

HE RESURRECTS LIFE

CORE PASSAGE: LUKE 7:11-17

CONTEXT

Luke recorded his account of Jesus's Sermon on the Mount in Luke 6. After Jesus concluded His teaching, He entered Capernaum and encountered a Gentile centurion who came to Jesus to plead for the healing and life of his servant. This healing Jesus performed from a distance, praising the centurion's faith. He then traveled to a village called Nain, where He encountered a funeral procession. Jesus's compassion for the widowed mother of the deceased young man led Him to perform a miracle on her behalf.

KEY CONCEPT

Jesus gives new life because He is compassionate and good.

As you examine Luke 7:11-17:

- Take comfort in the fact that Jesus has power even over death.
- Contemplate how Jesus's power to renew life, both spiritually and physically, fits into the good news that we are to share with the world.



TIMELINE

Jesus Heals a Leprous Man
(Luke 5:12-16)

Jesus Teaches About and Heals
on the Sabbath (Luke 6:1-11)

SESSION STUDY:
**Jesus Raises a Widow's Son
from the Dead (Luke 7:11-17)**

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralyzed
Man (Luke 5:17-26)

Jesus Delivers His Sermon
on the Plain (Luke 6:17-49)

John the Baptist Seeks
Confirmation That Jesus Is
the Messiah (Luke 7:18-35)

Daily Readings

☐ **Day 1:** Luke 7:1-10

☐ **Day 4:** Luke 7:24-28

☐ **Day 2:** Luke 7:11-17

☐ **Day 5:** Luke 7:29-30

☐ **Day 3:** Luke 7:18-23

☐ **Day 6:** Psalm 88



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Scripture passages.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

LUKE 7:11-13

JESUS HAS COMPASSION ON US AND WANTS TO GIVE US NEW LIFE.

Underline the circumstances surrounding the mother and son in this passage.

11 Afterward he was on his way to a town called Nain. His disciples and a large crowd were traveling with him. **12** Just as he neared the gate of the town, a dead man was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow. A large crowd from the town was also with her. **13** When the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said, "Don't weep."



VOICES FROM CHURCH HISTORY

"Our Lord Jesus Christ never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. His heart is still as compassionate as when he was on earth. His sympathy with sufferers is still as strong. Let us bear this in mind, and take comfort from it."¹

–J. C. Ryle (1816–1900)

Key Concept: Jesus gives new life because He is compassionate and good.

When Jesus entered Nain, he entered a serious and sorrowful scene—a funeral procession for a widow’s only son. Since this woman was a widow, aside from her grief at losing her child, her only son’s death meant that all provision and protection died with him.

Jesus’s compassion for the bereaved mother was not simply pity for her circumstances. His emotions were not performative. His compassion was not just a feeling to be experienced but one that led to action. Jesus’s example here is clear. He did not just feel sad for the woman, but His empathy produced an action that showed care and provision for the woman.

How should knowing that Jesus is compassionate toward our pain change the way we approach our struggles?

Interrupting the funeral procession, Jesus gave the widow a strange command: “Don’t weep” (v. 13). He was not chastising this mother for her mourning or for feeling sorrow about her loss. This command wasn’t a condemnation of her tears but a comment on the reality the woman was about to experience. “Don’t weep” was a promise of the work Jesus was about to do.

Soon the mother’s tears would no longer be necessary because Jesus would perform a miracle. Jesus has power over life and death, so He had the authority to do something about this grieving mother’s circumstance. The widow couldn’t see all that Jesus was about to do, but that couldn’t stop Jesus. His gentle command was a request for faith from the widow, to trust that when He told her not to weep, it was not a request without a promise.

How might you need to reevaluate the circumstances in your life that lead you to mourning and weeping?

Jesus’s request with His promise to this mother foreshadows the promise Jesus made about His own resurrection. Death would not have the final word over this woman’s son, nor would it have the final word over Jesus’s sacrifice on our behalf.

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Jesus can bring new life in our own lives. As we trust in Him and submit to Him, we are given new life in Jesus, and He will give us resurrected bodies at His return as well.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

JESUS HAS THE POWER TO RESURRECT LIFE, AND MANY NEED TO KNOW IT.

Underline all the action words related to Jesus's miracle in this passage.

14 Then he came up and touched the open coffin, and the pallbearers stopped. And he said, "Young man, I tell you, get up!" **15** The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. **16** Then fear came over everyone, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has risen among us," and "God has visited his people." **17** This report about him went throughout Judea and all the vicinity.

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

RESURRECTION: Both the Old and New Testaments teach that one day believers will experience a resurrection of the body from the dead (Isaiah 26:19; Ezekiel 37:12-14; John 11). The promise of the resurrection is found in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and it will take place at the future return of Christ. Because Christ was the firstfruits of the resurrection, Christians can be assured that their resurrection will be similar in nature, meaning it will be both bodily and glorious (Philippians 3:20-21; Romans 8:22-23). The hope of the future resurrection gives Christians confidence that death has been defeated in the death and resurrection of Christ.

Key Concept: Jesus gives new life because He is compassionate and good.



After Jesus told the widow not to weep, He demonstrated exactly why He said this to her. The first thing Jesus did was something entirely unexpected. He touched the open coffin where the dead man was, which according to Old Testament law would make Him unclean. But as God the Son, Jesus's compassion and holiness were greater than His concern for ritual uncleanness, as we see when He touched a leper (Mark 1:40-42), was touched by a woman with a bleeding problem (Mark 5:27-34), and touched the widow's son's coffin (Luke 7:14). Further, Jesus could not be made unclean by death or sickness because, as God the Son, He has power over both.

Why do you think Jesus was willing to touch the open coffin?

