STUDY BIBLE WORKBOOK

John 11

The Resurrection and the Life

QUICK STUDY + DEEP DIVE

Jesus meets the grief of Mary and Martha, declares Himself the resurrection and the life, and calls Lazarus from the tomb. This life-giving sign reveals His glory and leads the story toward the cross.

Scripture quotations: World English Bible (WEB)

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

Quick Study: Begin with the overview, chapter movements, Bible words, Greek pronunciation notes, Gospel Connection, and a guided prayer.

Deep Dive: Eleven Scripture-first SOAP passages include all 57 WEB verses, substantial observation, application, and prayer.

WESTERN GRACE MEDIA

John 11 — Geographic Setting

John 11 takes place chiefly at Bethany near Jerusalem, where Jesus raises Lazarus. After the religious leaders begin plotting His death, He withdraws toward the wilderness town called Ephraim. The regional map highlights the Jerusalem/Bethany area and only broadly suggests Ephraim's uncertain location.



Regional location



COUNTRIES IN YEAR 2020

Jerusalem (11:18, 55–57): Bethany is nearby; the Passover approaches in Jerusalem.

Bethany (11:1, 18): The village of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, about fifteen stadia east of Jerusalem.

The tomb (11:38–44): John describes a cave tomb but does not give an exact map coordinate.

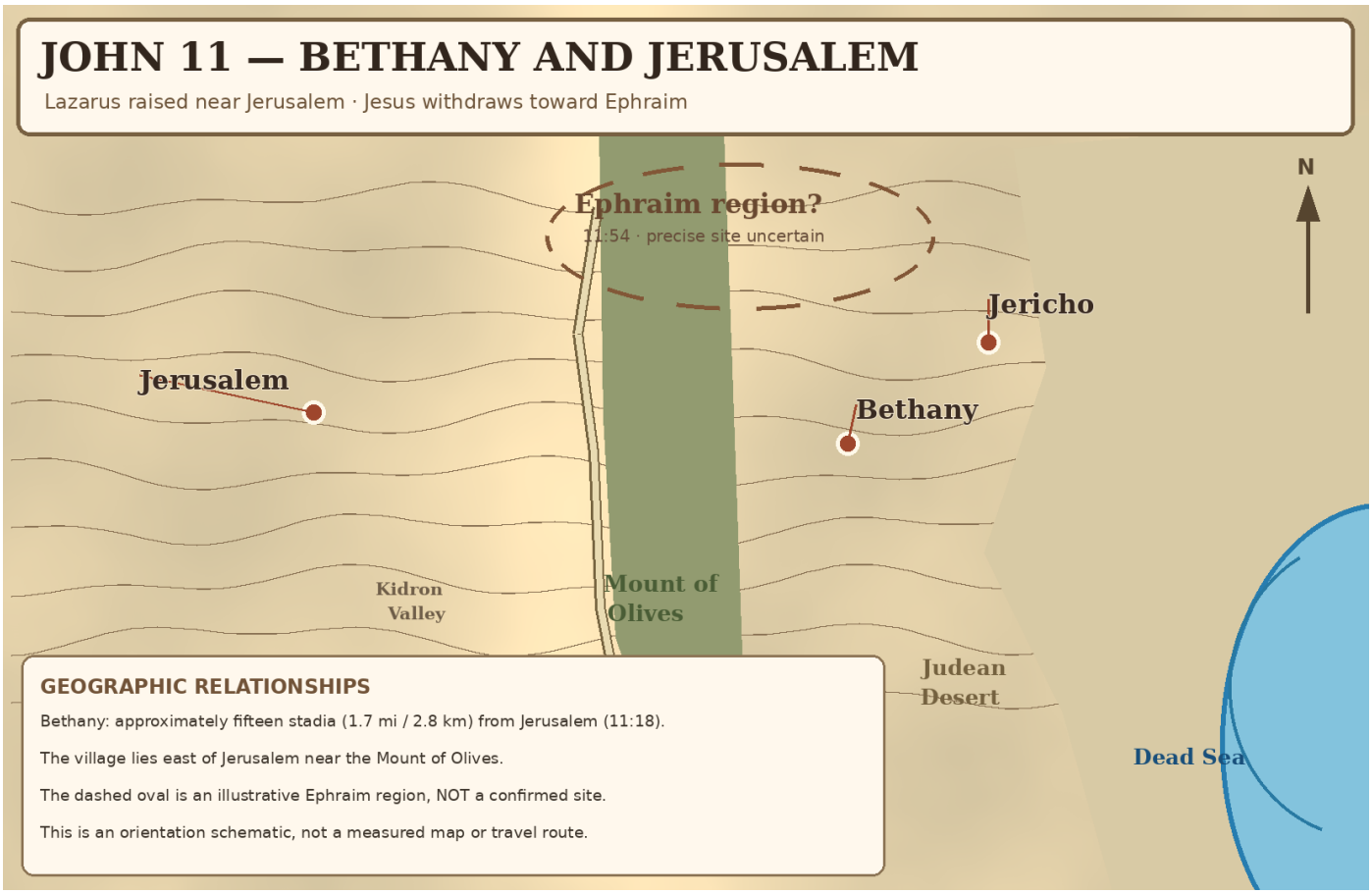
Ephraim (11:54): Jesus withdraws to a town near the wilderness; its identification is disputed.

