

John 11:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

Analysis

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. This verse contains one of Jesus' seven "I AM" (*ego eimi*, ἐγώ εἰμι) declarations in John's Gospel, deliberately echoing God's self-revelation to Moses as "I AM WHO I AM" (Exodus 3:14). Jesus doesn't merely promise future resurrection or teach about life—He claims to BE resurrection and life incarnate. The Greek present tense *eimi* (εἰμί) asserts timeless, eternal identity: Jesus IS (not was or will be) resurrection and life.

The double claim—"the resurrection AND the life"—addresses both future eschatological hope and present spiritual reality. "Resurrection" (*anastasis*, ἀνάστασις) promises bodily raising of believers at the last day (John 6:40, 44, 54). "Life" (*zoe*, ζωή) refers not merely to biological existence but eternal, abundant life in relationship with God that begins now (John 10:10; 17:3). Jesus offers both immediate spiritual life and ultimate physical resurrection.

"He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" promises that physical death cannot sever believers from Christ or prevent their resurrection. The paradox—dead yet living—reveals that true life transcends biological function. This statement to Martha before raising Lazarus demonstrates that resurrection isn't merely about resuscitating corpses but about Jesus' power over death itself. Christ's identity as Life-Giver grounds Christian hope: because Jesus lives, we shall live also (John 14:19).

Historical Context

Jesus spoke these words to Martha in Bethany (about 2 miles from Jerusalem) shortly before His own death and resurrection, probably in early AD 30 or 33. Martha's brother Lazarus had died and been entombed four days (John 11:17, 39). Jewish belief in resurrection was debated—Pharisees affirmed it, Sadducees denied it (Acts 23:6-8). Martha confessed belief in future resurrection: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (John 11:24).

Jesus' response shifted focus from abstract future hope to His person: He IS resurrection. This claim exceeded Jewish messianic expectations. While Jews anticipated general resurrection at the end of the age (Daniel 12:2), Jesus declared Himself the source and embodiment of resurrection life. His subsequent raising of Lazarus (John 11:43-44) provided visible verification of this claim, though Lazarus's resuscitation differed from Jesus' own resurrection—Lazarus died again, while Jesus rose to immortal glory.

The timing is crucial: John 11 occurs during Jesus' final months of ministry. The raising of Lazarus intensified opposition from Jewish leaders, directly precipitating the plot to kill Jesus (John 11:45-53). Ironically, religious authorities sought to kill the One who IS resurrection and life—the very act (Jesus' death) that would accomplish ultimate victory over death through His resurrection.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' claim to BE resurrection and life (not merely promise them) transform Christian hope?
2. What does believing in Jesus entail, and how does this faith result in life?

3. How should the reality that Jesus has conquered death shape how believers face mortality?
4. What is the relationship between present spiritual life in Christ and future bodily resurrection?
5. How does the raising of Lazarus preview and point to Jesus' own resurrection and its significance?

Interlinear Text

εἶπεν αὐτῇ ὁ Ἰησοῦς Ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ἀνάστασις καὶ
 said unto her Jesus I am the resurrection and
 G2036 G846 G3588 G2424 G1473 G1510 G3588 G386 G2532

ἡ ζωή· ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμὲ καν ἀποθάνῃ
 G3588 the life G3588 he that believeth in me though he were dead
 G2222 G4100 G1519 G1691 G2579 G599

ζήσεται
 yet shall he live
 G2198

Additional Cross-References

1 Thessalonians 4:14 (Faith): For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

John 3:36 (Faith): He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

John 1:4 (Parallel theme): In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

John 5:21 (Resurrection): For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

John 6:44 (Resurrection): No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Isaiah 26:19 (Resurrection): Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

Romans 8:2 (References Jesus): For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

John 6:35 (Faith): And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

Revelation 21:4 (Parallel theme): And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

Philippians 3:10 (Resurrection): That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

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