)! For the believer physical death is nothing to be feared. It is only the doorway which leads to LIFE (an eternal relationship with the living God)!

Jesus said, "I AM THE LIFE" (John 11:25). This is explained in John 11:26:

"And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never _____"

Jesus said something similar to this in John 8:51. A true believer will never be separated from God! The believer has ETERNAL LIFE. He will never experience spiritual death (separation from God).

Martha believed that Jesus was the _____ (Messiah), the _____ of God (John 11:27) but she did not really understand what Jesus meant when He said, "I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE" (John 11:25). Somehow she thought that the grave was greater than Jesus (see John 11:39-40). But soon she would see "the glory of God" (John 11:40). She would see how great the Son of God really is! The grave is no match for Him!

Martha left and then Mary came to meet Jesus, followed by many of the Jews that had come to mourn with her (John 11:28-31). When Mary met Jesus did she say the same thing that her sister had said (John 11:32 and compare 11:21)? _____ She thought that Jesus could have done something if He had been there when Lazarus was still living. Soon she would learn that Jesus is able to do something even though Lazarus has been dead for 4 days! Death is not greater than Jesus. Jesus is Lord over death!

What was Mary doing and what were the other Jews doing according to John 11:33?

They were WEEPING but Jesus was GROANING!

The word "GROANED" (John 11:33) means that Jesus was "deeply moved in the spirit." This word often refers to a person who is moved with anger or indignation. Jesus was angry! In a righteous way He was upset and troubled. The Lord was not pleased with the crying and sobbing all around Him. Mary and the Jews that were with her *did not understand!* They did not understand about death. They did not understand about Lazarus. And most of all they did not understand WHO JESUS WAS and WHAT JESUS COULD DO. The PRINCE OF LIFE was standing right in front of them and they were weeping and wailing because of DEATH!

Jesus asked where the tomb of Lazarus was and they said to Him, "Lord, come and see" (John 11:34). The Bible then tells us that " _____ " (John 11:35). This is the shortest verse in the English Bible (only two words and nine letters)! [*The shortest verse in the Greek New Testament is 1 Thessalonians 5:16--"Rejoice evermore!"*]

Jesus wept, but He was not weeping in the same way that the Jews were (see John 11:33). The word "wept" in John 11:35 is a different word than we find in John 11:33 ("weeping"). In John 11:33 we learn that Mary and the Jews were weeping. This word "weeping" means a loud expression of grief, especially by those who are mourning for the dead. These Jews were weeping and wailing and sobbing because of the death of Lazarus. In John 11:35 the word "wept" does not refer to loud weeping and wailing. It simply means "to shed tears."

Why did Jesus shed tears? Certainly He was not shedding tears for Lazarus. The death of Lazarus was no problem to Him! Also He knew exactly what was soon going to happen to Lazarus (see John 11:4, 11,23). Jesus was not shedding tears for Lazarus. Rather, He was shedding tears for the mourners of Lazarus! He was grieved that these people did not understand. He was grieved because of their unbelief.

The Jews noticed that Jesus wept and they said, "Behold how he _____ him (Lazarus)" (John 11:36). They thought that Jesus was shedding tears because of Lazarus. Read John 11:37. Some of the Jews were saying something like this: "Since Jesus loved Lazarus so much, why didn't He prevent Lazarus from dying? If He could open the eyes of the blind why could He not also keep Lazarus from dying?" Was Jesus pleased by these words (John 11:38)? _____ Once again He was moved with anger because of their unbelief. They did not think that Jesus had any power over death and the grave!

JESUS RAISES LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD

Lazarus' grave was in a cave (John 11:38). A stone was placed before the entrance. It was probably similar to the tomb where the body of Jesus was later laid.

Jesus told the people to take away the stone from the entrance of the tomb (John 11:39). Why did Martha not want the stone to be taken away (John 11:39)?

