

John 11:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

Analysis

John, writing retrospectively, clarifies the misunderstanding for readers. This editorial comment distinguishes between the disciples' understanding and reality. Jesus spoke of death's sleep (koimesis), but they thought natural sleep (hupnos). This hermeneutical note teaches proper biblical interpretation: understanding Jesus' words requires spiritual perception. John's clarification demonstrates the Gospel's catechetical purpose—teaching proper understanding of Christ's teaching.

Historical Context

John wrote his Gospel decades after these events with full knowledge of their significance. His editorial comments help readers avoid the disciples' misunderstandings and grow in understanding.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do John's clarifications help us properly interpret Jesus' teaching?

2. What role does retrospective understanding play in spiritual maturity?
3. In what ways does Scripture interpret Scripture, clarifying earlier statements?

Interlinear Text

εἰρήκει	δὲ	ό	Ἰησοῦς	περὶ	τοῦ	θανάτου	αὐτοῦ
spake	Howbeit		Jesus	of		death	his
G2046	G1161	G3588	G2424	G4012	G3588	G2288	G846
ἐκεῖνοι	δὲ	ἔδοξαν	ὅτι	περὶ	τῆς	κοιμήσεως	τοῦ
they	Howbeit	thought	that	of		taking of rest	
G1565	G1161	G1380	G3754	G4012	G3588	G2838	G3588
ὕπνου	λέγει						
in sleep	he had spoken						
G5258	G3004						

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 9:24 (Parallel theme): He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.

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