

Resurrection of Lazarus – John 11

7-10-16 PM

One of the interesting differences between the Old Testament and the New Testament is the promise of a final resurrection. Many people are surprised to find out that the Law of Moses made no promise of a resurrection; indeed, it is never mentioned by him. There are only a few references to a hope of a resurrection in the Old Testament: David in Psalm 16:9; Job in Job 19:25, and Daniel in Daniel 12:13. The hope of a resurrection required another promise and means to achieve it. This would come with Jesus.

In John 11 Martha reveals that she has a hope of resurrection. She states that on the last day: the dead will be raised in a New Body; we will be brought to our eternal home. Yet it is clear she did not realize that this promise was only through Jesus, who was right in front of her.

When Jesus was confronted by the situation, we are told in two locations that “He groaned” (vs 33,38). The Greek word used is *Embrimaomai*, which means “*to snort with anger; to have indignation on, or to blame, (to sigh with chagrin, (specially) to sternly enjoin*” – Strong's #1690. Why would this cause Jesus to react in a way that seem angry? Perhaps it is by their comments, which are nearly accusatory (“Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?”). Perhaps they weep believing He was powerless, and so it is their lack of Faith that causes this condition (Luke 7:13-14, Mark 5:38-39). Perhaps He looks ahead to His own mourners, as He pointed out in John 16:19-21. We may not know entirely, but we ought to see here not that Jesus was moved on the spot by compassion to raise Lazarus, but that He planned to work this for our understanding.

We might also contemplate the fear of the opened tomb. Consider that at first they lamented Jesus as powerless to help. But when he commands them to open the tomb, they seem to want Him to abstain. Now they are trying to stop Him from working. There are several cases where people fear the workings of Jesus. Consider the miracle of Matthew 8:32-34; there Jesus removes a multitude of demons from a community, and they ask Him to leave. On another level, we might consider that sometimes people fear the expectations of Jesus. After saving the woman caught in adultery, He told her to “go and sin no more” (John 8:11).

We saw the people here grieve Jesus. Do we grieve Jesus in our doubts? Do we look at the grave and see only the end? In Ephesians 4 we are warned not to grieve the Holy Spirit. Do we grieve the Spirit in our behavior? Have we caused God to regret us?

The miracle of Lazarus’ resurrection, the seventh of the seven miracles Jesus performs, proves that Jesus possesses the power to raise us when that day comes for us. Jesus said that the Father hears Jesus in all things, confirming for us the power of prayer as well. Finally, as the miracles of Jesus are meant to demonstrate, this proves He is our Savior.