

HOW LONG, O LORD?



FIRST MELISSA

Last week...

How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever? **How long** will You hide Your face from me?

How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart all the day? **How long** will my enemy be exalted over me?

Psalm 13:1-3

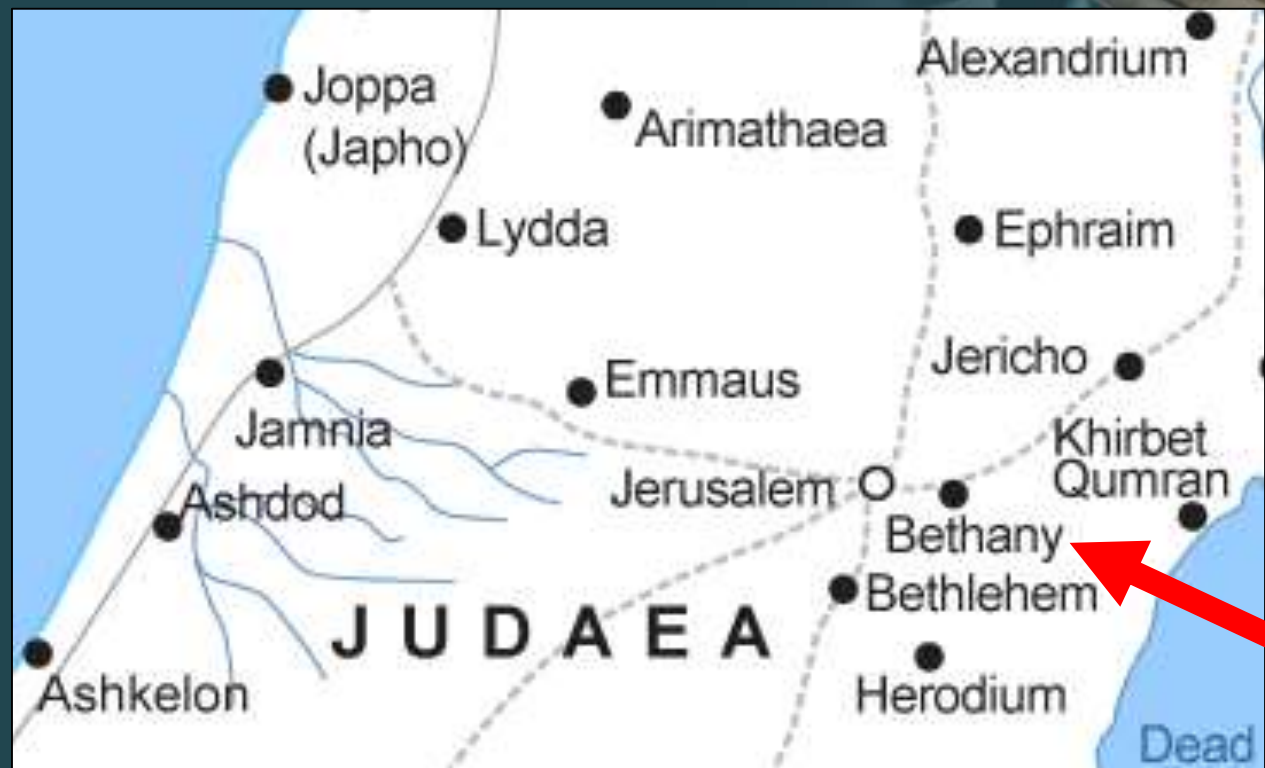


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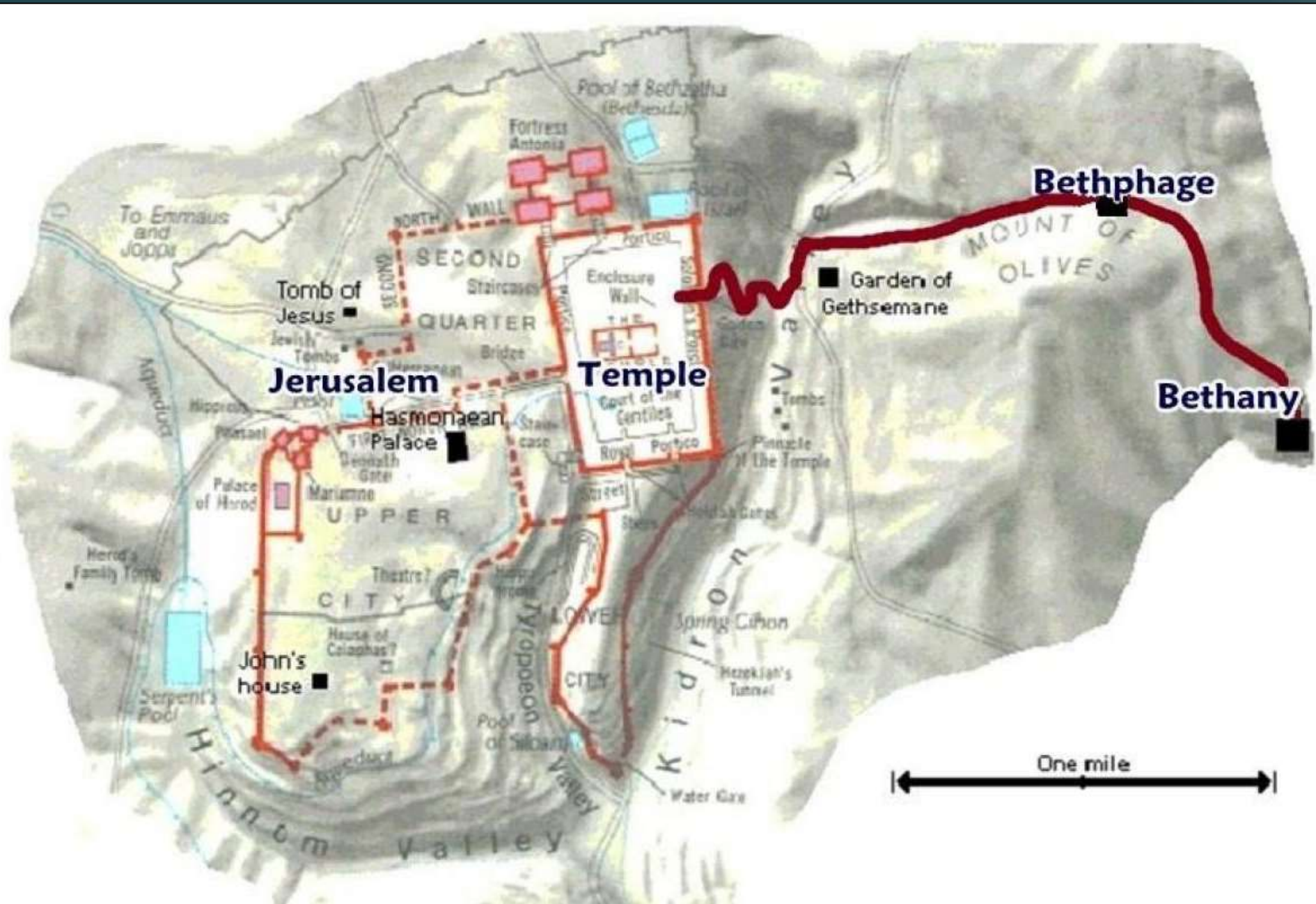
John 11



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Village of **Bethany**, on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, about 3 km east of Jerusalem, was a favorite place of rest and refuge for Jesus.



Bethany became the final stop before Jerusalem just off the main east-west road coming from Jericho. Being at the foot of the mountain, the people could not see Jerusalem, thus giving Bethany a sense of seclusion and quietness. The road between Bethany and Jerusalem provided a ready avenue for travel across the Mount of Olives, with the journey taking about 55 minutes to walk.

Source: Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary

Bethany mentioned in Scripture

- Name means “house of dates”
- Jesus visits Martha and Mary

Luke 10:38-42

- The anointing of Jesus by Mary in the home of Simon the Leper

John 12:1-8, Matthew 26:6, Mark 14:3



Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." But when Jesus heard this, He said, "This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it." John 11:1-4

Name "Lazarus" means "God is my helper"



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Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. **So** when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was [Bethany beyond the Jordan in Peraea].

John 11:5-6

*The delay of Jesus was intentional

If Jesus does not act when I ask Him to act, will I trust that He still loves me?





