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John 1-10

# REVIEW

- John is not interested in the realities around us that can be seen with the eye but in reality which must be seen in truth... a seeing that comes only through faith. This Gospel is truly a blind man's Gospel.
- "In the beginning..." before anyone was around to see it, God brought a first, visible creation into existence by His Word. Now, through that same Word made flesh, God is bringing about a new creation that cannot be seen with the naked eye (i.e., they are like wind/spirit). This new creation of God's offspring are fully and truly alive (i.e., they will never die).
- John the Witnesser pointed as a witness to the Lamb of God who removes sin. His disciples began to "abide" with Jesus and started to un-learn what seemed true and to learn what is true.
- The Word continues to reveal Himself to be I AM, the God who revealed Himself to Moses. The disciples – worthy and unworthy – catch glimpses. Those who believe and do the truth (the will of the Father) will truly live in the bosom of the Father; others who believe and understand full well who Jesus is but who do not do the truth (the Devil and Judas who will be possessed by the Devil) may live but only separate from the Father.
- The world doesn't receive the Word; instead, it puts the Word on trial... right from the start. That trial, in which the Word will be found "guilty" by the world, is actually a trial of the Father (since the Word only says and does what the Father says and does, such that to hear the Word is to hear and see the Father). By the world's guilty verdict and execution of Jesus, the offspring of God – the new creation – will come to full birth. By that same death, the world will be shown to be guilty and to be judging the truth by what only appears to be sight.
- The disciples also learn that they must die with Jesus (symbolized by eating his flesh and drinking his blood which will be stripped from him in the death on the cross) and that they can only live by taking in (eating) the Word, which alone gives life and which is actually the word of the Father (Jn 6).

# JOHN 7-10: THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

- Tabernacles: from fall harvest feast to Temple feast to covenant renewal characterized by water, light, joy
- Tabernacles is a feast for those who are at home in the "world" (e.g., Jesus' brothers)
- ACT1: The first 6 days (Where is Jesus from? Do not judge by appearances!)
- ACT 2: The last great day of the feast (True water / True light / True joy)
- ACT 3: The Man Born Blind (What happens to those who see?)
- ACT 4: Responses to the miracle (True shepherd helps children of God to see)
- ACT 5: The "little" tabernacles = Hanukkah ...

# ACT 5 JOHN 10:22-39

- The feast of Hanukkah was designed to commemorate the rededication of the Second Temple in 165 BC after its desecration. (Hanukkah was to begin on the 25 Chislev (about the time of the winter solstice in December) and to last for 8 days.)
  - Though separate in time by almost 2 months from the feast of Tabernacles, Hanukkah became known as the “little” feast of light, in relation to the feast of Tabernacles, THE “Feast of Lights”. (It became known as the Feast of Tabernacles in Chislev (2 Macc. 1.9).)
- At this feast, the apparently seeing but clearly blind Jews want Jesus to indicate clearly whether he is the Messiah (one of the first titles used of Jesus in John 1!)
- Jesus indicates (as in John 5) that the Father’s works witness to who he is:
  - Not: The Messiah
  - But: The one who is always with the Father
- Again the verdict: stone him!
- Jesus’ response: Anyone who has received the Word and does the Father’s will is actually “God’s son” = offspring of God
- End of the 5 acts: Concluding verdict by the world: arrest Jesus!

John 11

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS

INTRODUCTION

JESUS MEETS MARTHA

JESUS MEETS MARY

JESUS MEETS LAZARUS

THE RESPONSE TO THE RAISING OF  
LAZARUS

# INTRODUCTION

- Introduction of 3 people whom Jesus “loves”: Martha, Mary, Lazarus (siblings) – only mentioned in John 11-12 – from the Judaeen city of Bethany (2 miles from Jerusalem)
- Lazarus’s sickness is not for death but for God’s glory (cf. Jesus’ words on the man born blind in 9:1-3)
- Puzzling narrative: 11:5-7 = Jesus appears to wait so that Lazarus can die
- Disciples’ conversation with Jesus in light of his decision to go to Judea (cf. Jesus’ conversation with his brothers, John 7)
- Disciples’ conversation with Jesus in light of his assertion regarding Lazarus (he has fallen asleep)
  - NB: The disciples’ response (via Thomas) in 11:16 = Let’s go to die with him!
    - The equivalent to: “give me this water always”, “give us this bread always”, etc. Wrong! But right!

# JESUS MEETS MARTHA (11:17-27)

- Lazarus has been dead 4 days (beyond the 3 days when the soul might return to the body by itself)
- Mourners from Jerusalem (Jews)
- Conversation:
  - Martha makes a factual statement about Jesus' power and about her belief in Jesus' ability to restore Lazarus to life (11:21-22) to which Jesus responds ambiguously (11:23)
  - Martha then recalls Jewish expectation of life AFTER death (11:24), thinking that that's all that Jesus meant in 11:23
    - To what is she referring??



