

# The Lord in Capernaum and Nain

## Part 1

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*Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.*

[00:00:00] If you could turn to chapter 7 of Luke's Gospel, and read some verses at the beginning, through to verse 16.

Luke 7 through, chapter 1 through 17.

Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick and ready to die.

Chapter 7 verse 3.

And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying that he was worthy for whom he should do this. For he loveth our nation, and he hath bought us a synagogue. [00:01:04] Then Jesus went with them, and he was now not far from the house.

And when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself, for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof. Wherefore, neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee. But say unto me a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers.

And I say unto one, Go, and he goeth. And to another, Come, and he cometh. And to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And they that were sent returning to the house found the servant whole, that had been sick. [00:02:03] And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain. And many of his disciples went with him, and much people. And when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother. And she was a widow, and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

And he came, and touched the bier, and they that bare him stood still.

And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak.

And he delivered him to his mother. And there came a fear on all. And they glorified God, saying that a great prophet is risen up among us, and that God hath visited his people.

Now, I feel constrained to look at these verses, [00:03:06] because we see something of the beauty of our Lord Jesus in these two cases.

The wonderful way in which there was something for the Lord, where he could drink of the cup by the way, and answer in faith to him, which would refresh him. And this refreshment came, not from a Jew, but from a Gentile.

And we see how the Lord was here as a man of sorrows, and yet there was refreshment for him. There was that in his pathway which would mean something to his heart, which would give him pleasure and delight and refreshment.

We know that the Lord was here as the willing and obedient servant of God.

It was his delight to do the will of God. It was his meek to do the will of him that sent him. And we see that it was his delight to do God's will.

[00:04:03] And yet when we consider that sorrowful pathway which he took, which was shadowed by death, and how he cried to him who was able to save him, with strong tears and crying, we wonder what delight the Lord had. Well, it was in giving satisfaction to the heart of God.

But God saw to it that there would also be a response to that blessed man in this world. There would be those who would respond to him in faith.

And this must have meant much to our beloved Lord. And of course when we look at these two examples of the Lord's grace and power, we might also see a dispensational picture. The Gentiles are brought into blessing.

He may be rejected.

And Israel be as dead as dead can be. [00:05:02] As we see in the case of the son of the widow of Nain. And after a clear evidence that Israel had no response to the Lord Jesus, the Gentiles come in. They receive his sound.

They receive his salvation. But after the Gentiles, and we will surely be in this, how the gospel has gone out to us, there's coming a time when Israel will be revived. That dead corpse will be revived.

I would say that in these two circumstances, placed as they are, we see a dispensational picture. But it's not my purpose tonight, beloved hearers, to describe that, and to go into that side of things, but to look into the details of the narrative and see how things were with regard to the heart response to the Lord Jesus himself.

We see in verse 1, [00:06:01] When he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people. What will Solomon end?

What will Solomon end when he had ended all his sayings? Would his voice be needed? Would the voice, the teaching ministry of the blessed son of God be heard? Heard deep in the heart, in the conscience. Would it be needed?

Then we see he enters into Capernaum. And who do we meet in Capernaum? A Jew with faith?

On account of their lack of faith. He could not work in Capernaum. He did not work there.

Now we are confronted with a Centurion servant who was precious unto the Centurion.

You see, the Lord had been, already I would say, rejected by the Jews.

He came to his own, his own receipt in what John tells us. And now he's breaking the former limits and showing grace. But not mere grace, but grace to Gentiles. [00:07:03] Dead dogs of the Gentiles, utterly undeserving.

Shows grace to them.

We are outside the commonwealth of Israel. We are not entitled to any consideration by this one.

But he goes and he has in view the need of the Centurion and his servant. Oh, isn't that a wonderful thing? And the Lord is going to show grace to a Gentile, wonderful grace. And it will be on the principle of faith. There will be the response to the Lord Jesus by faith. Faith from a Gentile.

And that principle, I suppose, is explained clearly by Paul in Romans 3. But it wouldn't be a mere theory.

You say, well, you need faith to respond to the Lord. No, it would be a living faith which would delight the heart of the Lord. He had not found such faith as he had found in the case of this man.

It was a living, vital faith in the blessed Son of God, in himself, in Jesus.

[00:08:06] How precious that is. And that's the living link. That's the thing that brings the living link. And the faith was not presumption on the part of the Centurion. Not at all.

But he exercises his faith, I would say, in deep humility as a sergeant. And I think such were Centurions. A sergeant in the Roman Empire. He might turn in a Roman army. He might say, well, I've got people under me, as he does. And so you come along.

I'm the occupying authority. No, he recognizes the excellence of the one who has come to companion.

And I see that this is exceedingly precious. Then we see that the Centurion, and we notice that Luke always speaks well of these Centurions. They always get a favorable mention in the Scriptures.

And we see that he was a man who cared for those in his household. And this servant was dear, was precious unto him. [00:09:03] He was sick.