2 different
villages called
Bethany

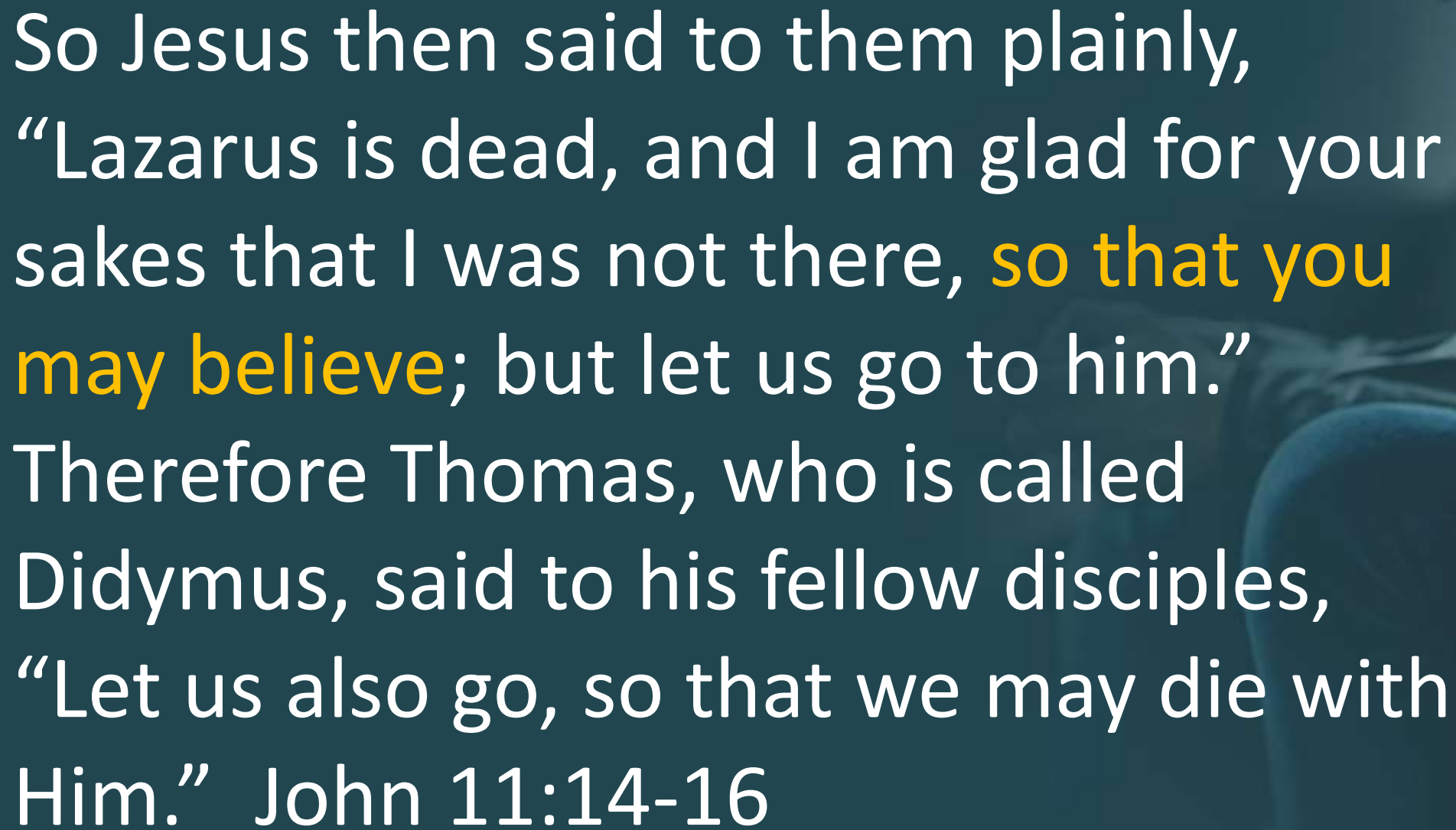
Then after this He said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.” The disciples said to Him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are You going there again?” Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” John 11:7-10



This He said, and after that He said to them, “Our **friend** Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep.” The disciples then said to Him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.” Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep.
John 11:11-13

- The word “friend” in Greek is *φίλος* *philos*
- Jesus said, “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you.” John 15:13-14
- and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,” and he was called the friend of God. James 2:23





So Jesus then said to them plainly,
“Lazarus is dead, and I am glad for your
sakes that I was not there, **so that you
may believe**; but let us go to him.”
Therefore Thomas, who is called
Didymus, said to his fellow disciples,
“Let us also go, so that we may die with
Him.” John 11:14-16

**Jesus' timing is different.
His desire is our faith.**



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Brian Dembowczyk wrote...

Jesus' delay led to Lazarus' death which led to Jesus' miracle which led to faith (11:15) which always leads to God's glory (11:4).

Had we written the script, we would have settled for so much less, wouldn't we have? Our version would have had Jesus rushing to Lazarus' side to heal him followed by a festive party of some sort. And we would have missed so much more that Jesus actually gave to His beloved friends. Jesus gave His friends a great gift when He allowed Lazarus to die. He gave them the gift of advancing their faith and drawing them that much closer to eternal life in Him, the Son of God. The resurrection of Lazarus is a wonderful demonstration of the power of Jesus, foreshadowing of Jesus' resurrection, and picture of our new life in Jesus.

