

Third Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 5 June 5, 2016

LUTHERAN

LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday.
An opportunity to make the rhythms of the readings
become a part of the rhythms of your life.

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“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”

June 2, 2016 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH

(Also presented as a part of the bible study/worship midweek service at the home of Robert Russo, who passed away on Monday, May 23, 2016, a Puritas Lutheran Church member.

E-mail puritaspastor@hotmail.com for details.)



<http://www.slideshare.net/fergie4/pdf-sermon-slides-luke-71117>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 615 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 522

“When in the hour of deepest need”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urD-4RyQMil> One LSB Hymn a Week, with 3 variations.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EavXeYxdCdU> Choral presentation from "Heirs of the Reformation: Treasures of the Singing Church" CD available from Concordia Publishing House.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PGtdqYdd9I> A setting by Richard Hillert, a well known Lutheran musician.
 Read more about him at <http://www.morningstarmusic.com/composers/h/hillert>

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

I Kings 17:17-24; RCL suggests 1 Kings 17:8-16,(17-24) or Psalm 146 (Next Week: 2 Samuel 11:26-12:10, 13-14; in addition to the 2 Samuel reading, RCL offers 1Kings 21:1-10, (11-14), 15-21a)

Elijah Raises the Widow's Son

¹⁷ After this the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill. And his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. ¹⁸ And she said to Elijah, "What have you against me, O man of God? You have come to me to bring my sin to remembrance and to cause the death of my son!" ¹⁹ And he said to her, "Give me your son." And he took him from her arms and carried him up into the upper chamber where he lodged, and laid him on his own bed. ²⁰ And he cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, have you brought calamity even upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by killing her son?" ²¹ Then he stretched himself upon the child three times and cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, let this child's life^[a] come into him again." ²² And the LORD listened to the voice of Elijah. And the life of the child came into him again, and he revived. ²³ And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper chamber into the house and delivered him to his mother. And Elijah said, "See, your son lives." ²⁴ And the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is truth."

- a. [1 Kings 17:21](#) Or *soul*; also verse [22](#)

"The wheels almost come off the wagon of the bold narrative known as the Elijah cycle, when the boy dies unexpectedly.

What saves the day is God's surprising willingness to respond to human protest and do something unprecedented...

Elijah is angry. God's ways may be mysterious, but he puts his foot down here. He does not simply reiterate or obey God's words as he has up until now. Instead of waiting and listening for God's response, the all-powerful divine word, he performs what appears to be some sort of sympathetic magic, "stretching himself on the child three times." Then he boldly commands God to "let this child's life come into him again" (verse 21). NRSV translates this in a way that softens Elijah's command to God with "let;" however, we could just as legitimately translate:

"YHWH, my god, return this child's life into him!" Elijah's off-the-cuff, completely unplanned action works. God responds. The boy revives.

In the context of this narrative, I expect a recovery of sorts. I expect a divine answer — or at least a narrator's commentary — that communicates, somehow, that this resurrection miracle was part of God's plan from the beginning. God thought this would be a great way to show the world that God is not only more powerful than Baal but more powerful than death.

But this is not where the text goes. Instead of tying up the loose ends, we hear that the boy is saved because "God listened to the voice of Elijah" (verse 22). This is surprising because on the surface the story of Elijah seems to be about the power of *God's* word. It is a story about getting people to listen to *God's* voice. Yet, at this pivotal moment in the narrative, the tide turns because God listened to *Elijah's* voice.

The boy's breath returns to him because God recognizes the truth in Elijah's protest. In turn, God does something God has never done in the Hebrew Bible (and will only do again through Elisha). God undoes death. Scholars argue about whether the boy was really dead or just close to death. I think that is because the text is not sure either. The Bible is in uncharted territory at this point. The notion of a resurrection is an unheard of experience. The writers are hesitant because they are trying to describe, tentatively and cautiously, something unprecedented.

In this moment of crisis, in response to the truth in Elijah's words, God mobilizes the power of life and does something God has never done before. God attends to this seemingly small thing -- the death of a poor boy -- with an enormous act of reversal. God pulls a resurrection out of a hat.

When the widow sees her son revived in Elijah's arms, she proclaims, "You are a man of God.... the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth" (verse 24). Elijah does not argue, but the reader knows that while her interpretation may be accurate, it does not capture what happened in the upper chamber. The boy's life returns because God recognized that the word of Elijah was truth.