While touching the coffin and standing in close proximity to the corpse, Jesus commanded the dead man to get up, and the man did so and began to speak. With words, Jesus told a grieving mother not to weep, and again with words, He raised her dead son to life, giving her the family and security she needed.

While touching the coffin and standing in close proximity to the corpse, Jesus commanded the dead man to get up, and the man did so and began to speak. With words, Jesus told a grieving mother not to weep, and again with words, He raised her dead son to life, giving her the family and security she needed.

The crowd likened this miracle to the work of a prophet. No doubt the people saw the parallels with the story in 1 Kings 17:17-24 where the prophet Elijah raised the widow's child from the dead. Yet the reality of this situation was greater. God had raised the dead and God had "visited his people" (Luke 7:16) because God was present among them in the flesh!

Regardless of the people's understanding about Jesus's identity, their response to His miracle was correct. This was the work of God, so they worshiped, and they saw in Jesus the power of God, so they told others about Him. This miracle did not just remain as a conversation within the crowd, a local legend; rather, this news about Him was shared and spread across the entire region.

When have you experienced Jesus's compassion and power, and how did you share the experience with others?

GROUP EXPERIENCE

BEFORE AND AFTER

Read Luke 7:11-17. Write down what the widow experienced before and after her encounter with Jesus. Then record your own before and after.

BEFORE

AFTER

WIDOW

YOURSELF

How does remembering your own “before” and “after” story encourage you to trust in Jesus’s compassion and to share His life with others?

Key Concept: Jesus gives new life because He is compassionate and good.



HEAD

How might you have a limited or incomplete understanding of who Jesus is in your life?

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

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As you pray through Psalm 88, bring your own pain to God along with the psalmist. Acknowledge where you may feel hopeless, be honest with God about your questions, and allow yourself to lament your circumstances in faith.



HEART

What thoughts and emotions arise when you contemplate the truth that Jesus has compassion toward you in your suffering?

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



HANDS

How can you show someone in need that compassion spurs action instead of just empathetic feelings?



THE OMNIPOTENCE OF GOD

By Daniel Stevens

“Can God make a rock so heavy that He cannot lift it?” Often discussions of God’s omnipotence quickly devolve into philosophical speculations like these, but the truth that God is all-powerful as laid out in Scripture ought to be received as spectacularly good news. (Incidentally, no, God cannot do that because the question involves a contradiction. It is like asking, “Can God know so much that He does not know something?” or “Can God be so much in a place that He is not there?”)

God’s omnipotence means that He is all-powerful, that He can accomplish anything He wills to do, and that nothing can stop Him from doing His will. This has historically been part of the definition of what it means for God to be God and is usually grouped with other “omnis” when talking about the divine nature: (1) omniscient—God is all-knowing, (2) omnipresent—God is present in all places and not physically limited, and (3) omnibenevolent—God is perfectly and limitlessly good.

GOD’S POWER FOR HIS GLORY

The Bible begins with a grand display of God’s omnipotence. He speaks, and all the universe bursts into being (Genesis 1). This act of creation and the ongoing sustaining of the created world speaks of God’s limitless and eternal power (Romans 1:20; Hebrews 1:3). God is so powerful that we do not have words to sufficiently describe His strength. All the forces of the physical world are both made and upheld by Him, and what we can describe are only the fringes of His power (Job 26:13-14).

God’s power is not mere mechanical action but the full execution of His will: “The LORD does whatever he pleases in heaven and on earth” (Psalm 135:6; cf. 115:3). The movement of weather (135:7), the judgment of the wicked (vv. 8-11), and the reward of His people (v. 12) are all accomplished by His power. As the newly repentant King Nebuchadnezzar proclaimed: “There is no one who can block his hand or say to him, ‘What have you done?’” (Daniel 4:35). No force can stand in the way of God doing His will. He is all-powerful and will accomplish what He sets out to do for His glory and the worship of His name.

GOD'S POWER FOR OUR GOOD

In Scripture, however, God's great power is not shown chiefly in creating and sustaining the world but rather in the salvation of His people. Isaiah stated, "The LORD's arm is not too weak to save" (Isaiah 59:1). The language of the "arm" or "hand" of the Lord is frequently used in the Old Testament to point both to the limitless strength of God and the way He reveals His power to save His people and judge their enemies. After God led the children of Israel through the Red Sea and destroyed the Egyptian host, Moses sang:

LORD, who is like you among the gods? Who is like you, glorious in holiness, revered with praises, performing wonders? You stretched out your right hand, and the earth swallowed them. (Exodus 15:11-12)

When looking forward to the great deliverance that Jesus would bring, the prophet Isaiah asked, "To whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?" (Isaiah 53:1).

In the New Testament, God's power to save remains a dominant theme where we find the power of God revealed in the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus to save His people. The power that raised Christ and exalted Him over "every ruler and authority, power and dominion" (Ephesians 1:21) is the same power that works in and for us who believe (1:20). Since nothing can stay God's hand:

neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39)

Because God's love and power are inseparable, all the unlimited power of God works for the good of His people.

JESUS AND THE POWER OF GOD

While the primary display of God's power in Jesus is the salvation worked through His death, resurrection, and ascension, we see the power of God on display in Jesus's earthly ministry as well. As perfect man, we find Jesus perfectly relying on the Spirit and performing wonders through the Spirit's anointing (Luke 4:18-19). But we also see Jesus directly exercising power that only God has because He is God the Son. Jesus has the authority to forgive sins, which belongs to God alone (Mark 2:7; Luke 5:21). He speaks, and the created world obeys (Matthew 8:27; Mark 4:41). He speaks, and death gives way to life (Mark 5:41-42). We should see in Jesus an echo of the power that spoke light out of darkness to create the world and the power that speaks life into the spiritually dead when we are saved (2 Corinthians 4:6).

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