Map caution: The rust circle identifies the Jerusalem/Bethany area; the dashed oval is only a proposed Ephraim region, not a site pin.

Original WGM atlas: Jerusalem/Bethany area highlighted; Ephraim shown only as a broad region. No routes claimed.

Bethany: Jerusalem, the Mount of Olives, and Ephraim

John 11:18 identifies Bethany as roughly fifteen stadia (2.8 km / 1.7 mi) from Jerusalem. The Mount of Olives lies between the city and Bethany. After the sign, Jesus withdraws toward Ephraim, but its precise location is disputed. This original schematic illustrates broad relationships, not measured routes or tomb coordinates.



READ THE TEXT WITH THE MAP

Bethany

Mary, Martha and Lazarus lived in Bethany (11:1). John places it about fifteen stadia from Jerusalem (11:18).

Mount of Olives

A ridge east of Jerusalem helps situate Bethany. The Gospel does not specify the family home or tomb coordinates.

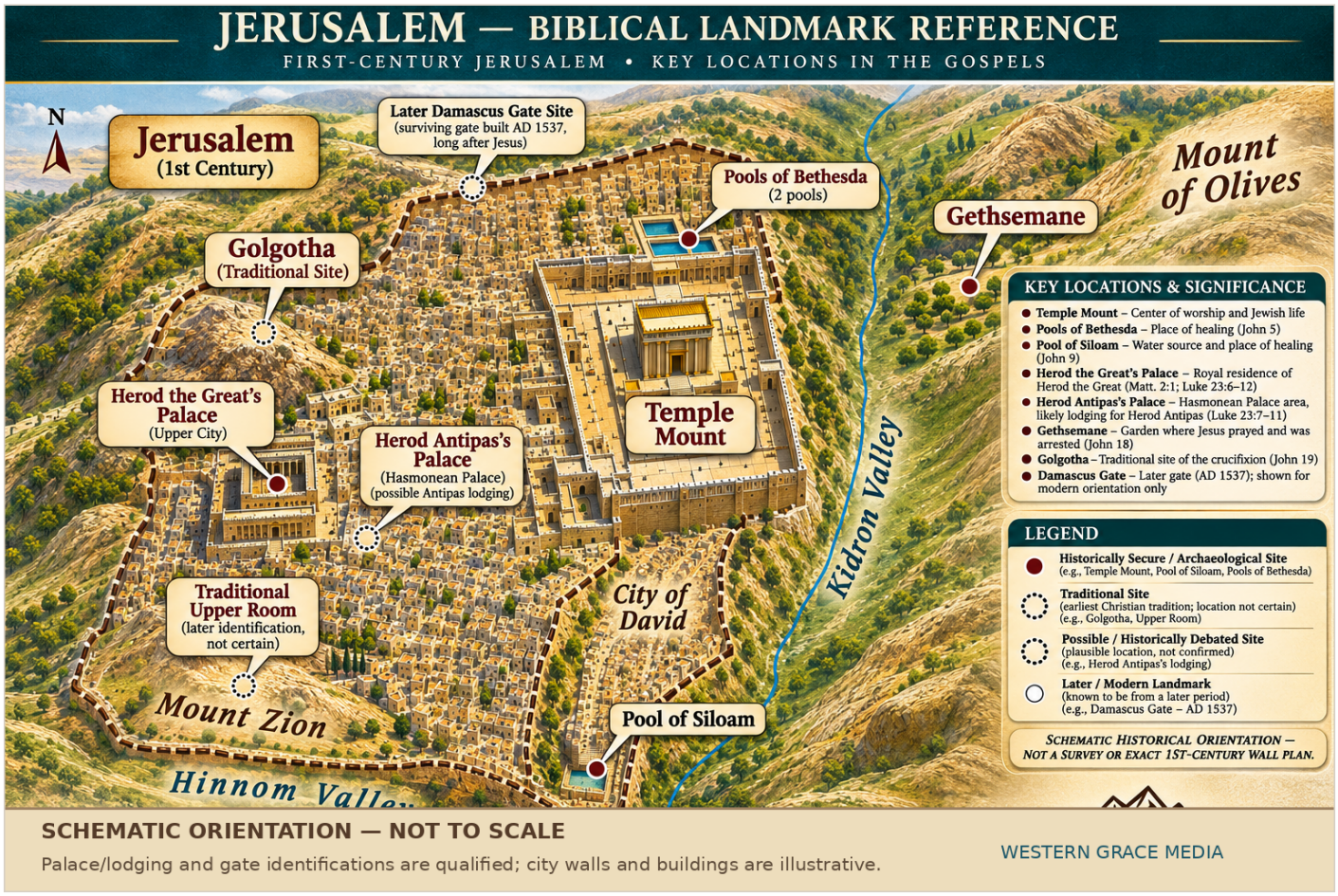
Ephraim

Jesus went to Ephraim near the wilderness (11:54). The dashed oval only represents a possible region; the precise site is disputed.

My notes about the setting:

Jerusalem Landmarks: Context for Bethany and Lazarus

Keep the preceding Bethany–Mount of Olives map for the Lazarus events. This additional Jerusalem master shows the nearby city of Jerusalem, the Temple, and its landmark relationships.



JOHN 11 — KEY LANDMARKS AND LIMITS OF CERTAINTY

Bethany (11:1, 18): Lazarus lived east of Jerusalem, beyond the Mount of Olives. It is outside this city close-up; use the preceding Bethany map.

