

## 22. Jesus Healed a Servant and a Son

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain to others the importance of building their lives on the right foundation. That right foundation begins when people come to Jesus with a humble spirit that causes them to have an attitude of repentance. In this topic, we are going to learn about Jesus healing a servant and then raising a son from the dead.

Luke 7:1-5 says, “Now when He concluded all His sayings in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and ready to die. So when he heard about Jesus, he sent elders of the Jews to Him, pleading with Him to come and heal his servant. 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.’” Jesus had spoken to a larger group of disciples after He chose the Twelve. A great crowd of people who had come from many areas heard Jesus as He taught His disciples. Then, we see that Jesus went to Capernaum.

A Roman centurion lived in the area of Capernaum. This centurion had a servant that was very precious to him. This servant became sick and was close to the point of death when Jesus came to Capernaum. The centurion had heard about Jesus. He asked some of the leaders of the Jews if they would go and tell Jesus about his sick servant and plead with Jesus to heal the servant. The fact that the elders of the Jews told Jesus about this centurion showed that they had a high respect for him. They knew that this centurion loved the Jewish nation and said that he had even built a synagogue for the Jews.

Luke 7:6-10 says, “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. Therefore I did not even think myself worthy to come to You. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. 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*.’ 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!’ And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.” Jesus was always ready to show compassion to those who asked Him for help.

However, the centurion did not feel that he was even worthy to have Jesus come into his house because he was a Gentile. As a result, he sent some friends with a message to Jesus as Jesus came toward his house. The centurion told the messengers to tell Jesus that he did not feel worthy to have Jesus come into his house. The fact that he felt he was not worthy is the reason why he had not come to Jesus personally to make the request. The word translated “worthy” means *to have weight or value*. The centurion felt that he had no value in the sight of Jesus because he was a Gentile. In Luke 15:18-19, the lost son was in the pigpen and decided, ““I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no

longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.””” Just like in the time of Jesus, many people today feel that they are so sinful that they are not worthy to be accepted by Jesus. They need to know that Jesus will always show compassion and accept them.

Jesus had just taught His disciples in Luke 6:20, “Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: ‘Blessed *are you* poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.’” Here, we see that Jesus had a living illustration of what it means to be poor in spirit. This Roman centurion had shown by His attitude that he had humbled himself before God. This was a real example of true humility and faith. As a result, this centurion could look forward to being in the kingdom of God because He recognized by faith that Jesus is God.

Because he felt unworthy, the centurion asked Jesus to just speak the word and his servant would be healed. He then gave his reason for that request. He said that as a centurion he was under the authority of the Roman government. At the same time, he had one hundred soldiers who were under his authority. He could tell these soldiers to go and they would go or he could tell them to come to him and they would come to him.

A crowd of people was following Jesus and Jesus immediately used these words to talk about the faith of the Roman centurion. Jesus said that He had not found such a great faith among any of the people of Israel. In this way, Jesus pointed out that the Roman centurion had shown great faith in the fact that Jesus is God because he knew that if Jesus spoke the word, his servant would be healed even though Jesus never saw or touched the servant. Hebrews 11:1 says, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Here, we see that faith believes the promises of God even though we have not seen the promised thing happen yet. That was the faith that the Roman centurion showed. Those who brought Jesus the message found the servant that had been sick totally healed when they returned to the house.

The next day Jesus went to a city called Nain where He showed great compassion to a widow. Luke 7:11-13 says, “Now it happened, the day after, *that* He went into a city called Nain; and many of His disciples went with Him, and a large crowd. And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the city was with her. When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, ‘Do not weep.’” When Jesus left Capernaum, many of His disciples went with Him. In addition, a large crowd of other people also followed Jesus that day as He went to the city of Nain.

When they came close to the gate of the city of Nain, they met a large crowd of people coming out of the city. These people were all a part of a funeral procession and they were carrying the body of a dead man out of the city to be buried. This man was the only son of his mother. In addition, his mother was a widow. This meant that she had no husband or other sons to care for her during her older years of life. Such widows had a very difficult time in that period because they had no one to provide for their basic needs. In fact, many people took advantage of them. Jesus warned in Luke 20:46-47, “‘Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, who devour

widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation.” In these verses, Jesus warned about the judgment that would come to those who stole the houses of widows and then tried to cover up their sin by praying long prayers for the widows.

In contrast, Jesus saw this widow and knew that the man being carried out of the city was her only son. Jesus was filled with compassion for this needy widow. The word translated “compassion” meant *to be filled with love and pity for a person in great need*. This same word is used in Matthew 9:36-38 where we read, “But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, ‘The harvest truly *is* plentiful, but the laborers *are* few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.’” Here, we see that the love of Jesus for the multitudes that were spiritually lost caused Jesus to ask us to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest.

Because of His compassion, Jesus told the widow, “Do not weep.” Luke 7:14-17 says, “Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried *him* stood still. And He said, ‘Young man, I say to you, arise.’ So he who was dead sat up and began to speak. And He presented him to his mother. Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, ‘A great prophet has risen up among us’; and, ‘God has visited His people.’ And this report about Him went throughout all Judea and all the surrounding region.” Here, we see that Jesus then went and touched the open coffin.

The men who were carrying the coffin stood still when Jesus touched the coffin. Then, they had what was probably the most amazing experience of their entire lives. Jesus just said, “Young man, I say to you, arise,” and the dead young man in the coffin sat up and began to speak. Jesus then presented the young man to his mother. We saw that Jesus had many disciples plus a large crowd that had been following Him. In addition, many people were a part of the funeral procession. All of these people were suddenly filled with fear. The word translated “fear” means *fear, terror or reverence*. The kind of fear that the people had that day is described by what they did. They immediately glorified God. The people recognized that God had raised up a great prophet among them. It had been four hundred years since Israel had any prophets and so the people suddenly realized that God had visited His people.

We see the report about Jesus raising this young man from the dead quickly spread among the Jews. This miracle had happened in the area of Galilee. However, we read that the news of this miracle spread throughout all of Judea and the surrounding region as well. This means that people throughout both Galilee and Judea heard about this miracle. There had been people raised from the dead in the Old Testament. However, that had happened during the time of Elijah and Elisha more than eight hundred years earlier. We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand why this miracle caused such great amazement among the Jews. That way they will be able to explain why Jesus chose to demonstrate His compassion in this way. May the Lord richly bless you as you equip your children to explain how Jesus demonstrated the mighty power of God.