

Luke His Purpose in Writing

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Luke 1:3-4 (ESV)

³ It seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴ that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.

Previously in Luke

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- Like **Matthew**, the **Gospel of Luke** gives us a birth story and genealogy of Jesus, but it includes some different details.
- Toward the beginning of his public life, Christ was rejected in the synagogue at Nazareth.
- Still, his ministry of healing, preaching and teaching continued to grow.
- Last week, we saw an example of his teaching.

Luke 7 Introduction

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- In **Luke 7**, we get several stories that all point to Christ's divine identity.
- He is God and his is the Messiah.
- He will show that to us by revealing his power over sin, disease and even death.
- Response to him will be divided. Some see their need for him while others do not.

Luke 7 Key Verses

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- Luke 7:47-50 (ESV)

⁴⁷ Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.” ⁴⁸ And he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” ⁴⁹ Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this, who even forgives sins?” ⁵⁰ And he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Luke 7 Outline

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1. A Centurion's Servant 7:1-10
2. A Widow's Son 7:11-17
3. Messengers from John 7:18-35
4. A Sinful Woman 7:36-50

1. A Centurion's Servant 7:1-10

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- 7:2 A centurion was a Roman officer over about 100 men.
- He isn't asking about himself, he is asking about his servant.
- 7:3-5 As a Gentile, he may not have been sure that Jesus would want to come to his house.
- The elders of the Jews provide a good reference for the man.

1. A Centurion's Servant 7:1-10

7:6-8 “Lord, ... I am not worthy to have you come under my roof.”

Tony Evans nails it,

Clearly, his self-perception was quite different from that of the various ... religious leaders ... This man had a high view of Jesus (“Lord”) and a humble view of himself (“I am not worthy”).¹



1. A Centurion's Servant 7:1-10

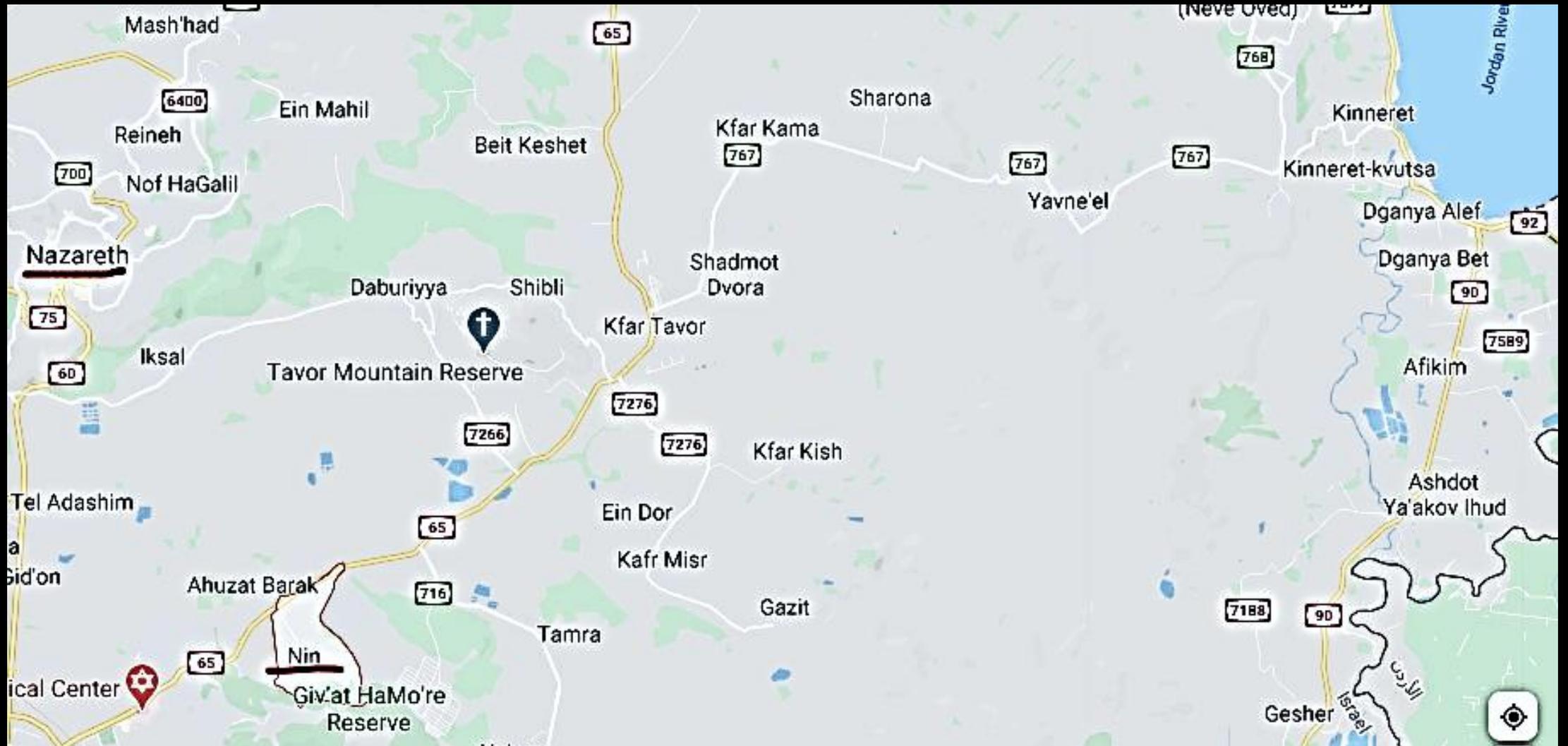
- 7:9-10 It is common to see the crowds marvel at Jesus.
- In this case Jesus marvels at the man's faith.
- Again, the centurion is a Gentile and his faith resulted in the healing of his servant, not himself.
- The man provides us with an example of faith, humility and intercessory prayer.