Jerusalem (11:18, 55–57): Roughly fifteen stadia from Bethany; people come from the city, and Passover draws near.

Ephraim (11:54): A later withdrawal beyond this close-up. Its precise identification remains debated and is not plotted here.

Map standard: Original WGM schematic, not to scale. Traditional sites, uncertain palace use and the later Damascus Gate are identified as context, not first-century proof.

My notes about the setting:

John 11 — The Resurrection and the Life

MAIN VERSE

John 11:25, WEB: Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will still live, even if he dies.

BIG PICTURE

Jesus learns of Lazarus’s illness, waits, and returns toward Judea. In Bethany, the grieving Martha confesses Jesus as the Christ and hears Him declare, “I am the resurrection and the life.” Jesus shares the mourners’ sorrow and then raises Lazarus from a four-day tomb. Many believe, but the sign also intensifies the leaders’ plot to kill Him. The chapter moves toward Passover and the cross.

Love and an Unexplained Delay (11:1–6)

Jesus loves the family and remains where He is for two days while Lazarus is sick.

A Dangerous Return (11:7–16)

The disciples fear a return to Judea, but Jesus resolves to go to Lazarus.

Resurrection Hope Meets Jesus (11:17–27)

Martha speaks honestly of loss and confesses Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God.

Jesus Enters the Grief (11:28–37)

Mary and the mourners weep; Jesus is deeply troubled and weeps.

QUICK STUDY NOTES

The Chapter’s Major Movements

The Tomb Is Opened (11:38–44)

Jesus calls Lazarus from the grave and reveals His life-giving authority.

