

## Why Believe in Luke 7:11-17 -- The Raising of the Widow's Son?

1. It is not reasonable to view this story as exaggeration, nor is it possible to explain it by natural causes. Thus, we are left with two options. Either it is true or it is a designed fiction. It is unlike the story we find in *The Life of Apollonius* 4.45 (See text below).
2. Although Luke alone records the raising of the widow's son at Nain, the other three gospels also record Jesus raising someone from the dead.
3. There was no Jewish expectation for the Messiah to raise people from the dead. Therefore, there is no clear motive to invent such a story.
4. There are significant differences in the raising performed by Elijah and Elisha and those by Jesus. Thus, the stories of Jesus are not based on those of the O.T.
5. Had such a story been invented, an insignificant place like Nain would probably not have been chosen as the setting for such a notable miracle.
6. The event took place in the presence of two great crowds. In Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 4:3, Quadratus claims that some of these witnesses were still alive and could testify before the Emperor.
7. Raisings were not unknown to the early church, and were, in fact, an integral part of the faith for which the Apostles were willing to die.

### Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius* 4.45

“Here too is a miracle which Apollonius worked: a girl had died just in the hour of her marriage, and the bridegroom was following her bier, lamenting as was natural his marriage left unfulfilled, and the whole of Rome was mourning with him, for the maiden belonged to a consular family. Apollonius then witnessing their grief said: "Put down the bier, for I will stay the tears that you are shedding for this maiden." And withal he asked what was her name. The crowd accordingly thought that he was about to deliver such an oration as is commonly delivered as much to grace the funeral as to stir up lamentation; but he did nothing of the kind, but merely touching her and whispering in secret some spell over her, at once woke up the maiden from her seeming death; and the girl spoke out loud, and returned to her father's house, just as Alcestis did when she was brought back to life by Hercules. And the relations of the maiden wanted to present him with the sum of HS 150,000, but he said that he would freely present the money to the young lady by way of a dowry. Now, whether he had detected some spark of life in her, which those who were nursing her had not noticed — for it is said that although it was raining at the time, a vapour went up from her face — or whether life was really extinct, and he restored it by the warmth of his touch, is a mysterious problem which neither I myself nor those who were present could decide.”