

## (18) Centurion's Servant Healed (Mt. 8:5-13; Lk. 7:1-10)

1. This synoptic episode is perhaps the most difficult one to harmonize.
  - a. Matthew's account describes the Centurion appearing personally (Mt. 8:5).
  - b. Luke's account describes the Centurion sending representatives and not appearing personally (Lk. 7:3,6).
  - c. This study will utilize a great harmonization presented by Zane Hodges in October, 1964 ([BibSac Vol.121 #o484, pp.321-332](#)).
2. The basic harmonization:
  - a. The outline:
    - 1) The slave boy falls sick (Lk. 7:2).
    - 2) The Centurion sends Jewish elders to Jesus (Lk. 7:3-5).
    - 3) The Centurion sends friends to Jesus (Lk. 7:6-8).
    - 4) The Centurion comes himself (Mt. 8:5-9).
  - b. Matthew's Gospel purpose needed no mention of the messengers preceding the Centurion.
  - c. Luke's Gospel purpose needed no mention of the Centurion's change of heart and personal appearance before Christ.
  - d. Neither account fatally contradicts the veracity of the other.
3. The details (Lk. 7:2-8; Mt. 8:5-9) and the Lord's response (Lk. 7:9; Mt. 8:10-13).
  - a. ἑκατοντάρχος hekatontarchos or ἑκατοντάρχης hekatontarchēs <sup>#1543</sup><sub>20x</sub>: commander of 100, *centurion*. Also κεντυρίων kenturiōn <sup>#2760</sup><sub>3x</sub>: *centurion* (Mk. 15:39,44,45).
  - b. δοῦλος doulos <sup>#1401</sup><sub>126x</sub>: *slave* (Lk. 7:2,3,10). παῖς pais <sup>#3816</sup><sub>24x</sub>: *boy* (Lk. 7:7; Mt. 8:6,8,13). ἔντιμος entimos <sup>#1784</sup><sub>5x</sub>: *highly regarded, precious* (Lk. 7:2; 14:8; Phil. 2:29; 1<sup>st</sup> Pet. 2:4,6).
  - c. Sick and about to die (κακῶς ἔχων ἡμελλεν τελευτᾶν kakōs echōn ēmellen teleutan) (Lk. 7:2). Lying paralyzed at home and fearfully tormented (βέβληται ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ παραλυτικός, δεινῶς βασανιζόμενος beblētai en tē, oikia, paralutikos, deinōs basanizomenos) (Mt. 8:6).
  - d. Relative perspectives on worthiness.
    - 1) He is worthy (Lk. 7:4-5). ἄξιος axios <sup>#514</sup><sub>41x</sub>.
    - 2) I am not worthy (Lk. 7:6-7). οὐ γὰρ ἰκανός ou gar hikanos (Lk. 7:6 also Mt. 8:8). οὐδὲ ἑμαυτὸν ἡξίωσα oude emauton ēxiōsa (Lk. 7:7).
  - e. "I will come" or "shall I come?" (Mt. 8:7).
  - f. Under authority and authority over (Mt. 8:9; Lk. 7:8). The Centurion's appreciation for chain of command equipped him to appreciate God's nature and work through the orderly application of authority power.
  - g. The Lord's testimony accurately portrayed the Centurion's statements as a manifestation of faith beyond any proportion He had yet witnessed among the Jews (Mt. 8:10; Lk. 7:9).
4. The Prophecy (Mt. 8:11-12).
  - a. Come from east and west (Isa. 43:6; 45:22; Mal. 1:11; Mt. 24:31).
  - b. Dine with Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob (and all the prophets) (Lk. 13:28-30). Is this the same as:
    - 1) Eating & drinking at the Lord's table in the Lord's Kingdom (Lk. 22:30). Or:
    - 2) The Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9; Matt. 22:1-14; Lk. 14:15-24). Or:
    - 3) A Feast of Fat Things (Isa. 25:6-9). A systematic study of eschatological eating events is greatly needed.
  - c. Outer darkness (Mt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:30). Not the same as the black darkness (2<sup>nd</sup> Pet. 2:4,17), which is reserved forever (Jude 6,13).
  - d. Weeping & gnashing of teeth (Matt. 8:12; 13:42,50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Lk. 13:28).
    - 1) Used 7x in the NT. 6x in parables. Matt. 8:12 is the only non-parable application.
    - 2) Definite articles highlight the unique and extreme character of this activity. ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων ho klauthmos kai ho brugmos tōn odontōn.
    - 3) The sense of sorrow and loss is magnified by the unnecessary nature of it. Each participant could've, should've, and now wishes they would've made different decisions in their Christian walk.
5. The epilogue.
  - a. The Centurion did not immediately go (Mt. 8:13).
  - b. The Centurion's messengers did go (Lk. 7:10).