Belief and Opposition (11:45–53)

Many believe, but leaders plan Jesus’ death; Caiaphas’s words foreshadow atonement.

Withdrawal and Passover (11:54–57)

Jesus withdraws toward Ephraim as the final Passover approaches.

QUICK STUDY FLOW



QUICK STUDY NOTES

Important Bible Words

Word / Phrase	Simple Meaning	Why It Matters
Bethany	Village near Jerusalem where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived	John locates the sign within walking distance of the capital.
Glory of God	God’s greatness and character made known	The sign reveals the Son and points ahead to His mission.
Resurrection	God raising the dead to life	Jesus says this hope rests in Him personally.
Eternal life	Enduring life given by believing in the Son	Physical death does not undo life in Christ.
Jesus wept	Jesus truly entered human grief	The Son is fully human and compassionate.
Sign	An act revealing Jesus’ identity	Lazarus’s return points to the giver of life.
High priest	Leading priestly office in Jerusalem	Caiaphas speaks words John interprets as prophecy.
Passover	Biblical feast remembering deliverance from Egypt	The approaching feast frames Jesus’ final journey to the cross.

Which word in John 11 most clearly explains Jesus as the resurrection and the life?

Translation Word Notes

Pronunciations are approximate classroom-style Biblical Greek. CAPITAL letters show the stressed syllable. Greek helps clarify meaning but is not required for understanding Scripture. NKJV/NIV/NLT phrases are brief comparisons; full Scripture quotations remain WEB.

Verse	Greek & pronunciation	NKJV	NIV	NLT	Meaning in context
11:4	doxa DOHK-sah	glory	glory	glory	God’s glory revealed through the Son
11:11	koimaō koy-MAH-oh	sleeps	fallen asleep	fallen asleep	Sleep here pictures physical death
11:16	Didymos DID-oo-moss	the Twin	Twin	Twin	Thomas’s Greek nickname means Twin
11:25	anastasis ah-NAH-stah-sis	resurrection	resurrection	resurrection	Jesus is the source of resurrection life
11:25	zōē zoh-AY	life	life	life	Life is found in Christ
11:26	pisteuō pis-TEV-oh	believes	believes	believes	Faith means trusting Jesus
11:33	embrimaomai em-bree-MAH-oh-my	groaned	deeply moved	deep anger	A strong emotional response; context matters
11:35	dakryō dah-KROO-oh	wept	wept	wept	Jesus truly cried with mourners
11:43	phōnē foh-NAY	loud voice	loud voice	loud voice	Jesus calls Lazarus aloud
11:47	sēmeion say-MAY-on	signs	signs	miraculous signs	His works reveal His identity
11:51	prophēteuō proh-fay-TEV-oh	prophesied	prophesied	prophesied	John interprets Caiaphas’s words prophetically
11:52	synagō soo-NAH-goh	gather	bring together	gather	Christ unites His people

Word-study notes:

The Gospel Connection

The raising of Lazarus points beyond one family's restoration to the identity and saving work of Jesus. He is the resurrection and the life (11:25), and Martha confesses Him as the Christ and God's Son (11:27). The sign leads some to faith and prompts leaders to plan His death. John then interprets Caiaphas's words in the light of Jesus dying for His people and gathering believers into one (11:51–52). The gospel is not merely that grief will end immediately or that every faithful person will experience healing now. It is that the Son of God willingly dies for sinners, rises again, and gives eternal life to those who trust Him (John 20:31).

Reflection: Will I follow Jesus with humble faith and speak truthfully about Him?

A Short Prayer from John 11

Lord Jesus, thank You that You are the resurrection and the life. You know my grief and You are not indifferent to tears. Forgive me when fear or disappointment makes me forget Your promises. Help me believe Your Word, comfort those who mourn, and look toward the hope secured by Your death and resurrection. In Your name, amen.

Pray this in your own words:

QUICK STUDY COMPLETE

One Truth to Carry With You

Jesus is the resurrection and the life. He enters our grief, calls us to believe in Him, and holds the power of life even in the face of death.

READY TO GO DEEPER — NEXT PAGE

Ready to Go Deeper?

