

I. v.38 “Therefore, Jesus, again being agitated in Himself, comes to the tomb; But he was buried and a stone was placed upon it.”

A. Now, Jesus continues to be upset concerning the condition of things.

B. He is seeing:

1. Mary weeping.

2. Martha worried.

3. The hypocritical crowd weeping out of duty.

4. And Lazarus dead.

C. As He nears the tomb, Jesus, being upset sees something else: a stone.

1. John is sure to tell us that a stone is there.

2. Why?

3. This story is filled with drama.

a) This drama is not for emotion’s sake.

b) It is to display the works of God in Christ.

c) The impossibility of doing anything to fix this problem with Lazarus is simply heightened by these little editorial remarks.

D. But, again, Jesus is incensed at something.

1. Why?

a) It is because of the unbelief of some in the crowd.

b) v. 37 “Could not this One open the eyes of the blind? Could He not also do (a miracle) in order that this one might not die?”

(1) This is mockery.

- (2) This is the same group as those in v. 46
 - (a) These are like their fathers.
 - (b) Grumblers and complainers.
- (3) Jesus is upset at this group of dissenters to His glory.
 - (a) Who are these people?
 - (i) "The crowd" = mixed group of people among the common villagers.
 - (ii) "The Jews" = a mixed group of people including the Pharisees.
 - (a) They often refer to the Pharisees- John 1:19, 24; 2:18, 20; 5:10, 15f, 18; 6:41, 52; 7:1, 11, 13, 15, 35; 8:22, 48, 52, 57; 9:18, 22; 10:24, 31, 33
 - (b) But they can often refer to those influenced by the Pharisees also, as here.
 - (b) It is important to remember:
 - (i) This crowd was consistently confused about Christ.
 - (a) This is not because Jesus was confusing.
 - (b) It was because of the influence of the dissenters.
 - (i) John 7:11-14
 - (ii) John 7:40-43

(iii) John 10:19–21 **19**

A division occurred again among the Jews because of these words. 20 Many of them were saying, “He has a demon and is insane.

Why do you listen to Him?”

21 Others were saying, “These are not the sayings of one demon-possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?”

(c) But, these people should not be considered true disciples of Jesus Christ.

(i) John 8:20-30

(ii) John 8:31-33

(a) cp. vv. 39-45

(b) cp. v. 48

(c) cp. 52-59

(iii) Notice that Jesus said that they do not believe and are still sons of the devil (v. 44).

(iv) This is the same crowd influenced by the leaven of the Pharisees.

(d) These are the same “Jews” who came to console Mary and Martha concerning their brother (11:19).

(e)

II. v. 39 “Jesus says, “Raise the stone.” The sister of the deceased, Martha, says to Him, “Lord, a stench is already emitting, for He is (dead) four days.”

E. Further anticipation of what Jesus will do.

F. Notice that she does not realize what is going on.

1. She sees the stone, the grave, the death, and the stench.

2. She does not see Jesus, His Words, and the power of God.

G. We can't blame her because there has never been one who could raise the dead like this.

1. Therefore, it was not something that appears to have crossed her mind.

2. Although, Elijah and Elisha did raise the dead (1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:18-37).

a) But each of those instances were to confirm that they were prophets and they spoke the Word of the Lord.

b) This is very different from what Jesus was about to do.

H. But, being in a tomb decaying for four days is way beyond the norm, even for the prophets of Israel.

What actually happens to the body when a person dies?

"However, the truth of the matter is your body does not die in quite so sudden or so orderly a fashion — different parts die at different rates, and the rates are somewhat variable depending on both your individual body and the circumstance of your death. What is certain is that after your heart stops beating, this creates a few key conditions. First, your blood stops flowing and begins to pool and settle wherever it is at in your body. Essentially, it congeals and turns your body purple and pink. Next, with no blood flowing, your body begins to turn cold, a phase known as algor mortis — or death chill to us laypeople. Hour by hour your body temperature will drop by 1.5 degrees (Fahrenheit), until it matches room temperature. Meanwhile, the more commonly known rigor mortis, when your dead body stiffens, occurs generally within two to six hours. At the same time, with no blood flow, your cells are becoming deprived of oxygen and so they have begun to individually die. Today scientists believe your brain cells don't immediately disintegrate, so it may take hours for all the individual neurons to die and for your entire brain to be dead. Your death, then, is actually many smaller deaths, occurring in domino-like fashion. As cells break down, they release enzymes which attract bacteria and fungi, contributing to the decomposition of your flesh and organs. After all your soft parts have been consumed, you're a mere skeleton and over time, say 50 years, your bones will gradually disappear into other life forms as well.

