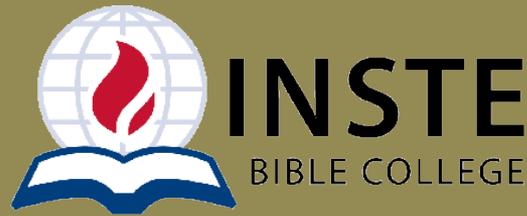


Encountering Jesus (8): A Widow

Drs. Nick and Leona Venditti



Biblical Text

- ¹¹Soon afterward Jesus went with his disciples to the village of Nain, and a large crowd followed him. ¹² A funeral procession was coming out as he approached the village gate. The young man who had died was a widow's only son, and a large crowd from the village was with her. ¹³ When the Lord saw her, his heart overflowed with compassion. "Don't cry!" he said.

Biblical Text

- ¹⁴ Then he walked over to the coffin and touched it, and the bearers stopped. “Young man,” he said, “I tell you, get up.”
¹⁵ Then the dead boy sat up and began to talk! And Jesus gave him back to his mother.

Biblical Text

- ¹⁶ Great fear swept the crowd, and they praised God, saying, “A mighty prophet has risen among us,” and “God has visited his people today.” ¹⁷ And the news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding countryside (Lk 7:11-17 NLT)

Introduction

- WIDOW
 - A woman whose husband has died
 - In the Scriptures, widows are often listed with the fatherless and orphans (Dt 14:29; 16:11; 24:19–20; 26:12; Ps 94:6)
 - Laws were passed to make special provision for this group and to protect them against the unscrupulous

Introduction

- WIDOW
 - The primary law had to do with levirate marriage—i.e., the closest kin would marry the widow (if she was without a son) to continue the family line
 - The plight of the widow was recognized in the number of laws designed for her protection and even survival
 - God was her legal protector (Ps 68:5)

Introduction

- WIDOW

- God provided the essentials (Dt 10:18)
- In the early Christian church there was a recognized group of widows to receive charity
- They were generally those over 60 years of age who had been faithful to their husband, were in poverty, had no relatives to support them, and had lived blameless lives filled with Christian good works (1 Tm 5:9–16)

Introduction

- WIDOW

- Those who denied her justice were cursed by God (Dt 27:19)
- At harvest time the widow might glean the grain in the fields, as well as some grapes and olives (Dt 24:19; Ru 2:2, 7, 15–19)
- She was also eligible for some assistance from the third-year tithe

Introduction

- WIDOW

- Nevertheless, the poverty of widows and the cruel treatment extended to them was so widespread that frequent reference is made to it (Jb 24:21; Ps 94:6; Is 1:23; Mal 3:5)
- A special law provided that the widow's garment could not be used as security for a loan (Dt 24:17) Tyndale Bible Dictionary

Outline

- Jesus and the Crowd
- Jesus and the Widow
- Jesus and the Son

Jesus and the Crowd

- Although our focus is on the widow, both the crowd and the son had an encounter with Jesus
- All three began focused on a funeral
- All three had interaction with Jesus
- All three had a change in opinion and perspective

Jesus and the Crowd

- Nain
 - The site is modern Nein, a small village on the slopes of Mt. Moreh (Nebi Dahi), 9 km (5.5 mi) SE of Nazareth
 - Today it is considered a Muslim town
 - It is only mentioned and found in our story
 - It was the people of that village that mourned the death of the widow's son

Jesus and the Crowd

- The crowd consisted of the funeral procession, the widow and members of the village
- They approached the village gate and Jesus met them with the disciples and another crowd who followed him
- After the miracle of raising the dead boy, fear swept the crowd

Jesus and the Crowd

- The crowd began to praise God
- The crowd recognized the miracle by exclaiming “a mighty prophet has risen among us.” and “God has visited his people today.”
- The result was that the news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding countryside

Jesus and the Widow

- A large crowd was with her when she came out of the village
- Jesus saw the widow and his heart overflowed with compassion
 - **σπλαγχνίζομαι** (splanchnizomai)- to have pity, compassion, feel sympathy with and deep empathy
 - Jesus really cared for the widow

Jesus and the Widow

- Jesus asked her not to cry
- He stopped the funeral procession
- Jesus raised her son from the dead
- He gave him back to his mother
- Jesus truly met the need of the woman which was to have her son back
- Jesus continues to meet all our needs

Jesus and the Son

- Even though we do not know the name of the son, the text does mention that he was her only son
- Culturally, a son had to care and meet the needs of his widowed mother
- Since the son died, who would take care of his mom?
- Jesus commanded the dead son to “get up”

Jesus and the Son

- By raising the son from the dead, Jesus demonstrated three things:
 - His compassion, empathy and care
 - His power and authority over death
 - His provision for the widow
- The son was now reestablished in his role of caring for his mom

Outline

- Jesus and the Crowd
- Jesus and the Widow
- Jesus and the Son

Conclusion

- The resurrected Jesus continues to have encounters with others today just like when he walked on the earth
- Have you had an encounter with the resurrected Jesus of the Bible?
- Let's pray

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