This Deep Dive follows S.O.A.P.: Scripture, Observation, Application, and Prayer. Begin with the complete WEB passage. Let the text set the terms of our study, then consider the explanation, respond personally, and pray.

S — Scripture

Read every verse slowly; note changes in speaker, setting, and what Jesus reveals about Himself.

O — Observation

What does John teach about the Son, the Father, eternal life, judgment, faith, and testimony?

A — Application

What should I believe, confess, obey, trust, or share in response to the passage?

P — Prayer

Pray from the passage’s truth rather than from imagined details about the characters.

Before I begin, what do I need to understand about trusting Jesus in grief and resurrection hope?

Questions and repeated words to watch for:

JOHN 11:1–6

Love, Delay, and the Glory of God

S — Scripture

1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus from Bethany, of the village of Mary and her sister, Martha.
2 It was that Mary who had anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.
3 The sisters therefore sent to him, saying, “Lord, behold, he for whom you have great affection is sick.”
4 But when Jesus heard it, he said, “This sickness is not to death, but for the glory of God, that God’s Son may be glorified by it.”
5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.
6 When therefore he heard that he was sick, he stayed two days in the place where he was.

John 11:1–6, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Lazarus is ill, and Mary and Martha send word to Jesus. John states explicitly that Jesus loves all three siblings. His decision to remain where He is for two more days must not be interpreted as indifference or a formula for how God will answer every prayer.

Jesus describes the coming event in terms of God’s glory and the Son’s glorification. He knows the outcome, but Mary and Martha do not. The story lets us see the difference between what the characters know and what Jesus knows.

John has already called Jesus the giver of life (1:4; 5:21; 6:40). The raising of Lazarus will become a public sign pointing to that identity and foreshadowing His own resurrection.

My observations:

A — Application

Where do I assume that a delay means God is absent? How does John 11 challenge that assumption without promising the outcome I prefer?

P — Prayer

Father, help me trust Your wisdom when I cannot understand Your timing. Keep me near Your Word and near Your people.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 11:7–10

Walking in the Light

S — Scripture

7 Then after this he said to the disciples, “Let’s go into Judea again.”
8 The disciples asked him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just trying to stone you. Are you going there again?”
9 Jesus answered, “Aren’t there twelve hours of daylight? If a man walks in the day, he doesn’t stumble, because he sees the light of this world.
10 But if a man walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light isn’t in him.”

John 11:7–10, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

When Jesus proposes returning to Judea, the disciples remember that hostile people had recently tried to stone Him (10:31, 39). Their concern for His safety is understandable.

Jesus’ illustration about daylight teaches that He is acting within the time and purpose appointed for His mission. It is not a command to ignore ordinary danger or to make reckless decisions.

His return is deliberate. The path toward Lazarus also brings Jesus nearer the conflict that will lead to the cross.

My observations:

A — Application

What does it look like to obey God’s Word thoughtfully rather than let fear govern every decision?

P — Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me follow Your truth with both courage and wisdom.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 11:11–16

Lazarus Has Died

S — Scripture

11 He said these things, and after that, he said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going so that I may awake him out of sleep.”
12 The disciples therefore said, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.”
13 Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he spoke of taking rest in sleep.
14 So Jesus said to them plainly then, “Lazarus is dead.
15 I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe. Nevertheless, let’s go to him.”
16 Thomas therefore, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, “Let’s also go, that we may die with him.”

John 11:11–16, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Jesus uses sleep as an image for Lazarus’s death. The disciples understand it as ordinary rest, so Jesus states plainly that Lazarus is dead. The passage does not deny the real finality of physical death.

Jesus says the coming event will strengthen the disciples’ faith. He is not happy that His friend suffered; He is explaining the greater revelation of His power and identity that they are about to see.

Thomas speaks with determined loyalty, even while expecting danger. John presents the disciples as real people still learning who Jesus is.

My observations:

A — Application

When Jesus’ words are hard to understand, will I return to the passage and let Scripture clarify Scripture?

