

Jesus and Elijah in the Gospel of Luke: Raising people to life!

- How many resurrection stories are there in the Bible?!
- Does anything strike you about these resurrection stories?
- What do they testify to?
- What do people tend to think about resurrection stories today?

1Kings 17.8-24	Luke 7.11-17
<p>8 Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, 9 “Go now to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and live there; for I have commanded a widow there to feed you.” 10 So he set out and went to Zarephath. When he came to the gate of the town, a widow was there gathering sticks</p> <p>...</p> <p>17 After this the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, became ill; his illness was so severe that there was no breath left in him. 18 She then 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 But he said to her, “Give me your son.” He took him from her bosom, carried him up into the upper chamber where he was lodging, and laid him on his own bed. 20 He cried out to the Lord, “O Lord my God, have you brought calamity even upon the widow with whom I am staying, by killing her son?” 21 Then he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried out to the Lord, “O Lord my God, let this child’s life come into him again.” 22 The Lord listened to the voice of Elijah; the life of the child came into him again, and he revived. 23 Elijah took the child, brought him down from the upper chamber into</p>	<p>11 Soon afterwards he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went with him. 12 As he approached the gate of the town, a man who had died was being carried out. He was his mother’s only son, and she was a widow; and with her was a large crowd from the town. 13 When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, “Do not weep.” 14 Then he came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, “Young man, I say to you, rise!” 15 The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. 16 Fear seized all of them; and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has risen among us!” and “God has looked favourably on his people!” 17 This word</p>

the house, and gave him to his mother; then Elijah said, "See, your son is alive." 24 So 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."

about him spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding country.

- Context of 1 Kings 17
- Similarities and differences?
- Jesus' own resurrection?

Jesus and Elijah in the Gospel of Luke: Ascending to heaven

- How many ascension stories are there in the Bible?
- What do they mean / why are they significant?

Elijah's ascension in 2 Kings 2

Now when the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. 2 Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. 3 The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the Lord will take your master away from you?" And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent."

4 Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here; for the Lord has sent me to Jericho." But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they came to Jericho. 5 The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the Lord will take your master away from you?" And he answered, "Yes, I know; be silent."

6 Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went

on. 7 Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. 8 Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground.

9 When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit." 10 He responded, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." 11 As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. 12 Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

- Succession narrative (like Josh 3-4 when Joshua takes over from Moses)
- Three times Elijah tells Elisha to 'stay here' and three times he refuses
- Elisha requests a double portion of Elijah's spirit
- Elijah is taken up into heaven, with a fiery chariot and horses and a whirlwind
- Elisha takes on his mantle in every sense...

Did Elijah go: i) up to heaven; ii) to Eden / paradise; iii) a secret place; or iv) unknown location?

John 3.13 "no one has gone up into heaven except he who came down from heaven, the Son of Man."

Luke 24

50 Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. 51 While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. 52 And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; 53 and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Acts 1

6 So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods

that the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” 9 When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. 10 While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. 11 They said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

- Jesus predicts his departure three times (Luke 9.22,44; 18.31-33) and says Peter will not follow him (22.31-32).
- Peter swears he will follow him (22.33) but denies Jesus three times (22.54-62)
- The disciples are to be witnesses to Jesus’ death and resurrection (24.48; Acts 1.8)
- Jesus commands them to ‘stay here’ to receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 1.4-5) which happens in Acts 2
- Jesus needs no help in ascending!

Preaching on Elijah / Elisha stories

- We call the books of Kings ‘historical’ books, but it’s really **theological** narrative
- Jewish perspective: Samuel and Kings are part of the ‘Prophets’ section of the Bible
- What are the ‘bookends’ of 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings?
- Whose voices and stories are we drawn to?
- Who / what do Elijah and Elisha represent?
- What are the underlying theological themes going on in the text?
- Can you draw out symbols and patterns that resonate with the Gospels?