

John 11:1-27

Verse 1 Jesus' location at the start of the chapter 11 beyond the Jordan river at the place where John the Baptist was first baptizing as was stated in verse 40 of John chapter 10. Jesus is getting close to His death as His hour to lay His life down for the sheep is approaching. This scene is near the end of His earthly ministry as He is nearing His entry into Jerusalem for His final days as the true Passover will be inspected and eventually deemed worthy by Pilate (**John 19:6**). In this story of raising Lazarus from the dead it reveals His most amazing miracle and will be a shadow pointing to His upcoming death and resurrection. Lazarus, who was from Bethany, was sick. Bethany was located on the east side of the Mount of Olives and was ~ 2 months from Jerusalem. This was the home of not only Lazarus, but also his sisters Mary and Martha.

Verse 2 The events of John have already taken place and John is writing this letter telling of the events that took place. He gives context and commentary about who Mary is in referencing that she is the same Mary that is recorded in John 12 where she anointed Jesus. Possibly, some of his initial readers who have been familiar with the story of Mary anointing Jesus and he was showing that this is the same Mary.

Verses 3-4 Mary and Martha send word to Jesus that Lazarus is sick with this verse indicating that Jesus loved Lazarus as well as Martha and Mary as they had spent time together throughout His earthly ministry. When Jesus heard the news that Lazarus was sick He makes a truth statement. He tells His disciples that this sickness will not end in death. Even though Lazarus will die, He will not stay dead as Jesus knows He is going to resurrect Him from the dead. How does Jesus know that? The answer is: He is God! He then states the reason for the sickness/death of Lazarus. The reason that Lazarus became sick and died was for the glory of God and so that the Son of God be glorified. God the Father is glorified when His Son is glorified. The Son glorifies the Father in His works. The works of the Son are a witness that He is from the Father (**John 5:36**).

Verses 5-10 There is another mention of the love that Jesus had for Lazarus and His sisters. After Jesus had heard that Lazarus whom He loved was sick, He does something that we may as strange. When we get word that family or friends that we love are very sick, we often drop everything and go to see them to be with them. After hearing the news of His friend Lazarus being sick, He stayed two days longer where He was at. After the two days had passed, He tell His disciples they are going to return to Judea. The disciples are hesitant to return to Judea as they remember how just recently (**John 10:31**) the Jews tried to stone Jesus and the hostility and hatred that awaits in Judea. Jesus responds to them by talking about working in the hours of day. There are 12 hours of a normal day when the work can be done as it is daylight. When the night comes the daily work tasks would cease. Jesus is saying that it is still the daytime when His works have to be done. The night has not yet come but is getting closer to when He will be crucified, and His works will cease. He must go to Bethany because His earthly ministry is not done yet and He must do the works of the Father in raising Lazarus for the glory of God.

Verses 11-14 Jesus then tells His disciples that Lazarus is sleeping, and He must go awake Him. The term fallen asleep is used in the NT to indicate death, especially of the believer who will be raised to life on the last day. The disciples don't understand that He is talking about death, but rather think that Lazarus is sleeping and as a result getting better physically. Since the disciples didn't understand that Jesus was referring to death, Jesus will then explain to them plain by telling them that Lazarus is dead.

- **1 Thess 4:13-18** But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep ⁱⁿ Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive ^{and} remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a ^{loud} shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive ^{and} remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Verses 15-16 Jesus is glad they were not with Lazarus when he was sick. Jesus was on the heavenly timeframe and itinerary and it was no coincidence they were not with Lazarus when he became sick. They were not there by the sovereign hand of God so that Lazarus would die, and the glory of God would be revealed. The disciples are going to be a front row witness to the miracle of Jesus raising Lazarus from dead which they would not have experience if they were not away at the time of Lazarus death. This event would strengthen their faith in Christ. Lazarus was stricken with sickness and eventually death. The blind man in John 9 was born blind for the glory of God and so the works of God may be displayed. Let us welcome any thing that our Sovereign Lord stricken us with or puts us through in life that would bring glory to Him. The glory of God is of the utmost importance. Jesus tells them they are going to see Lazarus. Interestingly, despite the previous concerns about the hostility the disciple who bravely spoke and said "let us go" would be "doubting Thomas."

Verse 17 By the time Jesus had arrived Lazarus had been dead for 4 days. The fact that Lazarus was dead for 4 days is of significance. There was a belief among some of the rabbis of the time that after one died their soul would hover over them for 3 days and if the body was brought back to life somehow the spirit would re-enter the person. They believed after three days the soul would depart and being brought back to life was impossible. In short, Lazarus being dead for 4 days shows he is really dead.

Verses 18-22 Bethany and Jerusalem were ~ 2 miles apart as Bethany was located on the eastern side of the Mount of Olives. Many Jews had come to console Mary and Martha concerning the death of their brother Lazarus. Martha heard that Jesus was coming and went out to him, while her sister Mary stayed behind at the house. When Martha comes to Jesus she declares trust in His healing power as she affirms that He had the power to heal Lazarus if He would have been there. This statement is not an accusation or harsh statement about Jesus not being there and by default He was to blame for the death of her brother. She also acknowledges the intimate heavenly relationship between Jesus and God the Father and His prayers could produce something positive to some degree concerning this situation.

Verses 23-24 Jesus declares the Lazarus will rise again to which Martha thinks He is speaking about the resurrection on the Last Day. This speaks to eschatology as the resurrection (rapture) occurs on the Last Day which eliminates any pre-millennial, pre-tribulation eschatology views. Verses on His coming being the last day **Daniel 12:13**, **1 Corinthians 15:20-26** **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18** **Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43**

Verse 25-26 This is the 5th of the “I AM” saying of Jesus. This is a reference to His deity as He is Yahweh, I AM that was mentioned in **Ex 3:14**. Here Jesus declares that He is the resurrection. Jesus is saying that He is the source of life and has the keys of life and death. Those who believe in Him are raised to life spiritually and will and also be resurrected physically only through union with Him.

- **John 1:4** In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.
- **John 2:19** Jesus answered them, “Destroy this ^[a]temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”
- **John 14:6** Jesus *said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.
- **John 5:25-29** Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. ²⁶For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; ²⁷and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is ^[a]the Son of Man. ²⁸Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, ²⁹and will come forth; those who did the good *deeds* to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil *deeds* to a resurrection of judgment.
- **1 Cor 15:20-26** But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. ²¹For since by a man *came* death, by a man also *came* the resurrection of the dead. ²²For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. ²³But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming, ²⁴then *comes* the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. ²⁵For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. ²⁶The last enemy that will be abolished is death.
- **Romans 6:3-5** Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? ⁴Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵For if we have become ^[a]united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be ^[a]in the likeness of His resurrection,
- **1 Peter 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Everyone who believe in Jesus will have eternal life as we have been raised spiritually and one day bodily. The believer may die physically, but physical death is only a transition for the believer because death can’t destroy the eternal life we have in Christ. In a sense our eternal life began the moment we were saved and will be consummated in our eternal state.

Verse 27 Martha makes the most important declaration that a human can make by stating she believes that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, the One sent from the Father.

- **John 20:30-31** Therefore many other ^[a]signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is ^[a]the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

Those who believe in Christ will never die as He Himself has given us eternal life as a gift. Eternal life has begun in those who believe in Christ and will be consummated in our bodily resurrection on the last day. It is through Christ than we are resurrected spiritually and one day resurrected bodily. Our spiritual and physical resurrections and eternal life are dependent on Christ as He declared “I am the resurrection and the life.”