P — Prayer

Jesus, teach me patient attention to Your words and faithful courage when obedience is costly.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 11:17–24

Martha Meets the Lord

S — Scripture

17 So when Jesus came, he found that he had been in the tomb four days already.
18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about fifteen stadia away.
19 Many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to console them concerning their brother.
20 Then when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary stayed in the house.
21 Therefore Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you would have been here, my brother wouldn’t have died.
22 Even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you.”
23 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”
24 Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

John 11:17–24, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

By the time Jesus arrives, Lazarus has already been in the tomb four days. John gives this detail before narrating the sign; the family’s grief is neither imagined nor minimized.

Bethany lies about fifteen stadia from Jerusalem (11:18), approximately 1.7 miles or 2.8 km. Many mourners have come. Martha meets Jesus with both sorrow and continuing confidence in Him.

Martha believes in a future resurrection at the last day, a hope Jesus has already taught in John 5–6. The next verses show that the resurrection hope is inseparable from Jesus Himself.

My observations:

A — Application

Can I bring grief and honest questions to Christ while still confessing what I know to be true about Him?

P — Prayer

Lord Jesus, meet me in sorrow and steady my faith in Your promises.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 11:25–27

I Am the Resurrection and the Life

S — Scripture

25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will still live, even if he dies.
26 Whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”
27 She said to him, “Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Christ, God’s Son, he who comes into the world.”

John 11:25–27, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Jesus does more than promise a future event: He identifies Himself as the resurrection and the life. Eternal life is grounded in His person and work, not in our ability to defeat death.

“Even if he dies” acknowledges physical death. “Will never die” speaks of the believer’s enduring life in Christ. Read the two statements together rather than pretending that Christians will never die physically.

Jesus asks Martha a personal question: “Do you believe this?” She responds with a confession that echoes the Gospel’s stated purpose in John 20:31: Jesus is the Christ and the Son of God.

My observations:

A — Application

How would I answer Jesus’ question, “Do you believe this?” What part of Martha’s confession can I make my own?

P — Prayer

Lord Jesus, You are the resurrection and the life. Strengthen my trust in You beyond the fear of death.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 11:28–32

Mary Brings Her Grief

S — Scripture

28 When she had said this, she went away and called Mary, her sister, secretly, saying, “The Teacher is here and is calling you.”
29 When she heard this, she arose quickly and went to him.
30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was in the place where Martha met him.
31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house and were consoling her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, “She is going to the tomb to weep there.”
32 Therefore when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying to him, “Lord, if you would have been here, my brother wouldn’t have died.”

John 11:28–32, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Martha calls Mary, who comes quickly. The mourners follow, believing she is going to weep at the tomb. The scene unfolds near Bethany, but John does not map a precise path between the home, meeting place, and tomb.

Mary falls at Jesus’ feet and voices the same painful thought Martha expressed: had He been there, Lazarus would not have died. John does not condemn her for speaking honestly.

Believers may tell Jesus what hurts without accusing themselves of having too little faith. Scripture invites lament alongside confident trust in the Lord.

My observations:

A — Application

What grief or unanswered question do I need to bring honestly before the Lord?

P — Prayer

Compassionate Savior, hear my grief and help me cling to Your truth.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 11:33–37

Jesus Wept

S — Scripture

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews weeping who came with her, he groaned in the spirit and was troubled,
34 and said, “Where have you laid him?” They told him, “Lord, come and see.”
35 Jesus wept.
36 The Jews therefore said, “See how much affection he had for him!”
37 Some of them said, “Couldn’t this man, who opened the eyes of him who was blind, have also kept this man from dying?”

John 11:33–37, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Jesus sees the mourners weeping, is deeply troubled, and weeps Himself. The Son of God does not stand outside human sorrow; His compassion is part of the Gospel’s portrait of His true humanity.

The Greek description of His emotional response is strong and can include indignation as well as deep disturbance. The text does not explicitly settle whether that intensity is aimed at death, unbelief, or a mixture of grief and anger.

Some mourners recognize His love; others ask why He did not prevent Lazarus’s death. John holds both the reality of grief and Jesus’ power together. Avoid using this scene to tell grieving people that they should not cry.

My observations:

A — Application

How might Jesus’ tears reshape the way I comfort someone who is grieving?

