

John 11:37-44. the Resurrection of Lazarus.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

Jesus' resurrection of Lazarus demonstrates his power and love, and offers believers a hope of eternal life.

Scripture: John 5:28, John 11:35, John 11:40, John 11:43, 1 Thessalonians 4:16

Topics: "Eternal Life", "Faith And Doubt"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer reflects on the lack of understanding of Jesus' actions on earth, emphasizing how unbelief can hinder God's gracious plans. Despite doubts and questions during times of trouble, God works for His purposes, offering deliverance and glory. The story of Lazarus' resurrection showcases Jesus' faith, love, and power over death, revealing the promise of eternal life for believers. Mortimer invites listeners to envision the joy and reunion in heaven, where saints will be transformed and united in eternal glory.

Transcript

When Jesus was on earth how little was his conduct understood by men! Those Jews who, seeing his tears, said, "Behold how he loved him!" were mistaken in supposing that it was grief for Lazarus that caused them to flow; but those were more mistaken who harbored suspicions of his faithfulness. Some ventured to hint that he might have prevented the death of Lazarus. "Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" It is not surprising that unbelievers should entertain such thoughts. But how is it that believers, in time of trouble, ever indulge the same? When they are overtaken by calamities, they are often tempted to inquire, "Why did God permit these afflictions? Surely He could have preserved me from this evil. What have I done to offend him that He has exposed me to such sharp trials?" But all the while that these thoughts are going on in the mind, the Lord is pursuing his own gracious purposes. Perhaps deliverance is near at hand; if not deliverance from the temporal evil, yet deliverance from still greater evil.

Unbelief is the great obstacle in the way of the Lord's gracious designs. When he gave the command, "Take away the stone," unbelief interfered. Martha had once said, "I know that even now, whatever you will ask of God, God will give it to you." Yet now she hesitates to consent to the removal of the stone. How gently the Lord expostulates with her! "Did I not say to you, that if you would believe, you should see the glory of God?" He warns her against shutting herself out of the blessedness he was preparing for her. The Lord loves to show us his glory in delivering; but he cannot do it if we will not confide in him. Martha listened to her Lord's admonition. She consented to the removal of the stone.

What a moment that was when Jesus, with uplifted eyes, stood before the open tomb! All was still within the cave, for death was there--and surely all was still without, while the Son of God prayed to his Father in heaven. The first sentence bespoke his faith. "Father, I thank you that you have heard me." The next showed his confidence in his Father's love--"I knew that you hear me always." The last displayed his own love to sinful men--"Because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that you have sent me." He knew their unbelief. He knew that some accused him of doing miracles through Satan's power, and he desired to convince them that He and the Father were One. Who can conceive the breathless expectation that filled every heart when he uttered the words, "Lazarus, come forth?" Had that voice not been obeyed, it would have been a little thing that the sisters had never again beheld their brother--the hopes of all the dead--the hopes of all the living,--the hopes of generations yet unborn, were suspended on the event of that moment. Had no movement been heard in that house of death, then all the dead would have slept forever. But now we know that all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth--those who have done good unto the resurrection of life. They shall come forth as Lazarus did--not like him to die again, but to live for evermore. They shall come forth, not bound in grave-clothes, but arrayed in white robes--not with covered faces, but with countenances shining like the sun in his strength. John has not described the meeting of Lazarus with his sisters and with his Lord; it is left for us to conceive the rapturous greetings, and it is possible for us to conceive the joy of that loving family; but it is impossible for us to form any idea of the meeting of the saints above, with each other and with their Lord. Lazarus found his sisters the same as he had left them, and they found him the same mortal creature as before. But hereafter every saint will regard his companion with delighted astonishment.

Though no resemblance we can trace,

We may believe we see

The dear companion of our race,

From sin and death set free.

We may believe that shining head,

Adorned with rainbow wreath,

The same that sank upon the bed

Damp with the dews of death.

Those lips that smiles seraphic wear,

Were once with pain compressed;

That face than summer sea more fair,

Was once with care distressed;

Those eyes that now with glory beam,

We often have seen to weep;

That form we now an angel's deem,
In dust we saw it sleep.
Too little thought I of this hour,
When weeping o'er your grave,
I saw you crushed by death's dread power,
And no arm near to save.
But then your flesh was purified
From every earthly taint,
That here with Christ you might'st abide,
And shine a glorious saint.

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