_____ The body of Lazarus had already begun to decompose and rot. But Jesus knew what He was doing, and soon Lazarus would come forth from the tomb without any bad odor at all!

If Martha would only believe what would she see (John 11:40)?

_____ Compare John 11:4 and John 11:25-26. The raising of Lazarus was wonderful occasion for God to make Himself known in a special way.

After they took away the stone Jesus prayed (John 11:41). Did He pray silently to Himself or did He pray out loud so that others could hear Him (John 11:41-42)?

_____ Jesus publicly thanked God for what was about to happen!

After this prayer Jesus cried with a LOUD VOICE and said: "Lazarus, _____!" (John 11:43). Did Lazarus obey the Lord's command (John 11:44)? _____ Jesus was very careful to call Lazarus by name (John 11:43). He could have called forth others from the dead if it had been the Father's will! There will come a time in the future when _____ that are in the graves shall hear His voice (John 5:28)! And they shall come forth (John 5:29)! Death and the grave are no problem to Jesus!

It must have been quite a sight to see Lazarus come forth from the tomb, still wrapped in his grave clothes (John 11:44)! Bodies were usually wrapped with strips of cloth, with spices sprinkled among the bindings so that the odor would not be too bad. Lazarus must have looked like a WALKING MUMMY! Jesus instructed the people to loose him (set him free by unwrapping him) and let him go (John 11:44).

It is difficult even to imagine the amazement which must have gripped those who saw this miracle! And yet we must realize that there will be a future resurrection of believers which will be far better than that which happened to Lazarus. Lazarus was brought back to life, but the day would come when he would *die again!* How would you like to die twice? But when believers are resurrected they will have new bodies and they will never die again! The following chart shows the difference between what happened to Lazarus and what will happen to believers in the future:

BELIEVERS
Immortal Bodies



Never Subject to Death
(1 Corinthians 15:53)
Never to Die Again!
Incorruptible Bodies



Never Subject to Corruption or
Decay (not subject to wearing
down or growing old) 1
Corinthians 15:53
Bodies That Are Meant
To Last For Eternity
(1 Corinthians 15:42-44)

LAZARUS
A Mortal Body



Subject to Death
(John 12:10)
He Must Die a Second Time!
Corruptible Body



Subject to Corruption and
Decay (the body of Lazarus
would wear down and grow
old)
A Body That Is Meant
To Go Back to Dust
(Genesis 3:19)

THE ENEMIES OF JESUS MAKE THEIR PLANS

Many of the Jews _____ on Jesus when they saw this remarkable miracle (John 11:45). Others went and told the Pharisees what Jesus had done (John 11:46). The Jewish leaders needed to decide what they should do about Jesus (John 11:47). Were they aware of the miracles which Jesus had done (John 11:47)? _____

Did these Jewish leaders think it would be good to just leave Jesus alone (John 11:48)? _____ They were afraid that Jesus would continue to increase in popularity and that more and more people would follow Him. Perhaps Jesus and His followers would even try to seize political power, they thought. These Jews knew that if this ever happened the Romans would step in and rule the Jews with a much firmer hand. They foolishly thought that the entire nation was in danger because of Jesus!

Caiaphas, the high priest, then said something that actually means two different things. What he said is found in John 11:50:

“It is **expedient** (better, beneficial) for us, that _____ man should die for the people, and that the whole nation _____ not.”

Caiaphas meant one thing when he said these words, but unknown to Caiaphas these words also carry another message! As it turned out, Caiaphas spoke just the words God wanted him to speak!

Let's think about the two meanings of these words. When Caiaphas spoke these words this is what he meant:

“If we let Christ live the Romans will probably come and destroy us and we will not be able to rule the people anymore. It is far better to have one Man die (Jesus) and then the entire nation will not perish (by the Romans).” This was actually a wicked plot to destroy Jesus!