Source: <https://www.gospelproject.com/jesus-wait-go-lazarus/>



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So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off; and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them concerning their brother. Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary stayed at the house. John 11:17-20



Martha then said to Jesus, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.” John 11:21-22

What a mixture of emotions!

Why did You not act sooner?

I still believe in Your power.



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Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise [again].” Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise [again] in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus said to her, “**I am the resurrection and the life**; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?” John 11:23-26

“resurrection is not something that Jesus does, resurrection is something that Jesus is”

- Dr. Eli Lizorkin-Eyzenberg



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Jesus taught about eternal life

- αἰώνιος *aionios* - adjective in Greek translated as “eternal”
- “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have **eternal** life.” John 3:16
- “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has **eternal** life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.” John 5:24
- “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give **eternal** life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.” John 10:27-28



Jesus' seven "I Am" statements in John's Gospel

- **"I am the bread of life."** (John 6:35, 41, 48, 51) As bread sustains physical life, so Christ offers and sustains spiritual life.
- **"I am the light of the world."** (John 8:12) To a world lost in darkness, Christ offers Himself as a guide.
- **"I am the door of the sheep."** (John 10:7,9) Jesus protects His followers as shepherds protect their flocks from predators.
- **"I am the resurrection and the life."** (John 11:25) Death is not the final word for those in Christ.
- **"I am the good shepherd."** (John 10:11, 14) Jesus is committed to caring and watching over those who are His.
- **"I am the way, the truth, and the life."** (John 14:6) Jesus is the source of all truth and knowledge about God.
- **"I am the true vine."** (John 15:1, 5) By attaching ourselves to Christ, we enable His life to flow in and through us. Then we cannot help but bear fruit that will honor the Father.

Source: <https://www.thomasnelsonbibles.com/jesus-seven-i-am-statements/>



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She [Martha] said to Him, “Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world.” John 11:27

What did Martha believe about Jesus?

- Christ / Messiah / Anointed One
- Son of God – see John 1:49, Psalm 2:7
- The Coming One – see John 12:13



When she had said this, she went away and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." And when she heard it, she got up quickly and was coming to Him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha met Him. Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary got up quickly and went out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. John 11:28-31



Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet, saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.”

John 11:32

Have you ever told God what His timing and actions should have been?



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When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was **deeply moved** in spirit and was troubled, and said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus wept.
John 11:33-35

Deeply moved may either be translated “groaned” or more likely “angered.” The Greek word **ἐμβριμάομαι** **embrimaomai** seems to connote anger or sternness. This Greek verb is used only five times in the New Testament, each time of the Lord’s words or feelings: Matthew 9:30; Mark 1:43; 14:5; John 11:33, 38.

Source: Bible Knowledge Commentary



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So the Jews were saying, “See how He loved him!” But some of them said, “Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?” John 11:36-37



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So Jesus, again being deeply moved within,
came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a
stone was lying against it.

John 11:38

Outside the Tomb of Lazarus

Source:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tomb_of_Lazarus#/media/File:Lazarus_Bethany.JPG



Outside the Tomb of Lazarus in 1906



Source:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tomb_of_Lazarus#/media/File:Lazarus_Bethany.JPG



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Inside the Tomb of Lazarus. The burial chamber is at lower right.



Jesus said, “Remove the stone.” Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, “Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been dead four days.” John 11:39

- **Jerusalem Talmud: “For the first three days after death the soul floats above the body, thinking that it will return to the body. When the soul sees the body, that the appearance of the face has changed, it leaves the body and goes its way.” (Yebamot 16:3)**
- **An ancient stone found in the same geographic location where some of the Dead Sea Scrolls were also found... “In three days, live, I, Gabriel, command you.” (Gabriel’s Revelation Stone, Israel Museum)**
- **The idea of resurrection within three days was not a foreign concept to ancient Jews.**
- **Jesus waited for two more days, timing his arrival in such a way that he got to Bethany on the fourth day – when resurrection was no longer possible!**



Jesus said to her, “Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?” So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me.” John 11:40-42



When He had said these things,
He cried out with a loud voice

[κραυγάζω *kraugazo*, literally “shouted loudly”],

“Lazarus, come forth.” John 11:43

**Augustine once remarked that if Jesus
had not said Lazarus’ name all would
have come out from the graves.**



The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.” John 11:44

- **Are you ready to be delivered?**
- **Are you spiritually alive but still wearing grave clothes?**
- **Do you want to be unbound?**



How Can We Be Made Alive?

