

Life after Death

Key Verse: “Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”
—John 11:25

Selected Scripture:
John 11:1-44

good friend of his, but Jesus did not go immediately to see him. After two days, he said to his disciples, “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.” (John 11:11) Lazarus had died.

Jesus had likened death to a sleep. When we sleep, we do not know anything, even as we are told, “The dead know not any thing, . . . for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” (Eccles. 9:5,10) Then Jesus and the disciples proceeded to Bethany. When they arrived, Lazarus had already been dead four days. Mary and Martha were glad to see Jesus, but Martha expressed disappointment. “Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died” (John 11:21), to which Jesus replied, “Thy brother shall rise again.”—vs. 23

Martha’s reply was an indication of her faith in her Lord. “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection

WE RECALL THAT A FAVOR-ite place of our Lord was in the town of Bethany, at the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. The home of his friends was an oasis of warmth and hospitality, and it was here that Jesus often came for rest and fellowship.

On one occasion, as Jesus was ministering in the north, he received word that his friend Lazarus was ill. Lazarus was a

at the last day.” (vs. 24) Jesus asked to be taken to Lazarus’ tomb. He was so touched by the sorrow of death that we are told, “Jesus wept.” (vs. 35) He instructed the stone to be rolled away, and lifted his eyes to heaven and prayed. He then “cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth.”—vss. 43,44

In the Key Verse, our Lord refers to himself as being ‘the resurrection and the life.’ In this instance, he suspended temporarily the power of death by restoring Lazarus to the same state of life which he formerly enjoyed. This was but an illustration of the resurrection power that will be used by our Lord and the church in the Millennial Age, when this power will be used in a much fuller and permanent degree. At that time will come the fulfillment of his promise of a resurrection that will overcome the dying process of disease, and ultimately bring the revived one up to the full perfection of life that was enjoyed in Eden by our first parents, Adam and Eve.

The world’s only hope is in the resurrection, yet, sadly, many Christians even now have little or no faith in it. Imagine the joy of family and friends, as they saw Lazarus brought back to life.

How reassuring it is to know that this same joy will be experienced by all the world, as they are reunited with their loved ones, when they are brought back from the grave—the sleep of death—to a kingdom to be established here on earth. Every human being who has ever lived will be awakened from the sleep of death, as Jesus foretold, “The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth.” (John 5:28,29) In this coming kingdom, all mankind, through the resurrection, will have the opportunity to come to a full knowledge of God, his son Jesus, and to develop a righteous character. All who thus ‘believe,’ and are properly affected by that belief, will have it said of them, ‘though he were dead, yet shall he live.’ ■