P — Prayer

Jesus, thank You for entering our sorrow. Make me patient, present, and compassionate toward those who mourn.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 11:38–44

Lazarus, Come Out!

S — Scripture

38 Jesus therefore, again groaning in himself, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone lay against it.
39 Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to him, “Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days.”
40 Jesus said to her, “Didn’t I tell you that if you believed, you would see God’s glory?”
41 So they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, “Father, I thank you that you listened to me.
42 I know that you always listen to me, but because of the multitude standing around I said this, that they may believe that you sent me.”
43 When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”
44 He who was dead came out, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Free him, and let him go.”

John 11:38–44, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

At the cave tomb, Jesus commands that the stone be removed. Martha points to the reality of four days of death. John describes this as an astonishing act of divine power, not a symbolic trick or a near-death recovery.

Jesus prays aloud so that the bystanders will know the Father sent Him. His action reveals both His life-giving authority and His relationship with the Father.

Lazarus comes out alive, and Jesus tells the others to free him from the grave wrappings. This sign anticipates the hope of resurrection, but Lazarus’s return to mortal life is not identical to Christ’s own glorified resurrection.

My observations:

A — Application

Where do I need to trust Jesus’ authority rather than the limits of my expectations?

P — Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for showing Your power over death. Give me a faith anchored in who You are.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 11:45–48

A Sign That Divides

S — Scripture

45 Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary and saw what Jesus did believed in him.
46 But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things which Jesus had done.
47 The chief priests therefore and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said, “What are we doing? For this man does many signs.
48 If we leave him alone like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.”

John 11:45–48, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Many of the witnesses believe after seeing what Jesus has done. Others report the event to the Pharisees. The same public sign produces different responses.

The leaders fear that a growing movement around Jesus might provoke Roman intervention and threaten their position and nation. John describes a specific political and religious calculation, not the motives of every Jewish person.

This confrontation teaches that fear of losing status or control can resist truth even when evidence is close at hand.

My observations:

A — Application

Am I more concerned with preserving approval or comfort than with responding to Jesus truthfully?

P — Prayer

Father, give me courage to follow truth when it threatens my pride or my plans.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 11:49–53

One Man for the People

S — Scripture

49 But a certain one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all,
50 nor do you consider that it is advantageous for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish.”
51 Now he didn’t say this of himself, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation,
52 and not for the nation only, but that he might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.
53 So from that day forward they took counsel that they might put him to death.

John 11:49–53, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Caiaphas proposes that one man die for the people rather than that the nation perish. The evangelist interprets this statement as an unwitting prophecy pointing to Jesus’ saving death.

John adds that Jesus would die not only for the nation but also to gather into one the scattered children of God. His mission reaches beyond narrow national boundaries, while the story remains anchored in God’s covenant history.

The leaders’ plot is morally wrong, yet God’s saving purpose is not thwarted by it. Do not confuse Caiaphas’s calculation with a righteous motive or use this passage to assign collective guilt to the Jewish people.

My observations:

A — Application

How does God’s ability to accomplish salvation through human wrongdoing deepen my worship without excusing wrongdoing?

P — Prayer

Father, thank You for the saving purpose accomplished through Christ’s death. Guard me from pride and unjust blame.

Pray this in your own words:

JOHN 11:54–57

Toward the Passover

S — Scripture

54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews, but departed from there into the country
near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim. He stayed there with his disciples.
55 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand. Many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the
Passover, to purify themselves.
56 Then they sought for Jesus and spoke with one another as they stood in the temple, “What do you
think—that he isn’t coming to the feast at all?”
57 Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had commanded that if anyone knew where he was, he
should report it, that they might seize him.

John 11:54–57, WEB

O — Observation

What does the passage reveal about Jesus, God, people, worship, faith, or the gospel?

Jesus withdraws to a town called Ephraim in the area near the wilderness. Its precise archaeological identification remains disputed, so the workbook map shows only a broad possible region.

Passover approaches, and pilgrims go up to Jerusalem for ceremonial preparation. The authorities have issued instructions to report Jesus’ whereabouts.

John’s story is moving deliberately toward the cross. The One who called Lazarus from the tomb is about to give His own life for sinners and rise again.