But these words also have another meaning. Caiaphas did not know it, but he was actually speaking the most wonderful good news that the world has ever heard! Jesus Christ must die for the whole nation! This is the good news of the gospel! Christ must die for our sins so that we do not perish! He must die so that we can be saved! Christ must die as man's SUBSTITUTE! So even though Caiaphas spoke about a wicked plan to kill Jesus, God used these same words to present the wonderful message of the gospel! Without knowing it, Caiaphas turned out to be one of the first gospel preachers! God can make even the wrath of man to praise Him!

We have such a great God that even the most wicked plans of man can be used to accomplish God's wonderful plan! God allows evil men to speak and act in certain ways, but when it is all done God's plan has been carried out! They are the losers and God is the winner! You can see how this happened as you read verses such as Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23-24 and Acts 4:26-28. God can even use unsaved men to accomplish His perfect plan!

From that day on, what did the Jews plan to do (John 11:53)?

_____ In the Father's plan it would soon be time for Jesus to lay down His life. His hour had not quite come and Jesus withdrew to the city called Ephraim with His disciples (John 11:54). The time for Jesus' death was drawing nigh (John 11:55) and the Jews were wondering if Jesus would come to the Passover feast (John 11:56). In the next chapter we will learn that He did come to Jerusalem for the Passover. He came openly and publicly (John 12:12-19). But before He came He was a WANTED MAN (John 11:57)! They wanted to take Him and kill Him (John 11:57,53).

Soon they would arrest Jesus and have Him hung on a Roman cross. Then His dead body would be placed in a tomb similar to the one Lazarus was in. He too would COME FORTH from the tomb like Lazarus, but unlike Lazarus He would never die again (Romans 6:9; Revelation 1:18). Before it ever happened Jesus predicted that Lazarus would rise again (John 11:4,23). Before it ever happened Jesus predicted His own resurrection (John 2:19; 10:17; Matthew 16:21). It was impossible for death to hold Him (Acts 2:24)!

Are you trusting the One who is the Resurrection and the Life? Are you depending on the PRINCE OF LIFE for your eternal salvation? Jesus said, "whosoever liveth and believeth in Me *shall never die*" (John 11:26)!

"BELIEVEST THOU THIS?" _____

(DO YOU BELIEVE THIS?)

See JOHN 11:26

“BEHOLD, HOW HE LOVED HIM.”

SAY, was it sorrow for the dead
That stirred those fountains deep?
Say, was it grief for Lazarus
That bade the Saviour weep?

Was it that He would fain have caught
The last expiring breath;
Or on those much-loved features gazed
Ere they were closed in death?

No, for He knew, 'twas His to speak
And bid death's shadow flee;
Was He not Lord of life and death,
The Resurrection He?

What then could move the Lord to grief,
And grief's external sign ?
Why should He weep o'er Lazarus
When His was power divine ?

Ah ! 'twas that tender sympathy—
That love, so deep, so true,
That groaned for Mary's agony
And Martha's sorrow knew.

And silent friends had gathered there,
And sorrowing round Him crept,
He knew their hearts were full of grief,
And therefore " Jesus wept."

His soul, in one short moment, passed
Long ages in review :
Glanced at the peace of Eden's bowers
And felt the curse was true.

Forward He looked, the coming scene
Might well His Spirit move :
Shall He go on to Calvary,
Oh, deep, mysterious love !

The cross adown the narrow path
In deepening shadow lay ;
The darkness there—the Father's wrath
Foreclosing life's short day.

This side, the powers of earth and hell
Beset the narrow road,
Beyond, the choirs of heaven swell
Around the throne of God.

'Tis done, and should that burning love
Be e'er forgot by thee ?
Think on the tears that Jesus shed
In dark Gethsemane.

Think how the Lord and Master wept
To see His people's pain ;
Think how He shed His precious blood
A rest for us to gain.

Then say, should it not teach us too,
To do as He has done ;
And shed our tears for others' woe,
Like God's beloved Son ?