Even when Elijah protests against God, his word expresses *God's truth*. Amazingly, God recognizes it too. Perhaps truth is not just the word of God delivered from on high. Because at least in this narrative, truth emerges out of a dialogue between God and humanity."

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=598

Thoughts on Amy Erickson's commentary? She is Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible at Illiff School of Theology Denver, Colo. One writer commented: Is this the story of a magician's "front man" who is angered when the magician's sales pitch seems to unravel? Are we told how the "front man" demands that the magician set things right again - with an implied "or else I'm outta here"? Do we see the magician perform a great new trick that has never been tried on a real subject - and marvelously, surprisingly, succeed? God must surely be greater than this, and Elijah must surely have been more faithful and humble, too.

Psalm 30(*Psalm 32:1-7; RCL suggests all of Psalm 32 or Psalm 5:1-8*)

Joy Comes with the Morning

A Psalm of David. A song at the dedication of the temple.

30 I will extol you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up
and have not let my foes rejoice over me.

² O LORD my God, I cried to you for help,
and you have healed me.

³ O LORD, you have brought up my soul from Sheol;
you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit. ^[a]

⁴ Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints,
and give thanks to his holy name. ^[b]

⁵ For his anger is but for a moment,
and his favor is for a lifetime. ^[c]

Weeping may tarry for the night,
but joy comes with the morning.

⁶ As for me, I said in my prosperity,
“I shall never be moved.”

⁷ By your favor, O LORD,
you made my mountain stand strong;
you hid your face;
I was dismayed.

⁸ To you, O LORD, I cry,
and to the Lord I plead for mercy:

⁹ “What profit is there in my death, ^[d]
if I go down to the pit? ^[e]

Will the dust praise you?
Will it tell of your faithfulness?

¹⁰ Hear, O LORD, and be merciful to me!
O LORD, be my helper!”

¹¹ You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;
you have loosed my sackcloth
and clothed me with gladness,

¹² that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent.
O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever!

- a. [Psalm 30:3](#) Or to life, that I should not go down to the pit
- b. [Psalm 30:4](#) Hebrew to the memorial of his holiness (see [Exodus 3:15](#))
- c. [Psalm 30:5](#) Or and in his favor is life
- d. [Psalm 30:9](#) Hebrew in my blood
- e. [Psalm 30:9](#) Or to corruption

Psalm 30 has appeared before on The 3rd Sunday of Easter. You can read W. H. Ballinger's comments from that lesson at https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=336

In "Captive to the Word Martin Luther: Doctor of Sacred Scripture" read a chapter about Luther's theological development and the role of Psalm 30. It's not the easiest reading, but gives insight into how the Holy Spirit uses the Psalms. http://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/asw/captive/captive-to-the-word_04.pdf

Galatians 1:11-24 (*Galatians 2:15-21; 3:10-14, RCL does not include 3:10-14*)
Readings from Galatians will continue through July 3. In today's readings Paul is establishing his credentials.

Paul Called by God

¹¹ For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel.^[a] ¹² For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹³ For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it. ¹⁴ And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. ¹⁵ But when he who had set me apart before I was born,^[b] and who called me by his grace, ¹⁶ was pleased to reveal his Son to^[c] me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone;^[d] ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.

¹⁸ Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and remained with him fifteen days. ¹⁹ But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother. ²⁰ (In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!) ²¹ Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²² And I was still unknown in person to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. ²³ They only were hearing it said, "He who used to persecute us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy." ²⁴ And they glorified God because of me.

- a. [Galatians 1:11](#) Greek *not according to man*
- b. [Galatians 1:15](#) Greek *set me apart from my mother's womb*
- c. [Galatians 1:16](#) Greek *in*
- d. [Galatians 1:16](#) Greek *with flesh and blood*



“The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 8th Chapter”

“Glory to You, O Lord”

Luke 7:11-17 (*Luke 7:36—8:3*)

Jesus Raises a Widow's Son

¹¹ Soon afterward^[a] he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. ¹² As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. ¹³ And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, **“Do not weep.”** ¹⁴ Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, **“Young man, I say to you, arise.”** ¹⁵ And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus^[b] gave him to his mother. ¹⁶ Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, **“A great prophet has arisen among us!”** and **“God has visited his people!”** ¹⁷ And this report about him spread through the whole of Judea and all the surrounding country.