Oh, he was ready to die.

How that man, that poor servant, needed Jesus. He was sick and ready to die.

What a case. And he needed the Lord.

Nothing else could deliver the man from his sickness, which was going to bring him to death. And then the Centurion is greatly moved by the circumstances and the needs in his house. And when he hears of Jesus, he sent unto him elders of the Jews.

He thought, well, these would best, this embassy would best represent me. I couldn't go myself.

These are the people who would have the air of the Lord Jesus. And he sends the message that he would come and heal his servant. Or rather, save his servant from death. That was the great cry, that he might save him from death. And we see in the Centurion a beautiful example of intelligence of faith.

[00:10:03] He knows whom to go to.

He knows whom to direct his petition to. He exercises faith in an intelligent way.

And we see that he's a soul, really, which is led along by the Spirit. And that he would come and save, heal his servant from death.

And when they come to Jesus, they besought him instantly. There was an urgency about it. And that he was worthy for whom he should do this. They lay before the Lord Jesus, we might say, the credentials of the Centurion. Oh, the Lord knew what was in the man's heart before they even spoke to him, I'm quite sure. And the Lord knew all things. And he says he loved all nations. Oh, the Lord loved the nation too. And the Lord was concerned about this wave of people. And they were sheep that had gone astray seemingly without a shepherd. And here was the shepherd of Israel come after the lost sheep of the house of Israel. [00:11:02] And these lost sheep are addressing the Lord Jesus. They say, this man, he loved our nation. Oh, if only they knew that the Lord Jesus loved them so much. And he's built us a synagogue. I suppose the archaeologist will tell us there were two synagogues in Capernaum. One of these evidently built by the Centurion. And so he was, I would suggest to you, a God-fearing. In Jerusalem at that time, there were about 400 synagogues on top, all around it. Not in Capernaum, but two. And when we read, Jesus went, Jesus went. Then Jesus went. Then we see the activity of the Savior.

Responding to this petition. How his heart was moved. He delighted to do good. He went about doing good. It was his delight to do it. It was his pleasure. He was available to everyone who stood in need, night or day. He was the willing servant of all who were in distress. [00:12:01] He was going to dry the tears of the widow. He would take up the children in his arms and bless them. In that way, for example, he would show us what the Father was like. The whole world lies in the wicked one. But we're in the arms of the Father. And the Lord Jesus showed us what the Father was like. In all the wondrous things that he did, he came to show us what God was like. Jesus went.

A willingness to go and meet a poor soul in desperate need.

Oh, the grace of our beloved Lord. And he says he went with them. And when he was not far from the house, the Centurion sent friends. And he addresses the Lord with respect. Oh, you just wonder what was in his heart that motivated him to say, Trouble, not myself. It was no trouble to the Saviour. That was his purpose.

To come.

To seek and to save. To heal.

To do good.

It would be no trouble to the Lord.

It was his business to come. And I suppose although the Centurion was untaught in some things, [00:13:04] there was that vital faith in the Lord Jesus. He knew that the Lord could act in power as well as in great grace. Even to him, an undeserving Gentile Centurion.

And then the Lord says, Sorry, the Centurion goes on to express his unworthiness.

And he says, Never thought I myself worthy to come unto thee. His utter worthlessness. He knows the one before him.

The one who is coming is supremely great.

Far more excellent than he could ever aspire to. He sees in the Lord Jesus the great dignity and beauty and his worth.

And he says he himself isn't worthy. Oh, how fitting this is when we're contemplating the Lord.

How unworthy we are. How unworthy even to speak about the Lord Jesus we are. [00:14:04] To utter his precious name. To contemplate him. Yet we have the revelation. He has endowed us with his spirit. With his word. He saved us. He's made us his own.

We're unworthy. And he said, Just say a word. He recognizes his power as well. Just say the word.

The one who could say, Let there be light.

There was light.

There was one who could say a word.

And the servant would be healed. Then he says, For he discerned that the Lord would heal some a man perhaps. I also am a man sent, Rent under authority.

A colonel, captain, centurion.

Rent under authority.

Having unto me soldiers. He says, In effect, that servants are at my bidding.

I can tell them what to do. [00:15:02] And they do it. That diseases are at your bidding.

They're your servants.

The circumstances through which this household was passing, The centurion, And his servant, His son, Were allowed of God.

And the Lord could come in. And speak.

And the disease would respond. It would have to obey.

It had no choice.

The Lord had authority over all things. He is the creator.

And then when we look at verse nine, When he heard these things, He marveled at him.

When we compare Mark chapter six, We see quite the opposite. There wasn't the faith there. But here there is.

His faith was greater than those He honored.

And I think it was Augustine who said, That what the Lord could not find in the olive, He found in the wild olive. What he couldn't find in the olive, [00:16:02] He could find in the oleaster. He finds it in this Gentile centurion.

Here is one who would give him, Who would respond to him. In faith? No. Great faith. He hadn't found that in Israel. He desired that of his people. But he only had it from a Gentile.

