

John 11:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

Analysis

Jesus' response reveals divine omniscience—He knows Lazarus' condition and outcome before arrival. The phrase 'not unto death' is paradoxical, as Lazarus had died or would soon die. Christ means the ultimate purpose transcends physical death, pointing to resurrection and glorification. This illness would manifest God's glory and the Son's glory, demonstrating Christ's equality with the Father in glory. The 'for' indicates divine purpose in suffering, consistent with Romans 8:28.

Historical Context

The Greek 'doxa' (glory) in John's Gospel consistently points to Christ's deity and the cross. John emphasizes signs that reveal Jesus' divine nature to counter early Gnostic heresies.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' statement challenge our understanding of suffering's ultimate purpose?
2. In what ways does Lazarus' illness glorify both the Father and the Son?
3. How can we maintain faith when God's promises seem paradoxical?

Interlinear Text

ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν Αὕτη ἡ ἀσθένεια
heard When G3588 Jesus that he said This G3588 sickness
G191 G1161 G2424 G2036 G3778 G769

οὐκ ἔστιν πρὸς θάνατον ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ τῆς δόξης τοῦ
not is unto death but for the glory G3588 G1391
G3756 G2076 G4314 G2288 G235 G5228 G3588

θεοῦ ἵνα δοξασθῇ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ δι' αὐτῆς
of God that might be glorified G3588 the Son G3588 of God thereby G846
G2316 G2443 G1392 G5207 G2316 G1223

Additional Cross-References

John 11:40 (Glory): Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

John 9:3 (References Jesus): Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

John 5:23 (Parallel theme): That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

1 Peter 4:14 (Glory): If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

John 2:11 (Glory): This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

John 17:5 (Glory): And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

John 9:24 (References God): Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

John 8:54 (References Jesus): Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

John 17:1 (References Jesus): These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

1 Peter 4:11 (Glory): If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.