

Jan 31, 2016



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
Death separates us for a time;
Christ will reunite us forever

POEM FOR THE WEEK:
Grief will not last, joy will return,
For through our tears we clearly
see That while we part but for a
time, With Christ we'll spend eter-
nity. —D. De Haan

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
*And whoever lives and believes in
Me shall never die. Do you believe
this*

(John 11:26 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Jan 24, 2008)

**Series: SACRED GIFTS AND
HOLY GATHERINGS**

UNIT: Holy Days

NEXT WEEK

Passover
(Exodus 12:1-14)

Death and Resurrection

John 11:38-44

Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson examines Lazarus' **Death and Resurrection** and what that means to us today. The **study's aim** is to understand the principles and reason behind death and resurrection. The **study's application** is to structure our thinking and reactions to life's incidents to see the hand of God at work to bring faith to us and glory to Himself and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Lesson Introduction and Background

Funerals tell us a lot about how the family and friends of the departed view death. For Christians, there is sometimes a celebratory mood that almost becomes a blissful denial of the death. This is usually not satisfactory, for the loss of a loved one is sad even for believers. Funerals for unbelievers can only be described as awkward since there are few words of comfort for those who die without the hope of resurrection to eternal life with Jesus. Last week's lesson was about a village wedding, one of the most joyous events in rural life. This lesson's setting is a village funeral, also a major event but with a completely different tone. It was a time of wailing instead of dancing. Both events were significant in the life of a village. And in both cases Jesus intervened to change a dire situation into a happy ending. The household of siblings Mary, Martha, and Lazarus was in the village of Bethany. Bethany was on the outskirts of Jerusalem, on the lower eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. This mountain is situated directly east of the temple area in Jerusalem, across the Kidron Valley. To travel between Bethany and Jerusalem, one would skirt the southern flank of this mountain, a walk of about two miles (see John 11:18). Bethany also was located on the Jericho Road. Thus pilgrims from Galilee would pass through the village as they made the final ascent from the valley of the Jordan River to Jerusalem. Jesus may have used the household of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus as a convenient base when he visited Jerusalem (see Mark 11:11). The two-mile walk, 30 minutes each way, was inconsequential in a society where everyone was accustomed to walking. Martha, Mary, and Lazarus are described as "loved" by Jesus (John 11:5). Luke records a story about the sisters (not mentioning Lazarus) that involved another visit by Jesus in their home (Luke 10:38-42). This story shows a familiarity with Jesus similar to that which he had with his chosen 12. The home may have been large and comfortable, although we have no information regarding the household's source of income (note Mary's possession of expensive ointment in John 12:1-5). When a person died in that time and place, the interment of the body followed very quickly. Embalming was not practiced by the Jews of Jesus' day (contrast Genesis 50:1-3, 26), so a decaying corpse would soon begin to smell of decomposition—thus the urgency to have the body entombed. Nonetheless, the body would be washed, wrapped in linen shrouds, and perhaps have spices and various sweet-smelling concoctions included in the wrappings to mask bad odors (compare John 19:39, 40). After the body was placed in a ready tomb, the entrance would be sealed using a stone carved for this purpose (compare Matthew 27:60). That is all very different from the modern custom of using a casket and concrete vault, digging a suitably deep hole, and marking the spot with a headstone in a community cemetery. In Bethany, there would be no burial in the sense of shoveled dirt filling a hole. Family tombs in places like Bethany were ready to be used on short notice. Today's lesson is prefaced by what may seem to be curious inactions by Jesus. While he was some distance from Bethany and Jerusalem, Jesus received word that his friend Lazarus was gravely ill and that the man's sisters wanted Jesus to come (John 11:1-3). But without apparent reason, Jesus delayed (11:6), arriving days after the interment (11:17). Yet comparing the time frames of John 11:6 with 11:17 leads to the conclusion that Lazarus would have died even if Jesus had started toward Bethany immediately. Even so, Jesus could have healed Lazarus from a distance (compare Matthew 8:5-13), so why didn't he? Jesus explained that the death of Lazarus was to result in faith (John 11:15). Indeed, the question he asked Martha after he arrived was "Do you believe this?" (11:26). Her confession of faith contrasted with the voices of skepticism (11:37), leading into today's text.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

THE DEATH (JOHN 11:38-39)

Time of grief (38)

Though God allows grief, He will show compassion (Lam 3:32-33)

Even in grief, God's presence brings eternal joy (John 16:22)

God promises that His children who mourn will be comforted (Matt 5:4)

God promises that those who weep for His sake will one day laugh (Luke 6:21)

God turns wailing into dancing (Ps 30:11)

Jesus' view of death (39)

The death of saints are precious in God's sight (Ps 116:15)

The death of saints brings them to the bosom of God and His angels (Luke 16:22-27)

The death and lives of saints are in God's hands (Ps 31:15)

THE FAITH (JOHN 11:40-42)

Trusting in God (40)

Trust in God because He is our shelter (Ps 32:7)

Trust in God because there should be no fear of death (Ps 23:4)

Trust in God because He is our refuge (Ps 46:1)

Trust in God because God He is our fortress (Prov 18:10)

Prayer (41)

Prayer because there is confidence in approaching God's throne (Heb 4:16)

Prayer because Jesus is interceding for us (Rom 8:34)

Prayer because the prayer offered in faith is effective (James 5:15-16)

Prayer because God hears prayers (1 Kings 8:39)

God's attentiveness (42)

God hears and is attentive to the prayers of the righteous (Ps 34:15-17)

God is attentive to the needs of obedient servants (Isa 58:6-11)

God is attentive to the righteous (1 Peter 3:12)

THE RESURRECTION (JOHN 11:43-44)

God's power over death (43)

God's power over death for God's children (Luke 20:35-36)

God's power over death in heaven (Rev 21:4)

God's power over death because He is the only one who can destroy the soul (Matt 10:28)

Freedom and restoration (44)

God restores into salvation (Ps 80:3)

God renews and restores one's spirit into a new creation (2 Cor 5:17)

God renews and restores the inner being (2 Cor 4:16)