



NOTES FOR FURTHER STUDY

Supplemental Texts

2 Kings 5; Pss. 107:19-20; Isa. 6:9-10; Jer. 9:23-24; Matt. 7:28-29; 8:5-13; 28:18; Mark 6:5-6; 11:22-25; 15:39; Luke 4:14-30; 13:38; 19:28-44; John 10:8; Acts 10; 13:46-48; 18:5-6; 28:26-28; 1 Cor. 1:26-31; 4:3-4; 2 Cor. 3:4-6; Phil. 2:3-4; Col. 1:15-20; 2:9-15

Study Summary

After finishing His famous sermon on the plain, Jesus continues His ministry among the outcasts and lowly, revealing His authority once again in the healing of a centurion's servant. This passage reveals the character and quality of a humble faith that is found in the most unlikely of places: a Gentile centurion. The story points back to God's work through the prophet Elisha and forward to His plan of salvation to save people from all nations and all peoples through the work of His Son Jesus.

Historical & Theological Background

The Centurion: "Originally a centurion was an officer who commanded a hundred soldiers, but in time the number varied. Josephus" (a Jewish historian) "speaks of a gradation of officers, with the decurion below the centurion (like the NCO below the captain) and the chiliarch and the hegemon above him (like the colonel and the general)." "The historian Polybius" notes the qualifications "looked for in centurions: they must not be so much 'seekers after danger as men who can command, steady in action, and reliable; they ought not to be over anxious to rush into the fight; but when hard pressed they must be ready to hold their ground and die at their posts'. Men of fortitude and integrity were clearly required. It agrees with this that each of the centurions of whom the New Testament gives us knowledge is a man of character (cf. 23:47; Acts 10:22; 22:26; 23:17, 23; 24:23; 27:1, 43)." The centurion of this story was "possibly a Roman seconded to serve with the forces of Herod Antipas." However, "there were no Roman forces in Galilee before AD 44" "and therefore the man" was "likely a member of Herod Antipas's guard, which was organized according to the Roman military system," and he may or may not have been a Roman citizen; "his nationality is not stated, but he was not a Jew (cf. 7:5, 9), nor is there any indication that he was a proselyte" (a Gentile convert to Judaism).

[citations taken from: *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary* by Morris; *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* by Marshall; *NIV Biblical Theology Study Bible*, GE D.A. Carson]

DISCUSSION PRIMER

April 10th is the celebration of Palm Sunday on the Church Calendar. Palm Sunday commemorates the day Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey to the cheers of the people and begins Holy Week—the week leading up to Good Friday and the celebration of Easter Sunday. In preparation for MC read Luke's account of Palm Sunday (Luke 19:28-44). What similarities in events and themes does Palm Sunday have with the story in Luke 7? Come to MC ready to

TEXTUAL INVESTIGATION

LUKE 7:1-10

Big Idea: Humble Faith Trusts Not in Personal Credentials But in Christ
Fallen Condition Focus: Trusting in Personal Credentials

- What "saying" is Luke referring to in verse 1? How does the previous sermon connect with the current story? (See Matt. 7:28-29)
- Who is the centurion? What does he want from Jesus (v. 2)? (See HTB)
- Why do the Jewish elders believe Jesus should heal the centurion's servant (v. 3-5)?
- Why does the centurion send additional messengers to stop Jesus from coming into his house (v. 6-7)? (See Acts 10:27-29)
- In what does the centurion place his confidence that Jesus can heal his servant (v. 7-8)?
- How does Jesus respond to the centurion's faith (v. 9)? When else is Jesus left amazed? (See Mark 6:5-6) How does this foreshadow God's plan of salvation? (See Acts 13:46-48)
- What happens to the servant (v. 10)? What does this reveal about Jesus' power/authority?
- What OT story does this story connect with? What NT story does this foreshadow? (See 2 Kings 5 and Acts 10)

Gospel Connection: Read Col. 2:9-15. How does Jesus display His power/authority in our salvation?

TEXTUAL INTERSECTION: How does the text intersect with our lives?

- In what things does the world around us place its confidence and trust? What sources of authority or power are highly esteemed in our culture?
- What might you consider to be your credentials? Do you ever place confidence in your talents or resources? Should you? Why or why not?
- What is humility? (See Phil. 2:3-4 & 1 Cor. 4:3-4) What place does humility have in our culture? In our church? In your life?
- Where do you place your confidence and trust? Do you have a "great faith" like the centurion? Why or why not?
- What place does prayer have in your life? Do you seek God in prayer? Do you have confidence that God hears our prayers and will answer them? (See Mark 11:22-25)
- How might you grow in humble faith this week? This month? This year? What habits or practices need to be replaced? What habits or practices might you take up?

REPLICABLE QUESTIONS

Read **Luke 7:1-10** and explore together what the passage reveals about:

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| 1) The character and purposes of God? | 4) Our identity in Christ? |
| 2) The fallen human condition? | 5) Our obedience to Christ? |
| 3) The gospel of Jesus Christ? | 6) Our relationship to others |

TEXTUAL APPLICATION: "So, what now?"

Have each participant identify a personal take-away in light of this study. Is there . . .

- a command to obey? • a beauty to behold? • a mission to fulfill?
- a promise to claim? • a truth to believe? • an example to follow?
- a sin to repent of? • a service to render? • a person to tell?