

John 12:9-19. Christ Is Honored and Hated the More on Account of Lazarus.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

The resurrection of Lazarus led to increased envy and hatred towards Jesus, ultimately contributing to his death, but ultimately demonstrating God's sovereignty and power.

Scripture: John 12:1-37, Revelation 7:9

Topics: "Gods Sovereignty", "Easter Story"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer reflects on the events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, highlighting the sorrowful yet significant moments that ultimately led to the most joyful event in history. The actions of Mary, Lazarus, and the disciples unintentionally provoked the envy and treachery of those who sought to harm Jesus, showcasing the mysterious arrangement of God who turns evil into good. Despite the malice of enemies, God's servants are encouraged not to despair, knowing that their efforts to honor Him will ultimately lead to victory and joy in His presence.

Transcript

It was on the Saturday evening that the Lord Jesus supped at Bethany, and was anointed by Mary. The next day was not the Jewish Sabbath. That Sabbath began at six o'clock on Friday evening, and concluded at six o'clock on Saturday evening. It was on Sunday, the first day of the week, that the Lord entered Jerusalem, riding upon a donkey's colt, and accompanied by the joyful multitude. On the first day of the next week he rose from the dead. Between these two joyful days there was a dark interval--a week of unexampled sorrow and suffering.

The acclamations of the multitude on the day the Savior entered Jerusalem, increased the envy of the Pharisees. They said to each other with alarm, "Behold, the world has gone after him." They could not deny that he had raised Lazarus from the tomb; therefore they were determined to blast his growing reputation by violence. They desired not only to put him to death, but Lazarus also--because he was a living monument of his power. But had they accomplished their design, how easy it would have been for the Prince of Life to call him a second time out of his grave!

The sisters little knew, when they applied to Jesus for help in their hour of sorrow, that their brother's resurrection would lead to their Savior's death. They little thought, when they saw that brother seated at the supper at Bethany, that on that day week, his deliverer from the grave would be sleeping in his own!

But in the end, they had reason to rejoice, for the death of their Lord was the forerunner of the most joyful event that has happened since the beginning of the world--his resurrection.

Nor was it Lazarus alone that provoked the enmity of the wicked. Mary, by her act of love, was the occasion of stirring up Judas to commit an act of treachery. He was so indignant at the disappointment he sustained, and at the rebuke he received, that he offered, four days afterwards, to betray the Lord into the hands of his enemies. Truly did Mary anoint the Lord for his burial. It was his only anointing, for he was hastily buried, and the ointment that the women prepared was too late. Thus we perceive that the family of Bethany unconsciously roused the indignation of the two chief instruments of the death of their Lord. The service Mary rendered led Judas to propose his betrayal; and the benefit Lazarus received led Caiaphas to suggest his murder.

Such was the mysterious arrangement of God. He who brings real good out of seeming evil--brings seeming evil out of real good. Good deeds are often followed by consequences that appear evil. But the servants of God have no reason to despair, when their attempts to honor their Master increase the malice of his foes. Though Satan may succeed in casting some into prison, or in causing others to be slain, he can never succeed in casting one believing soul into his own prison--the bottomless pit--or in causing him to be hurt by his own death--the second death.

We may conceive what grief Mary would have felt had she known that Judas was incited by her act of love to betray his Lord; yet, when she saw that Lord risen from the dead, would she have grieved then? No doubt it has often happened that the piety of new converts has awakened enmity against their minister, and has even led to his execution. Those converts must have felt acute anguish when they saw their beloved teacher consuming in the flames; but their anguish would be turned into joy could they see him standing before the throne clothed in a white robe, with a palm branch in his hand; or on the sea of glass, with the harp of God; or with the Lamb on Mount Zion singing the new song.

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