

The Centurion's Servant Is Healed  
Matthew 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10

**Matthew 8:5-13**

<sup>5</sup> When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, appealing to him, <sup>6</sup> "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly." <sup>7</sup> And he said to him, "I will come and heal him." <sup>8</sup> But the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. <sup>9</sup> For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." <sup>10</sup> When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel\* have I found such faith. <sup>11</sup> I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, <sup>12</sup> while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." <sup>13</sup> And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; let it be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment. **ESV**

**Luke 7:1-10**

After he had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. <sup>2</sup> Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him. <sup>3</sup> When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his servant. <sup>4</sup> And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him, <sup>5</sup> for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue." <sup>6</sup> And Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. <sup>7</sup> Therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. <sup>8</sup> For I too am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me: and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." <sup>9</sup> When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." <sup>10</sup> And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well. **ESV**

## CENTURION.

The captains of the sixty centuries (companies of one hundred men) in the Roman legion. The centurion carried a staff of vine wood as his badge of office. There were various degrees of rank among the centurions according as they belonged to the three divisions of the *triarii*, *principes*, and *hastati*, and led the first or second *centuria* of one of the thirty *manipuli*. The first centurion mentioned in Scripture is the one who in our Lord's early ministry sent a request that He would heal his dying servant (Matt 8:5-10). The other is Cornelius, an early convert to Christianity (Acts 10:1). Others are mentioned (Luke 7:2, 6; also in Acts).

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This miracle is similar to the healing of the nobleman's son in John 4:46-54, although some argue that they are the same event; they differ in particulars. The narratives do not agree.

There is, however, some difficulty in the two records in Matthew and Luke. Matthew says the Centurion himself came to Jesus. Luke says the Centurion sent "elders of the Jews" to Jesus.

Would it be stretching credibility to say that the Centurion in sending a delegation represented himself? E.g., Rhonda calls Walter and says, "Jim asked me to have you call Bob about the order of worship next Sunday and suggests we sing 'Amazing Grace.'" Walter calls Bob and says, "Jim said he wants us to sing 'Amazing Grace' next Sunday."

Is Walter wrong? What would Bob understand to have occurred? That Jim had talked with Walter; not Rhonda.

Another possibility? The Centurion is standing with "elders of the Jews" and other friends. The Centurion, who thought himself not worthy that Jesus should come under his roof, did not directly speak to Jesus. Notice in Mt 8:10 "those who followed."

This officer of the Roman garrison located at Capernaum approached Jesus on behalf of his slave "who was dear to him and was about to die."

Note: All the Centurions, who are serious soldiers in the Roman Army, who are mentioned in the New Testament, were “not far from the kingdom of God.”

The Centurion at the crucifixion:

“Truly this was a righteous man; truly this was the Son of God.”

Cornelius {Acts 10} “was a devout man, and one who feared God.”

Julius {Acts 27: 1, 3, 43} saved Paul when the ship was wrecked on the reef.

Notice too that the Jewish elders make application on behalf of the Centurion, a Roman Gentile who cared for his slave. Roman soldiers were known for their cruelty to their slaves and nearly everyone else. This says something about the slave as well.

The Centurion had heard about Jesus and in genuine humility would not approach Him directly, therefore he sent the elders of the Jews.

This Centurion to have been in such good standing with the Jews, would have been acquainted with the OT Scriptures, and while not a Jewish proselyte, had become a believer in the only true God.

He had built a synagogue for the town {Luke 7:5}.

Jesus starts to go to the Centurion’s house but the Centurion says that it is not necessary. Why?

He understood authority!

This disease, at the command of Jesus, must obey its Master.

The Centurion obeyed orders and those he ordered obeyed him.

So he saw no difficulty on the part of Jesus to “only speak a word.”

Jesus' response, Luke 7:9; Mt 8:11, 12

**Luke 7:9** When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith."

**Matthew 8:11, 12** I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, <sup>12</sup> while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The Kingdom of Heaven is a spiritual kingdom established in the hearts of men.

The sons of the kingdom are the Jewish nation who should recognize Messiah, but for the most part will reject Him.

Do not miss this lesson on authority. How did the Jews challenge Jesus?  
By what authority...? Matt 21:23

Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?"

After this they find the slave well.

**And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well.**

Some lessons:

Don't judge someone too hastily by their occupation unless it is in and of itself sinful. Examples? Abortion provider; seller of pornography, etc.

The best men are those with the lowest opinion of themselves. There was no hypocrisy in the Centurion's protest or else Christ would have known it.

Did Jesus miss an opportunity to teach us the terrible error of having armies?

There is no scriptural support for pacifism. Define pacifism.

**1** : opposition to war or violence as a means of settling disputes ;  
refusal to bear arms on moral or religious grounds

**2** : an attitude or policy of nonresistance

“Jesus marveled?” There are a number of occasions where the people marveled at Jesus, but here He marveled. “Marvel” is to “wonder at.”

Did Jesus ever marvel at the faith of a Jew?

Matthew 8:10, Jesus marveled at the faith of this Gentile Centurion.

Mark 6:1-6

6:1 Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him. 2 And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, "Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands! 3 Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" And they were offended at Him. 4 But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house." 5 Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. 6 **And He marveled because of their unbelief.** Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.

Those who should have know Him were for the most part blinded and so He was a Light unto the Gentiles

Isaiah 42:5-9

5 Thus says God the LORD, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, Who gives breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk on it: 6 "I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, **As a light to the Gentiles**, 7 To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house. 8 I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to graven images. 9 Behold, the former things have come to pass, And new things I declare; Before they spring forth I tell you of them."

What are your thoughts?

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