1. [Luke 7:11](#) Some manuscripts *The next day*
2. [Luke 7:15](#) Greek *he*

“This is the Gospel of the Lord” **“Praise to You, O Christ”**

[Matthew Poole's Commentary](#)

Ver. 11-15. Luke alone gives us an account of this miracle of our Saviour's. Matthew mentions only the raising from the dead of Jairus's daughter. Luke adds this. John adds that of Lazarus, [John 11:57](#), by which our Lord did mightily show his Divine power, and gave us some firstfruits of the more general resurrection, as well as declared himself to be, as he elsewhere saith, the resurrection and the life. The place where this miracle was done was called Nain. H. Stephen Heb., Chald., Gr. et Lat. nomina, & c., tells us, it was a city or town about two miles from Mount Tabor, at the foot of the lesser Mount Hermon, near to Hendor. It was the custom of the Jews

to bury their dead without their cities. Christ met this dead body carrying out. He was it seems her only child, and she was a widow, so under a great affliction, God by this providence having quenched the only coal she had left in Israel.

And when the Lord saw her, (the text saith), he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. None moved him on the behalf of the widow, neither do we read that she herself spake to him; only our Saviour's bowels were moved at the sight of her sorrow, and consideration of her loss. It is observable that our Saviour wrought his healing miracles:

1. Sometimes at the motion and desire of the parties to be healed.
2. Sometimes at the desires of others on their behalf.
3. Sometimes of his own free motion, neither themselves nor others soliciting him for any such act of mercy toward them;

and that in the three first miracles, (of which Matthew and Luke give us an account here and [Matthew 8:1-34](#)), which he wrought after his famous sermon on the mount, he gave us an instance of all these, in his healing of the leper personally beseeching him, of the centurion's servant at the entreaty of the elders of the Jews, and of the widow's son here, upon his sight of the woman's affliction, none soliciting him. Thereby showing us that we ought not to stay our hand from doing good when we have proper objects and opportunities before us, until we be importuned and solicited there unto. Christ saying to her,

Weep not, forbade not the natural expression of her passion, but signified a sudden and not expected resurrection, so as she should not weep without hope. This said, he cometh and toucheth the bier, or the coffin, and saith not, Young man, in the name of God, I say unto thee, Arise; but,

Young man, I say unto thee, Arise; thereby declaring to them (would they have understood it) that he was the Son of God, and while he was on earth had a power in and from himself by the word of his mouth to command the dead to arise. His word was effective, and to evidence it, it is said, that

he that was dead sat up, so as all might take notice of the miracle,

and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother; to let him know his duty to be subject to her, and the jurisdiction she had over him.

<http://biblehub.com/commentaries/luke/7-11.htm> **Matthew Poole** (1624–1679) was an [English Nonconformist theologian](#). Read his biography at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_Poole

“Ok let’s get it out into the open.. Our western twenty first century minds really struggle with the miracle in the narrative of Jesus encounter with the widow from Nain ... right! I’ll be straight up it was the first question that came to my mind. Is this real...I wanted to understand it scientifically. It goes beyond my understanding and worldview.

Maybe I wanted to be saved by the bell ... which is a saying that comes from times when medical science wasn’t so great and people used to be buried alive and wake up in their coffins and would ring a bell that was placed in them to signal that they were alive. Was he really dead, And if that was the case how did Jesus know? And we still have to deal with Jesus healing someone that was so close to death with simply his word. ‘Young man I say to you get up!’

I wanted to suggest that Luke had simply used this story about Jesus because it fitted into stories about Elijah and Elisha from the Old Testament, it was a literary way of saying if anyone could raise someone from the dead it would be Jesus. I mean Luke even calls Jesus ‘the Lord’ which seems out of step with the rest of the gospel, and this miracle story is only mentioned in Luke’s gospel.

I’m being honest, and I find myself standing with the people who Luke tells us saw this miracle. In the narrative they can’t deny what they have seen, and their conclusion helps us put it into perspective as well. ‘a Great prophet has appeared amongst us... ‘God has come to help his people’. They can’t explain it but in this event they recognise the presence and rescue and power and grace of God. Something they had as a people been longing and waiting for they realise that there is something unique and special about Jesus...” <http://howard-carter.blogspot.com/2015/11/the-widow-at-nain-jesus-compassion.html> Howard Carter is a Presbyterian minister and church planter in Auckland New Zealand. In this blog he reflects on God, life, the scriptures, family, Church and church planting, film and media and other stuff. Join him as he reflects on the Journey.



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