2. A Widow's Son 7:11-17

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- This is the only time **Nain** is mentioned in the Bible.
- Today it is known as **the Arab village of Nin**, in the Galilee area of Israel.
- It is about 6 miles SE of Nazareth and maybe 20 miles SW of the Sea of Galilee.

2. A Widow's Son 7:11-17



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- Church in Nain (Nin):
A Catholic church in an Arab village
- A church has existed on this site since at least the 4th Century.
- See <https://www.custodia.org/en/news/church-nain-will-be-reopened>

2. A Widow's Son 7:11-17

- In this story, there is no mention of anyone praying or exercising faith.
- **7:13** Jesus simply “**had compassion on**” the grieving widow and mother.
- Christ’s compassion and power over death give us insight into the nature and character of our Lord.

3. Messengers from John 7:18-35

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- In the parallel story in **Matthew**, we learn that John sends these messengers from prison.
- **7:19** That may explain his impatience with Jesus or his possible wavering regarding Christ's identity.

3. Messengers from John 7:18-35

- 7:21-23 In response, Christ points to the fact that he is fulfilling Old Testament prophecy as the Messiah should.
- 7:24-28 When the messengers leave, Jesus gives John the best character reference imaginable.
- Jesus concludes that John is pretty much the greatest man that ever lived.
- Yet we the church hold an even more privileged place.

3. Messengers from John 7:18-35

- 7:29-30 ²⁹ (When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just, having been baptized with the baptism of John, ³⁰ but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.)
- Let's let this sink in for a minute. It is a pattern.
- Those who lived outwardly sinful lives were baptized by John and received Jesus, but not the Pharisees and lawyers.

3. Messengers from John 7:18-35

- Many people responded to God's call to repentance.
- The religious leaders, however, were too satisfied in themselves to see any need to repent.
- First, they rejected John's baptism, then they rejected Jesus.
- Their closed hearts led them from one error to another.

3. Messengers from John 7:18-35

The rejection of the gospel message is not due to the form of its presentation. John preached the gospel while living an ascetic life-style. Jesus preached the gospel in the joy of the kingdom's arrival, but both were rejected.

Neither satisfied the wishes of this generation because their message was the same. Both preached a message of repentance, and both offered salvation to the outcasts. ²



Robert H. Stein,
Southern Baptist
Theological Seminary

3. Messengers from John 7:18-35

- 7:31-35 Sometimes it is not in *how* you say it.
- We Christians often think we need to *package the Gospel* in such a way as to make it relevant.
- There is a huge market for books and other materials designed to better connect the church with the world.
- Most of these are useful *to a certain extent*.

3. Messengers from John 7:18-35

- 7:31-35 Still, it would be hard to find two messengers more different in their approach than John and Jesus.
- The result: The same people rejected them both.
- Again, sometimes it is not in *how* you say it.
- In any package, the message of the gospel gives us a solution to the problem of our sin – so that is what we have to want.