No, your hair and fingernails do not continue to grow after you die. But your skin cells live for days, your muscles may twitch, and in the rarest cases, pregnant women may even give birth after they've died."

The purification process of the body, the stench of John 11, is caused by the millions of cells, and parts of the cells, decaying since there is no respiration, blood flow, or gravity to move it all around. This decay attracts bacteria which grow and spawn in the body producing the odor of death."¹

- A. The Jews did not embalm.
 - 1. Therefore, in order to protect the society from seeing this process of death, the dead were buried/entombed as soon as possible.
 - a) With all the processes that occur in death, the Jews developed a very highly superstitious understanding of death.

¹ . <http://www.medicaldaily.com/what-forensic-scientist-doesnt-tell-you-7-postmortem-responses-dead-body-314404> accessed 8/28/2016

b) Thus, Martha was aghast at the thought of removing the stone which sealed the gaseous smells of the rotting corpse in the tomb.

III. v. 40 “Therefore, they raised the stone. But Jesus raised His eyes up and said, “Father, I praise you that you have heard me.”

- A. Interesting play on words here!
- B. It would have taken a tremendous amount of faith (or morbid curiosity) to remove the stone from the tomb.
 - 1. As the sealed tomb was opened, the smells filled the air.
 - 2. It is possible that gasses had escaped and the sound of hissing could have been heard.
 - 3. Lazarus’ body truly had decayed up to the point of Jesus’ command!
- C. However, as they “raised the stone,” Jesus “raised His eyes.”
 - 1. This is the difference.
 - 2. Jesus was always looking to the Father.
 - a) He prays to God in order to give thanks for His fellowship.
 - b) He presumes that God has heard Him; He knows that God has heard Him.
- D. People were watching Him.
 - 1. “What is He going to do?”
 - 2. “To whom is He praying?”
 - 3. “What is going to happen next?”

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V. v. 42 "But I know that you always hear of Me, but because of the crowd, which is standing around, I spoke, in order that they might believe that you have sent Me."

A. This is an admission that the crowd did not believe.

B. The crowd is growing, and includes the "Jews" who were consoling Mary.

C. Jesus prays publicly, not for His own sake.

1. Matthew 6:5–6 **5** "When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you,

they have their reward in full. 6 "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees *what is done* in secret will reward you.

2.

3.

D. He prays publicly so that those who

1. Have come to see Him

2. Witness the resurrection of Lazarus

3. See His prayer and direction of His eyes.

4. And giving glory to God

E. So that they might know Him and the Father who sent Him.

1. This is a statement of Messiah.

2. He prayed publicly for the sake of teaching and confirming the source of the power to raise Lazarus from the dead.

VI. v.43 "And while saying these things, he cried out by a great voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

F. Dramatic!!

G. "While saying..."

1. = while He was praying to the Father, publicly stating that He is praying for the crowd to believe...

2. = Jesus simultaneously screams out, suddenly, in command of Lazarus to come out of the tomb!

- a) What sudden drama.
- b) What shock to the crowd.

H. This “shout” is minuscule compared to the “shout” of His coming for His church

1 Thessalonians 4:15–18 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Psalm 46:6–7 6 The nations made an uproar, the kingdoms tottered; He raised His voice, the earth melted. 7 The Lord of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Jeremiah 25:30–31 30 “Therefore you shall prophesy against them all these words, and you shall say to them, ‘The Lord will roar from on high And utter His voice from His holy habitation; He will roar mightily against His fold. He will shout like those who tread *the grapes*, Against all the inhabitants of the earth. 31 ‘A clamor has come to the end of the earth, Because the Lord has a controversy with the nations. He is entering into judgment with all flesh; As for the wicked, He has given them to the sword,’ declares the Lord.”

Amos 1:1–4

1 The words of Amos, who was among the shepherders from Tekoa, which he envisioned in visions concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. 2 He said, “The Lord roars from Zion And from Jerusalem He utters His voice; And the shepherds’ pasture grounds mourn, And the summit of Carmel dries up.” 3 Thus says the Lord, “For three transgressions of Damascus and for four I will not revoke its *punishment*, Because they threshed Gilead with *implements* of sharp iron. 4 “So I will send fire upon the house of Hazael And it will consume the citadels of Ben-hadad.

VII. v. 44 “The one having been dead came while being bound of the feet and the hands, wrapped in burial cloths, and His face in cloths. Jesus says to them, “Loose Him.”

I. “Right away!”

1. Imagine the scene.

a) I could guess that all the smell has left.

b) The body is full of life.

c) He is walking and seeing, and breathing.

(1) Imagine the shrill from Martha and Mary!

(2) Imagine the hysteria from the crowd.

2. The people rush to unwrap him and free him from His grave cloths.