

Who was Eutychus in the Bible?

Eutychus, whose name means “fortunate,” had the misfortune of falling out of a window—and the fortune of experiencing a miracle directly afterwards. The account of Eutychus’s accident is found in Acts 20:7-12.

The setting is the tail end of Paul’s third missionary journey. He has sailed from Philippi and is on his way back to Jerusalem with a gift for the church there. He spends a week in Troas, and “on the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight. There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting. Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third story and was picked up dead. Paul went down, threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him. ‘Don’t be alarmed,’ he said. ‘He’s alive!’ Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking until daylight, he left. The people took the young man home alive and were greatly comforted” (Acts 20:7-12).

Luke, a medical doctor and eyewitness to this incident, plainly states that Eutychus was dead. The fall from the third-story window had been fatal for the young man. But Paul, a true apostle of Jesus Christ, was given the power to raise Eutychus back to life again. This is one of very few resurrections recorded in the Bible—others include miracles performed by Elijah (1 Kings 17:17-24), Elisha (2 Kings 4:32-37), Peter (Acts 9:36-42), and, of course, Jesus Himself (Luke 8:49-56; John 11).

After Eutychus was restored to life, the church in Troas had a meal, Paul continued preaching, and, as would be expected, Eutychus’s friends and family were “greatly

comforted" to not be planning a funeral (Acts 20:12).

Some may try to use the story of Eutychus to warn against the dangers of sleeping in church—or of preaching too long—but the point of the story is simply the power of God to heal. Luke includes the story in order to show the great, life-giving power of God and to further authenticate Paul's message as one who had “the marks of a true apostle, including signs, wonders and miracles” (2 Corinthians 12:12).