4. A Sinful Woman 7:36-50

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- 7:36 We know Jesus ate with “sinners,” but he also ate with Pharisees when he had the chance.
- It’s possible that he never turned down a free meal.
- There is a wonderful lesson here on the importance of hospitality in the church, so keep that in mind!

4. A Sinful Woman 7:36-50

- All four Gospels give us a story similar to this one, of a woman anointing the feet of Jesus.
- The other three are probably describing the same event, in the last week of Jesus' life.

4. A Sinful Woman 7:36-50

- This one happens earlier and in Galilee, not near Jerusalem.
- The main issue is also different.
- This one deals with **sin and forgiveness**.
- The other deals with the **sacrifice of the woman** and the high value of the perfume.

4. A Sinful Woman 7:36-50

- 7:37, 39, 47 Luke tells us 3x that the woman is a sinner.
- 7:47, 48, 49 By the end of the story, he assures us just as many times that Jesus is the forgiver of sins.

4. A Sinful Woman 7:36-50

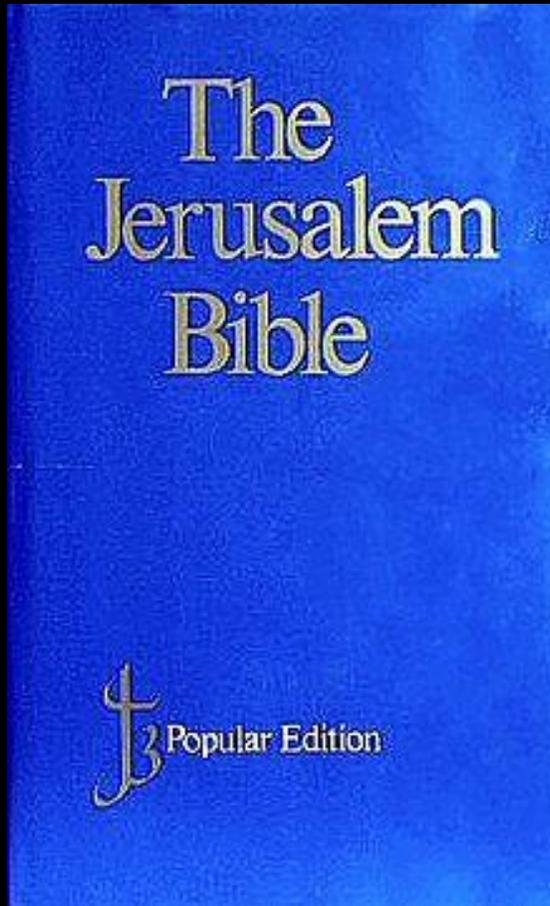
7:44 Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, “Do you see this woman?”

Tony Evans, once more,

“Jesus wasn’t questioning the Pharisee’s eyesight. He was questioning his discernment.”¹



4. A Sinful Woman 7:36-50



- 7:47 The Jerusalem Bible clarifies, *“Her sins, her many sins, must have been forgiven her, or she would not have shown such great love.”*

4. A Sinful Woman 7:36-50

- Simon saw the woman as she was in the past, not as Jesus could make her.
- 7:50 Jesus concludes with an assurance that her faith has saved her.
- It was not her love or her sacrifice. Those were but the outcomes of her saving faith.

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3. In relation to John's questions, Christ shows how he is fulfilling messianic prophecy.
4. No matter how we package the gospel, some will reject it.
5. In the story of the sinful woman, Christ points out the connection between faith, forgiveness and love.

Luke 7 A Prayer

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- Dear Father in heaven,
- We come before you in humility knowing that in ourselves there is nothing that would make us worthy to have you listen to our prayers.
- We truly have nothing to offer but our faith in Christ.
- We know that he came to proclaim forgiveness to sinners like ourselves, so we ask you to cleanse us of our sins.

Luke 7 A Prayer

- We ask you to make us faithful intercessors, much like the centurion, with respect to those we love. Please hear the prayers that we offer up for others.
- Help us to remain faithful in the midst of our own trials, even as John had to remain faithful in prison.
- And as we recognize how great your forgiveness has been toward us, make us people who would show you great love.
- In Christ,
- Amen.

Luke 7 References

1. Evans, Tony. The Tony Evans Bible Commentary . B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.
2. Stein, R. H. (1992). (Vol. 24, pp. 232233). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.