

MIRACLES OF JESUS

HEALING THE CENTURION'S SERVANT - LUKE 7:1-10

- A. Jesus entered Capernaum after teaching the people (1), *After he had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum.*
1. *His sayings* refers to Jesus' teaching which included the *Sermon on the Mount*, as recorded in Matthew 5 -7, and partially in Luke 6:17-49.
 - a. The Sermon on the Mount is misunderstood by many who compare it to the 10 Commandments.
 - b. The 10 Commandments reveal that man can't be saved by his works because it is impossible to obey the Law.
 - c. The Sermon on the Mount pictures what a person who has been saved by grace looks like.
 2. *In the hearing of the people*, Luke 6:17-18, *And he came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured.*
 3. Capernaum
 - a. It was a city on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee.
 - b. He adopted it as his center of ministry where many miracles took place, in Matthew 9:1, *And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city.*
- B. A centurion had a need he hoped Jesus would meet (2-5)
1. He had a gravely ill servant and he sent Jewish elders to Jesus in the hope that He could heal him (2-3), *Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him. When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his servant.*
 - a. *centurion*
 - 1) A centurion was a Roman officer in command of about 100 men.
 - 2) Centurions in the New Testament are pictured favorably.
 - a) Cornelius in Acts 10-11 who was directed to have Peter come and share a message from God.
 - b) A centurion present at Jesus' crucifixion and identified Him as the Son of God, Mark 15:39.
 - c) The centurion who listened to Paul's advice as he was being transported to Rome, Acts 27:43.
 - 3) The centurion heard about Jesus through the miracles He had performed.
 - b. The centurion had a special relationship to the servant.
 - 1) *servant* is the same word for slave which is probably what he was.
 - 2) He was *highly valued* by the centurion which means *held in honor, precious, dear.*
 - a) In verse 7, the centurion used a different word for *servant* which can mean *son*.
 - b) The centurion had a personal concern for this slave whom he highly respected.
 - c. Jesus' reputation became known by the centurion who sent a delegation of Jewish elders to Jesus seeking help.
 - 1) The servant was in great pain, Matthew 8:6, *Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly.*
 - 2) Possibly, due to the servant's condition, the *Jewish elders* were to ask Jesus to come to the centurion's home.
 - 3) These men were civil rulers of Capernaum.
 - a) Normally, Jews hated Roman soldiers who occupied their towns.
 - b) The centurion enjoyed the respect of the Jews in Capernaum as will be seen in verse 4 and 5.
 - c) It is possible that the centurion doubted that Jesus would have considered a Gentile Roman soldier's request but hopefully He would respond to the Jewish elders.
 2. The Jewish elders expressed why the centurion deserved to have his servant healed (4-5), *And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him, for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue."*
 - a. The elders *pleaded with him earnestly.*
 - 1) It may also be translated, *begged him diligently.*
 - 2) We don't know why they were so motivated unless they hoped the centurion would continue to show favor on their community.

- b. They declared that the centurion was *worthy* to receive his request.
 - 1) He loved the nation of Israel which should be evident because he built their synagogue.
 - 2) It appears they were promoting merit but this is a story of grace.
- C. The centurion demonstrated his faith in Jesus through the report of his friends (6-8)
1. Jesus agreed to go with them but was met on the road by friends of the centurion (6), *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.*
 - a. Jesus went with the Jewish elders.
 - 1) It is certain that Jesus did not choose to go out of obligation.
 - 2) Jesus was not hindered by boundaries like Jew versus Gentile and master versus slave.
 - 3) I believe He went to demonstrate the Sermon on the Mount and to authenticate His message.
 - b. The centurion sent friends to Jesus telling Him not to be troubled by his undeserved request.
 - 1) The centurion felt unworthy to have Jesus enter his house.
 - 2) He may have wanted to spare Jesus the embarrassment of entering a Gentile's house since a Jew would consider himself defiled if he entered the house of a Gentile.
 - 3) I believe it was much more.
 - a) The centurion said he was *not worthy* for Jesus to enter his house.
 - b) In relation to the elders, he was worthy, but in relation to Jesus, He was not.
 - c) The centurion came to know Who Jesus is based on His miracles and he felt unworthy before the One Who has all authority.
 2. The centurion believed that the command of Jesus would heal his servant (7-8), *Therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. 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."*
 - a. From Matthew 8:5, we find that the centurion came out from his house to speak with Jesus.
 - b. The centurion was uncomfortable in having Jesus enter his house.
 - 1) *Therefore*, looks back to verse 6 and the centurion's presumed unworthiness.
 - 2) Again in verse 7, the centurion used another word for *unworthy*, translated *presumed*.
 - c. The centurion offered another alternative to Jesus.
 - 1) He compared Jesus' authority over sickness to his authority over his soldiers.
 - 2) He demonstrated faith in Jesus Who he believed could heal his servant by command.
 - a) In Matthew 8:8, the centurion called Jesus, *Lord*, which can mean simply a term of respect but here I believe it indicates his faith in Jesus as Messiah.
 - b) He believed that Jesus' ability to perform miracles authenticated Who He is which is the purpose of miracles.
 - c) Most Jews believed that Jesus was a miracle working man but this Roman centurion believes that Jesus was a miracle working God.
 - d) Larry Richards, *The meaning of Christ's miracles was clear to a Gentile military man, while God's chosen people hesitated and held back.*
- D. Jesus rewarded the centurion's faith (9-10), *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." And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well.*
1. Jesus was amazed by the centurion's faith.
 - a. He declared to the crowd that had followed Him that He had not found such faith even in Israel.
 - b. He was referring to a faith in Who Jesus is based on what He could do.
 - c. William Taylor, *He saw not only that he was the Messiah, but also that he was God Incarnate, and therein lay the superiority of his faith to that of any Israelite. Not any one of the apostles, as yet, had reached the lofty altitude on which this Gentile soldier stood.*
 2. The centurion's messengers returned to his house and found the servant healed.
 - a. The healing was immediate, Matthew 8:13, *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.*
 - b. The healing was complete.
 - 1) The servant was *well*, which means to be *in good health*.
 - 2) Charles Ryrie, *Not only was the paralysis relieved, but the pain that tormented him was gone.*

CONCLUSION

- A. This passage tells of a man physically healed by Jesus and another who was spiritually healed.
- B. It is a message of hope! The hope of a miracle led the centurion to Jesus.
- C. It is a message of grace! The Jewish leaders were pushing merit but Jesus offers grace.
- D. It is a message for everyone! Everyone needs spiritual healing which comes through Jesus alone.,