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us **alive** together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:4-7



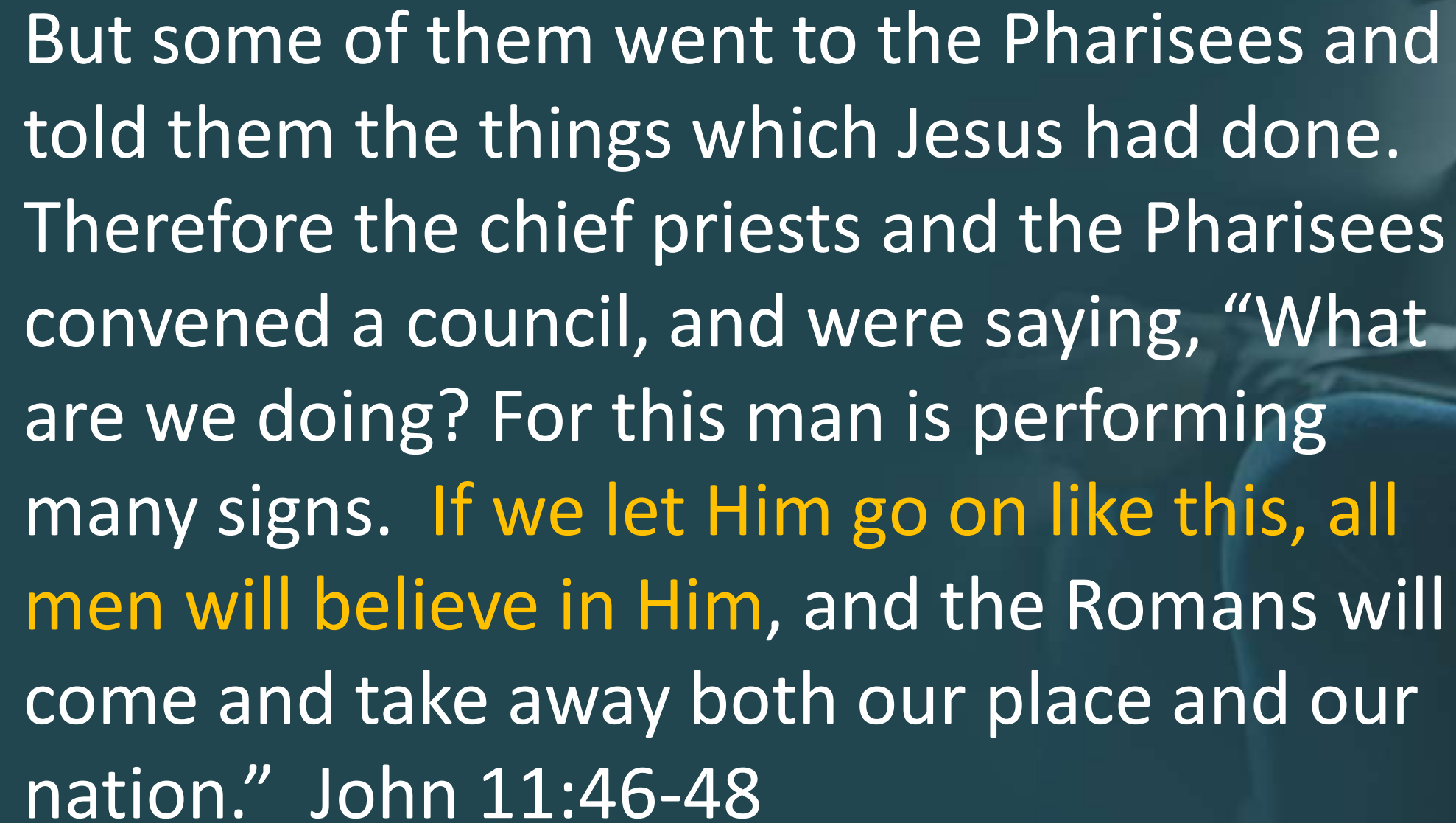
Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what He had done, **believed in Him.**

John 11:45

Did you know that your consistent trust in Jesus, even during painful and difficult days, might help someone else come to believe in Him?



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But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them the things which Jesus had done. Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, “What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs. **If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him,** and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.” John 11:46-48

How can followers of Jesus help others believe in Him?



FIRST MELISSA

How Long, O Lord?

First week's answer...

Until He is finished with me

Second week's answer...

**Until Egypt (a slave mentality)
is out of me**



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How Long, O Lord?

Third week's answer...

Until I get to see the
salvation of God

Fourth week's answer...

Until we as God's people
have humbled our hearts



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Which one are you?

- Martha – hurting and loud, calling out Jesus in public
- Mary – sad and quiet, facing struggles alone at home
- Lazarus – bound up, facing death, needing deliverance



How Long, O Lord?

This week's answer...

Until we experience the gifts
of faith and resurrection



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