**God Has Visited His People**

Based on [Luke 7:11-17](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Lk7.11-17)

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It is amazing how one new virus can turn the world upside down. Every day they release reports about the number of deaths due to COVID-19. Do you know the number of deaths due to sin? 100% of the deceased died on account of sin, lovelessness, anger, rivalry, covetousness, love of money, fear of men and ignorance of God. Adam and Eve try to hide from death with figleaves, we think we can hide from it with facemasks. But in the end, as with both, we must be clothed by God lest we be found naked, defenseless and ashamed.

We have no real defense from even the slightest evil. As Martin Luther once pointed out...we cannot fathom the danger we face every minute of the day from which God protects us. You think you do well on your own, and avoid danger alright. Well, consider for a moment all of the devils that surround you in this world, and are intent on tearing you apart. And O the sin they would slave to stoke from within you. If God would withdraw his hand--if he would tell his holy angels to cease and desist from our aid for one second--we would be torn to bits, physically and spiritually before you can say “Lord Have Mercy”. You live and breath now, not because you are healthy or lived an upright life, nor because you believed and prayed enough, but because it pleases God to keep your death at bay until the appointed time.

At Nain, there was a widow who had an only son who had died at his appointed time. We don’t know how he died, but it was tragic. And he was the only thing left for this woman in the world. She had already lost her husband to death, and now her only son, a full grown man who was to provide for her and take care of her, was dead too. There was no welfare system, no government cheque coming for her...no food bank or safety net of socialized seniors care. It was the man's job to bring home the bacon, and her division of labour was to keep a home for him. Now she is alone in the world. First her husband, now her only son...both dead.

All she can do now is keep a home for herself. All she can do is hope for the charity of extended family, if she has any, or upon alms of pity from neighbors. It’s natural to think she’s crying because of the heartache of losing her son. But looking past the emotional pain, which is no doubt there and primary. Looking into her life situation she is now a helpless widow. You can see why the epistles of the New Testament make such a strong charge for looking after widows, and that failing to take care of family makes one worse than an unbeliever.

And our Lord, Jesus Christ, had a mother who was to walk the same via dolorosa. When Jesus was still a baby, Simeon prophesied to Mary that a sword would pierce her own soul too. She would suffer the heartbreak of losing her son to cruel death. And she was widowed. The last time Scripture mentions her husband Joseph, was when Jesus was twelve. As an adult, Jesus is called “the carpenter's son”, but where is Joseph? Mary is seen much, but without her husband. And when Jesus is on the cross he directs the apostle John to Mary saying, “Behold, your mother”. He instructs John to look after her now that he is going to die.

Jesus cares for the widow at Nain, even as he cared for his own mother at the time of his death. *Nobody knows the trouble I’ve seen; nobody knows but Jesus.* He had compassion on her, understood her misery, but charged her not to weep. How can you tell a grieving mother at her son’s funeral not to weep? Jesus wept at Lazarus’ tomb. And we are told to grieve the dead, but not as though there is no hope. We press on and look forward to the joy that will come in the new creation and the resurrection of all things. Death is bad, but the forgiveness and life that is ours in Christ is greater than all the weeping and fear for this life. We are free to turn from our sinful self indulgence and live every day for Christ, who has for us turned death into the portal of eternal life.

There is always a reason to weep. Death still looms over the world, casting its shadow over everything. And now with this endless pandemic, we are daily reminded to be afraid because there could be another outbreak, so wear your mask and social distance. Wouldn’t it be better that we were daily reminded that the devil prowls around as a roaring lion, that sin is crouching at our door, and that death is coming for us all. Isn’t that a more serious problem even than Coronavirus? You might catch COVID or spread it to others; but what if you fall into sin, or lead others to it? Cover your face with a mask, sure, but more importantly bridle your tongue. Distance yourself from your neighbor for a time, yes. But more importantly...as long as you are in the world distance yourself from temptation, sin and evil. COVID can lead to earthly death; but sin can lead to eternal death. If the world bid you take this pandemic seriously; how much more does heaven cry out for you to work out your own salvation?

Death continues to cast its shadow, as we enter the eight month of government sponsored fear of death. But you, fear God and seek his righteousness, and you will fear no evil. Jesus Christ comes into the world and he is the light. He says to his disciples, “The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going.” Don’t give in to fear. You have the light, walk in him.

The widow is told not to weep, and then Jesus raises her son from the dead. Then he gave the man to his mother, just as he gave John to his own mother from the cross. And the woman was not distracted. Even before jesus raised her son, he told her not to weep because of the hope that is laid up in heaven. When Jesus asked Martha if she believed her brother Lazarus would live, she stated the faith, “Yes, I know he will live again in the resurrection of all flesh”. Her faith in the consolation of Jesus came before, he raised her brother. So too, she was told not to weep before her son was raised. And even though the consummation of our joy, must wait until His coming...he had come for her. And her grief was turned to joy then and there, as Jesus demonstrated his power over death for all to see. And all who saw it glorified God, who had visited his people.