My observations:

A — Application

What has John 11 taught me about Jesus as I prepare to read the final days of His earthly ministry?

P — Prayer

Lord, prepare my heart to study Your cross and resurrection with reverence, faith, and gratitude.

Pray this in your own words:

Hard Questions

Why did Jesus wait if He loved Lazarus?

John 11:5–6 explicitly joins Jesus' love with His delay. The story shows His purpose to reveal God's glory and strengthen belief. It does not give us permission to claim that every delayed answer to prayer will end in a visible miracle.

Does the phrase "not to death" mean Lazarus never died?

No. Jesus plainly says Lazarus died (11:14), and John says he had been in the tomb four days. Jesus speaks about the final outcome of this sickness under His power, not a denial of Lazarus's real death.

Will believers never physically die (11:26)?

Jesus also says believers may die (11:25). Read both verses together: believers have eternal life in Him despite physical death, with future resurrection hope. John 5:28–29 and 6:39–40 support that reading.

Why does Jesus weep when He knows He will raise Lazarus?

Jesus' tears show real grief and love. Knowledge of the coming miracle does not make suffering or loss unreal. Traditional Christian teaching understands Him as truly God and truly human.

Questions and study notes:

Hard Questions (continued)

Was Jesus angry in John 11:33 and 38?

The Greek expression translated “groaned” can suggest forceful indignation or deep agitation. Scholars differ about its focus. The safest reading notes the emotional intensity without pretending to know its single precise object.

Is Lazarus’s return the same as Jesus’ resurrection?

No. Lazarus is restored to earthly mortal life; Jesus’ resurrection is His decisive victory over death in a glorified state. Lazarus’s raising is a sign pointing to Jesus’ greater identity and mission.

Does Caiaphas’s prophecy justify his plot against Jesus?

No. John shows God’s providence working amid a morally wrong plan. Caiaphas seeks political advantage, while the evangelist recognizes a deeper meaning in the words “one man should die for the people.”

Does John 11 blame all Jewish people for Jesus’ death?

No. Jesus, Mary, Martha, Lazarus, many believers, and His disciples are themselves Jewish. John reports decisions by particular leaders. He does not authorize collective blame or hostility toward Jewish people.

Questions and study notes:

Hard Questions (continued)

Where exactly was Ephraim?

John 11:54 names the town and its wilderness region, but the archaeological identification is not certain. Many propose an area north-northeast of Jerusalem. Our map marks this as an approximate area only.

What did the fifteen stadia measure?

John 11:18 places Bethany about fifteen stadia from Jerusalem, approximately 2.8 kilometers (1.7 miles). The precise ancient walking route is not specified.

Are the Bethany in John 11 and “Bethany beyond the Jordan” the same place?

No. John 11 concerns Bethany near Jerusalem. The site named in John 1:28 is beyond the Jordan and its exact identification is disputed. The workbook maps distinguish them.

How is the raising of Lazarus connected to the gospel?

The sign reveals Jesus as the resurrection and life (11:25). It also brings opposition to a climax and prepares readers for the One who will give His life for sinners and rise again (John 20:31).

Questions and study notes:

Reflection

Where do I need to bring grief honestly to Jesus instead of hiding it?

How would I answer Jesus' question, "Do you believe this?"

How can I show Christlike compassion to a grieving person this week?

What does the raising of Lazarus teach me about Jesus' power and the hope of resurrection?

A Prayer of Resurrection Hope

Father, thank You for showing Your glory in Your Son. Jesus, You are the resurrection and the life, and You entered a grieving family’s pain with real compassion. Help me bring my sadness and questions honestly before You and remain anchored in what Scripture teaches. Teach me to love grieving people without offering easy explanations. Give me courage to confess that You are the Christ, the Son of God. Keep my hope rooted in Your cross, Your resurrection, and Your promise of eternal life. May I trust You until the day faith becomes sight. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Pray this in your own words:

ONE TRUTH TO CARRY WITH YOU

Jesus is the resurrection and the life. He enters our grief, calls us to believe in Him, and holds the power of life even in the face of death.

Final Notes