

81 Nain

Names (also known as)

Nain, Nein

Etymology

nā'ân - a home; figuratively a pasture: - habitation, house, pasture, pleasant place. BDB – ‘the habitation of a shepherd’

Location/Description

In the record of Scripture, Nain is mentioned only in connection with the visit of Jesus and the miracle of raising the widow's son from the dead (Luke 7:11). Present day, It is identified with the village called Nein, standing on the north-western slope of Jebel ed-Duhy (= the “hill Moreh” = “Little Hermon”), about 4 miles (6.5 km) from Tabor and 25 miles (40 km) southwest of Capernaum. At the foot of the slope on which it stands is the great plain of Esdraelon.



Scriptural references

Old Testament

None

New Testament

Luke 7:11

Famous characters

Jesus, the widow of Nain and her son

Brief History

Edward Robinson and Eli Smith, who visited Palestine in the mid-19th century, identified

Nein as, "the Nain of the New Testament," where, according to the Bible (Luke 7:11-17), Jesus raised a young man from death and reunited him with his mother.



Nain today approaching from Mt Tabor

Nein is mentioned in the writing of Eusebius (c. 263–339) and Jerome (c. 347–420) as being situated near Endor (Indur). Its identity as a biblical site was recognized by the Crusaders, who built a church there to commemorate the site of the miracle, a church rebuilt by the Franciscans. Nein has been visited by many travellers and pilgrims since. Robinson and Smith also note that Nein decreased in size over the ages, and was at their time of writing but a small hamlet, inhabited by only a few families. At the end of the 19th century, Nein was described as a small village made of stone and adobe, with a small mosque, named Mukam Sidna Aisa, to the north.



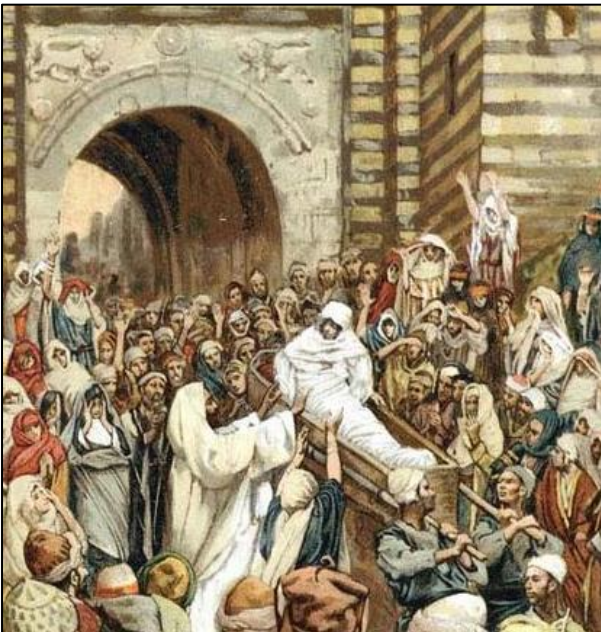
Nain as it was when Robinson and Smith visited

‘Possessing the gate of his enemies’

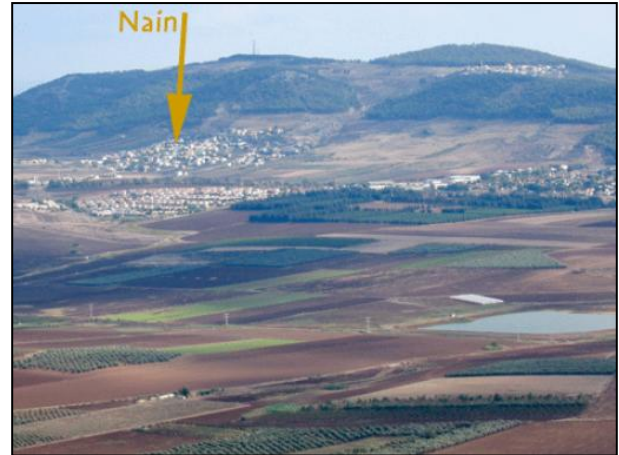
The events at Nain in Luke 7 contain the first resurrection by the Lord in his ministry and the first in Israel since the days of Elisha. The record in Luke 7 shows a type of the work that the Lord Jesus would accomplish in his mission.

It was into the city of Nain that Jesus led his disciples and ‘much people’ with him. At the same time as the Lord was entering the city, a funeral procession was leaving the city and in the procession, a widow with ‘much people’ of the city following her. The widow had lost her husband and now lost her only son. In the gate of the city, the Lord had compassion on the widow, and came near and touched the bier. With Christ’s touch and the words “Young man, I say unto thee arise”, the young man was resurrected and delivered to his mother.

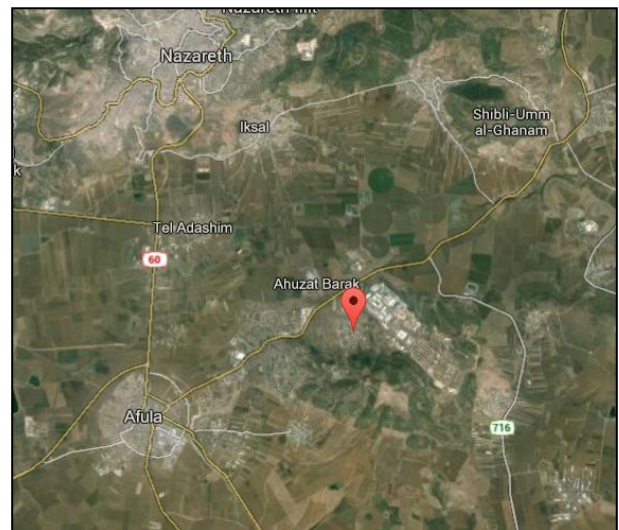
Since the days of Adam there had been an endless procession leading to death, and now in this incident there was a graphic portrayal of the problem confronting the whole human race. The now childless widow is a picture of the pathetic state of mankind, with no natural source of help and overwhelmed by death. As this procession left the city it was interrupted by the procession of Jesus, the Prince of Life (Acts 3:15). In the gate of the city of death, the Lord reached out and identified with ‘the sting of death’. He associated with those he came to save, and in the act of doing so, made the seemingly endless procession following death ‘stand still’.



In this miracle the Lord foreshadowed the work that he would ultimately accomplish. The spiritual sign of this place is that in the gate of the city of Nain, the Lord Jesus Christ showed that he would ‘possess the gate’ of the greatest enemy of man, namely death.



A view of Nain from the north



Sources:

Easton’s Bible Dictionary
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nein>

(Compiler – Jeff Cooper)