# RESURRECTION IN JEWISH PERSPECTIVE

- No after life (Sheol, sleep, etc.)
  - Baruch 2:16-18; Eccl. 9:5-6 10
- Resuscitation (same body, same members)
  - Elijah: 1 Kgs 17:17-24, Elishah: 2 Kgs 4:18-37, 'Dry Bones': Ezek 37
- Physical resurrection
  - 2 Macc 7, esp. vs. 11; 2 Baruch 50:2; Sib. Orac. 4.176-190
- Spiritual resurrection
  - 1 Enoch 108:11-12, 2 Bar 30:2-5; Jub 23:31
- Immortality (no death!)
  - Wisdom 1-6 (esp. 3:2); T. Moses 10:8-9, Jubilees 23:31
- Unclear
  - Daniel 12:1b-3, Pss Sol 3:12; 4 Macc 18:23; T. Judah 25, T. Benj. 10:6-8

# HOW TO UNDERSTAND RESURRECTION

- Resurrection depends on expected existence:
  - Return to this world (no word about another world) → Resuscitation
  - Raised to a new physical order (earthly, or at least material) that does not die → Physical resurrection
  - Raised to a new spiritual order that never ends (heavenly, or possibly transformed material existence) → Spiritual resurrection
  - Not raised (since they don't die) go on living forever in a humanly inconceivable existence in God's presence or in the memory of those still living → Immortality
- Which one of these best expresses what happened to Lazarus?
- What do you think will happen to Jesus?
- What do you think will happen to the children of God?

# JESUS MEETS MARTHA (11:17-27) - CONCLUDED

- Jesus' response (11:25-26) transcends any known understanding of Jewish resurrection expectation
  - I AM is resurrection and life = belief in "I AM" means that even if you die in the flesh you will live (How? Where? When?)
- Martha's response (11:27)
  - "The Christ, the son of the living God" = the words of Peter in Matthew, Mark, Luke!
  - "The one coming into the world" = the words of the Samaritan woman
  - Adequate?

# JESUS MEETS MARY (11:28-37)

- Very complex scene with elements of emotion in Jesus that we do not find in any other conversations with anyone else
  - Martha goes to Mary to tell her that the “teacher” is calling for her (11:28)
  - Mary rises obediently and goes to the place where Jesus had met Martha, accompanied by the Jewish mourners (11:29-31)
  - Like the healed-blind-man, Mary falls at Jesus feet (11:32a) and says the only words attributed to her in this Gospel (11:32b, only repeating Martha’s words)
  - But... the impact on Jesus is dramatic (11:33-34a): Shaken / Where is he?
  - The Jewish response: “Come and see” (11:34b) an eerie reminder of ...?

# JESUS MEETS LAZARUS (11:38-44)

- Jesus' initial meeting with the dead Lazarus: the impact on Jesus is uncharacteristically dramatic (11:35) – the nadir of Jesus' emotions
    - Jewish understanding: how much he loved Lazarus! (But you should now expect that the Jewish understanding is actually a misunderstanding.)
    - But, why then DOES Jesus weep???
  - A further exchange with Martha (11:38-40)
  - First time (!) in John's Gospel of any prayer by Jesus to the Father (11:41b-42)
  - The Word speaks to death (11:43) and the result (11:44)
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# THE RESPONSE TO THE RAISING OF LAZARUS (11:45-54)

- Response
  - Many Jews believe (11:45)
  - Chief priests and Pharisees call a council to stop Jesus (11:46-54) – later we learn that they also want to kill Lazarus! (12:10)
    - Caiaphas, son in law of Annas, as judge: 11:49-53
      - Annas I (AD 6-15) first Roman appointed High Priest. His sons / son-in-laws: Eleazar b. Annas (16-17), Joseph Caiaphas, son in law of Annas I (18-36), Jonathan b. Annas (36-37), Theophilus b. Annas (37-41), Matthias b. Annas (43), Jonathan b. Annas restored (44), Annas b. Annas (63)
- As in previous stories, Jesus eludes his arrest: 11:54

# QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- How do you explain Jesus' "pastoral care" at the beginning of this episode of waiting until Lazarus dies before coming to his home? Remember: this is consonant with Jesus' attitude to people in need from the beginning of the Gospel.
  - What is your impression of Martha, of Mary, of Jesus in light of the events at Lazarus's home and tomb?
  - Why did Jesus weep?
  - Lazarus died and Jesus raised him from death by restoring him to life. What's next for Lazarus?
  - How does this Gospel present the leaders of the Jewish people in the face of life, life-giving, and new life? What kind of shepherds are they to the people?
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