

**Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)**

**Luke 7:1-10**

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. This week, we will read Luke chapter 7. Today, we will read verses 1-10.

**Verse 1: “Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum.”**

Capernaum was the center of Jesus' earthly ministry at that time. In the previous chapter, we saw that after Jesus called the twelve apostles, He spoke a discourse to them and to the people, which we usually call the Sermon on the Plain. After He finished speaking these words, He returned to Capernaum. Because Jesus had stayed in Capernaum for a period of time, performing many miracles and teaching the people, the local residents of Capernaum should have known Him and been aware of all that He had done.

**Verse 2: “And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die.”**

Very strikingly, this chapter shifts its focus to a Gentile—a Roman centurion. A centurion was in charge of one hundred soldiers. At that time, all of Galilee was under the control of Herod. However, Herod himself did not possess real authority; the true power lay in the hands of the Roman military. This Roman centurion commanded one hundred soldiers. As we will see, he was actually a Gentile who loved people and feared God. He had a servant who was dear to him, and this servant was sick and about to die.

**Verse 3: “So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant.”**

At that time there was a system of slavery, and generally speaking, the life of a servant was considered of little value. Yet for the sake of a servant whom he loved, this centurion asked Jewish elders to go and plead with Jesus to come and heal his servant. He had great faith in Jesus; he knew that Jesus had the power to heal his servant, even though the servant was already near death. At the same time, he also felt that, as a Gentile, his status might be inappropriate. Jesus’ earthly ministry was first directed to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Perhaps through his own observation, the centurion had come to understand this, and therefore felt that he might not even be qualified. Thus, he earnestly requested the Jewish elders to go and plead with Jesus on his behalf.

**Verses 4–5: “And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for whom He should do this was deserving, for he loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue.”**

This Roman centurion not only loved people, but loved them to such an extent that he had an excellent reputation. When he asked the Jewish elders to go to Jesus, they immediately went and spoke on his behalf before Jesus. They even gave him a commendation, saying that Jesus should heal his servant because he was worthy. Why was he worthy? Because he loved their nation. Although he was a ruler, he loved them. Moreover, he was a God-fearing man who allowed them to build a synagogue. Through these few words spoken by the elders, Luke clearly portrays this centurion as an official who was loved by the people—one who loved others, loved the people, and feared God.

**Verse 6: “Then Jesus went with them. And when He was already not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying to Him, ‘Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof.’”**

In Luke's account, Luke seems to emphasize especially that Jesus came into the world for all peoples. Therefore, when Jesus heard the plea of the Jewish elders, He immediately went with them toward the centurion's house to heal the servant. This centurion must have been very familiar with Jewish customs. At that time, during the transition between the Old and New Covenants, most Jews still held firmly to Old Testament teaching—that Jews and Gentiles were to be separated. Thus, the centurion felt that it might not be appropriate, and said to the Lord, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof." In other words, he did not dare to let the Lord violate what the Jews regarded as proper regulations—that Gentiles and Jews should remain separate—because of his own need.

**Verse 7: "Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed."**

This is very remarkable. When the Jewish elders introduced this man to Jesus, they said that he was worthy for Jesus to heal his servant. But how did he evaluate himself? First, he considered his house unworthy for Jesus to enter. Second, he regarded himself, as a Gentile, unworthy even to come and meet Jesus. His evaluation of himself was exceedingly low. What, then, did he ask of Jesus? "But say the word, and my servant will be healed."

We have mentioned earlier that when Jesus healed the sick and cast out demons, He usually did so one by one, and very often He personally laid His hands on them. For Jesus knew that the crucial matter was not merely healing sickness or casting out demons, but that through these acts, those who were demon-possessed or afflicted by disease might receive salvation through His help—a salvation that concerns eternity. In the case of this centurion, Jesus was willing to go, willing to lay hands, and willing to associate with him. But the centurion himself felt unworthy; therefore, he only asked that Jesus speak a word. He then proceeded to explain the basis of his request.

**Verse 8: “For I also am a man placed under authority, having 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.”**

He was a man who thoroughly understood authority. A person who possesses authority only needs to speak a word, and those under his authority will carry it out and complete it. Why did he have authority? The verse begins, “For I also am a man placed under authority.” He was a Roman officer; above him were higher-ranking officers, and above them were layers upon layers of authority. A person who truly has authority is one who submits to authority. This centurion obeyed the commands of those above him, and therefore he had confidence that any command he issued to those under him would be carried out immediately.