Wow. Now that was really the work of God's grace. That the man should respond to the Lord Jesus. To see his worth and his power.

And then we see that they, On returning to the house, They find that the servant was sound. Sound that had been sick.

Now when we come to the next portion, Verse eleven, We see that the day after, I suppose that would have a bearing on the dispensational aspect Of these two portions.

He goes into the city of Nain.

And we see two processions.

[00:17:01] Many of his disciples went with him. And much people.

And he comes near to the gate of the city. And we see another procession coming. And there was a dead man carried out. And the widow.

And much people of the city. And we see them as it were coming together. And then in verse thirteen, We see something which is exceedingly precious. The Lord saw her.

The Lord saw the woman. And we see his concern for the woman. We see his compassion.

And the delicate consideration he has for her. He is first interested in this woman. Well the Lord has dominion over a man as long as he is dead. And the man was dead.

You might say, humanly speaking, Nothing could be done.

But this dead man too would know the grace of God. [00:18:02] This dead man, this dead son, Would know the grace of the Lord Jesus. With power.

And he would be declared son of God. With power.

Because of resurrection of dead persons. And here would be one of the dead persons. That would be raised by the son of God. But let's look at the consideration the Lord has for the woman. We read in verse thirteen, He had compassion on her.

He is first concerned with the woman. Think of her.

All her sorrow. Her tears.

He yearned to have her son back.

But she had perceived what death brings in.

The severance of earthly relationships. And the Lord says to her, weep not.

First interested in her case. Comes in not only with compassion, But with, I would say, a word which must have brought assurance to her heart. A word of consolation and comfort.

He says, weep not.

And we see that the son had a special character. [00:19:04] He was the only son of his mother. And the Lord Jesus was an only begotten son.

Well did Christ know the cost of the widow's loss. He knew what it was that the widow was going through.

He knew intimately the thoughts of his father. He knew what would befall him at Jerusalem. He knew what would be in the heart of God.

He was God.

We see in Genesis 22, How the father and the son, Both of them went together. What must it have been in the heart of the father, To see his son in Gethsemane's garden.

Must have stirred the father's heart greatly. And without rising to speculation. We are greatly touched by his mode of address. When he speaks in his prayer there, Father, father.

[00:20:02] Addressing his father. Abba, father.

And when we consider that by way of contrast, The words on the cross. Already we contemplated this afternoon. There he says, My God, my God, Why hast thou forsaken me. What must have stirred the heart of God, To see his son hang on the cross.

Well did Christ know the cost of the widow's loss here.

He must have had a keen appreciation of it.

As he came and touched the coffin.

And then he says, Young man, and this is most peculiar. The man was dead and yet he addresses him. And there's coming a day when the dead will hear this voice. It's a wonderful thing.

And here's an example of it. I say unto thee, arise.

Now there was a response from a dead man. That's so strange.

It doesn't happen. It was a miracle.

He says, arise. [00:21:01] And there was a response. And from each and every heart in this room. There's been a response. We've heard him speak to us. And there's been a response. We arise.

And he says, He that was dead sat up and began to speak. That's what he wants. He wants, let me see thy countenance. Let me hear thy voice.

He wants the response of hearts. That appreciate his glory, his beauty.

And respond in affection and devotion. But you know the grace of the Lord Jesus isn't confining. He isn't restrictive in his grace. He doesn't say, well I only raise you. I'll only raise your son if you give him back to serve me. Doesn't say that at all. He delivers him to his mother. Still interested in the mother. She had had the loss. Not the Lord Jesus in this account. She had had the loss. He takes account of her need. He doesn't say, I give you life so you can serve me. I'll forgive you if you serve me. No, he gives.

Him back to his mother.

[00:22:02] And that is so suggestive of the great grace of the Lord Jesus. And we see the response of that. There was great fear upon all and they glorified God. Could they glorify any other but God? And they utter, I suppose, what we find right at the beginning of Luke's Gospel. And by Zacharias, I believe, when he says that God has visited his people.

God has visited his people. Oh, that we might appreciate that.



For this really is the secret of piety. The mystery of piety. God has been here in flesh. Now he's in the world.

And if we want to live a life which is pleasing to God, it's an appreciation. There's been a man in this world who's been here for the glory of God. And now he's in the glory. And we're living our lives in view of the fact that he's looking down on us. And he's regarding us. Taking account of our lives, our conduct, our speech, our thoughts, our motives. [00:23:04] He's looking at us.

But are we taking account of all those things? In the light of the fact that he's there in the glory. And there's a day when we're going to see him. The judgment seat of Christ. To give account of what we did down here. Well, let there be a response. Let there be the speaking forth. Once Christ has touched us.

Raised us up by his voice. The voice of power. And let there also be the response of true vital faith. Faith perhaps you wouldn't find in Israel. But let there be great faith. Great confidence in this one. Who alone is worthy.