Based on his personal experience, and likely through observing Jesus for some time—since Jesus frequently came in and out of Capernaum—he saw that there was a special authority upon Jesus. Why? Because Jesus submitted to authority. To whose authority did Jesus submit? He submitted to God’s authority. Because He fully submitted to God’s authority, God’s authority rested upon Him. For God, healing is simply a matter of a word. As long as God says that the illness is healed, healing takes place. The centurion had absolute confidence that God could do this. At the same time, based on his observation, he recognized that Jesus was One who fully submitted to God, and therefore God’s authority was upon Him. He only needed to exercise that authority by speaking one word, and his servant would be healed.

In fact, the same principle applies to us today. As long as we submit to authority, authority will be present in our lives. In the home, if you submit to your father’s authority, you will find that you also possess a father’s authority toward your children. Among the saints who serve in the church, if one fully submits to God’s authority, that person will have authority that comes from God. Thus, Christian authority is never about position. It is not because I am an elder that others must submit to me. Rather, it is because I submit to God’s authority in my own life that there is authority upon me for others to recognize and follow. This centurion

understood this very clearly. Therefore, he said to Jesus, You only need to speak a word; You do not need to come to my house.

**Verse 9: “When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, ‘I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!’”**

In this passage, there are three evaluations. The first is the evaluation of the Jewish elders, who considered the centurion worthy of Jesus’ healing. The second is the centurion’s own evaluation of himself—he regarded himself as a Gentile who was completely unworthy to come before Jesus. The final evaluation is Jesus’ evaluation of him: “I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel.” A person who truly understands authority is one who submits to authority; and a person who truly submits to authority is also a person of great faith. Jesus declared that such great faith He had not found even in the house of Israel.

Therefore, in verse 9, “When Jesus heard these things, He marveled at him.” The word “marveled” is indeed used here. In the four Gospels, there are very few things that caused Jesus to marvel, because He is the Son of God. He knows what is in the hearts of all people, and nothing should surprise Him or catch Him off guard. Yet in the entire Bible, there are only two instances where it is said that Jesus marveled, and this is one of them. The great faith of this Gentile centurion caused Jesus to marvel, because He had not found such faith even among Israel.

The other instance is found in Mark 6:6, where the Chinese Bible translates it as “astonished,” but the English still uses the word “marvel.” The context is when Jesus returned to Nazareth and taught the people there, and His fellow townspeople said, “Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon?” Because of this, Jesus did not perform many mighty works there. Thus, verse 6 says that “He marveled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.”

In the Gospels, Jesus marveled only twice—once at the great faith of a Gentile centurion, and once at the unbelief of His own hometown of Nazareth. Those who should have believed did not, and that caused Jesus to marvel; and one who seemingly should not have believed had such great faith, and that also caused Jesus to marvel.

**Verse 10: “And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.”**

Just as the centurion had said, Jesus did not need to go there; He only needed to speak a word, and the servant was healed. Jesus marveled because even before He had met the centurion face to face, the centurion already possessed such great faith; therefore, one word from Jesus was sufficient.

The centurion’s faith was actually based on two things. First, it was based on his understanding of authority. He knew that only those who submit to authority truly possess authority. And in Jesus he saw One who fully submitted to God, and therefore possessed God’s authority. Second, it was based on his understanding of himself. He knew that he was utterly unworthy—unworthy for Jesus to come to his house, and unworthy even to come before Jesus. Because of these two things, Jesus marveled at his faith.

May we truly learn a good lesson from this centurion. After we are saved, the grace we receive from God is entirely undeserved. Standing in a position of being unworthy, whenever we have any need and come to Jesus to ask, we must first be people who submit to authority—especially submitting to God’s authority in our lives. A person who submits to authority and understands grace is a person full of faith.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You. Through the example of this centurion, teach us in our daily lives to submit in all things to Your leading, to submit to Your will upon us, and to submit to Your authority in our lives. Only one who submits can truly know You; and only one who truly knows You can be a person of faith. Help

me to grow today on the path of faith. Bless my life today. We pray in the Holy Name of Jesus Christ.