

Nuggets and Gems from the Bible

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Living Stream Ministry
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In Luke 7:1-35 three matters are covered: the Man-Savior curing the dying one with a word (vv. 1-10), the Man-Savior showing pity to the weeping mother by raising up her dead son (vv. 11-17), and the Man-Savior strengthening His forerunner (vv. 18-35). It may not seem that there is any connection between these three instances. Actually, these matters are related.

CURING THE DYING ONE WITH A WORD

Luke 7:1 and 2 say, “After He completed all His words in the hearing of the people, He entered into Capernaum. And a certain centurion’s slave, who was highly valued by him, was ill and about to die.” A centurion was an officer over one hundred in the Roman army. This centurion represents the believing Gentiles, who are saved through faith in the Lord’s word (v. 7).

Having heard about Jesus, this centurion “sent to Him elders of the Jews, requesting that He might come and bring his slave safely through

his illness” (v. 3). When these elders reached Jesus, “they entreated Him earnestly, saying, He is worthy that You should grant this to him. For he loves our nation, and he himself built the synagogue for us” (vv. 4-5).

While the Man-Savior was on His way to the centurion’s home, the centurion sent friends, saying to Him, “Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy that You should enter under my roof; wherefore I did not even count myself worthy to come to You; but say a word, and let my servant be cured” (vv. 6-7). In verse 8 we have a further word of the centurion conveyed to the Lord Jesus through his friends: “For I also am a man set under authority, having under myself soldiers; and I tell this one, Go, and he goes; and another, Come, and he comes; and to my slave, Do this, and he does it” (v. 8).

In 7:1-10 we see authority and the word of authority. The centurion seemed to be saying to the Man-Savior, “Lord, I am not worthy to come to see You or for You to come to my house. Yet I know what authority is. I am under the authority of others, and others are under my authority. All I need to do is speak a word to one of the soldiers, and he does what I say. I know, Lord, that You are the authority in this universe.”

How did this Roman centurion, a Gentile, come to know the Lord's authority? According to [verse 5](#), he loved the Jewish nation and built a synagogue for the Jews. From this we see that probably he had some knowledge of the Old Testament. Furthermore, he referred to the Man-Savior as Lord. Hence, he realized that the Man-Savior was the One who has the genuine authority.

The centurion also knew the significance of a word of authority. This was the reason he could say to the Man-Savior, "Say a word, and let my servant be cured" ([v. 7](#)). He knew authority and the word as the expression of authority. The centurion's slave was in fact healed by the word of the Man-Savior.

In [7:9](#) the Lord Jesus marveled at the centurion's faith: "And hearing these things, Jesus marveled at him, and turning to the crowd following Him, He said, I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith." The Gentile centurion recognized the authority of the Man-Savior and realized that His word was a word with healing authority. Thus, he believed not only in the Man-Savior, but also in His word.

In this case also we see the Lord's human virtues with His divine attributes. His virtue was

expressed in the fact of His going to the home of the centurion. The Lord Jesus is the Lord of the entire universe. Nevertheless, He was willing to go to see an officer in the Roman army. The centurion had only one hundred soldiers under his authority, but the Lord Jesus has the whole universe under His authority. In the Man-Savior's human virtue, His divine attribute of authority was expressed. He spoke a word, and the centurion's slave was healed.

SHOWING PITY TO THE WEEPING MOTHER BY RAISING UP HER DEAD SON

In 7:11-17 we see the Man-Savior showing pity to the weeping mother by raising up her dead son. Verses 11 and 12 say, “And it came about soon afterwards that He went into a city called Nain, and His disciples went with Him and a large crowd. Now as He came near the gate of the city, behold, one who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a considerable crowd from the city was with her.” This situation was very sad, and no one could do anything to comfort the grieving widow. First she had lost her husband, and now she had lost her only son.

This case was unique in its misery—the only son of a widow was being carried in the coffin. The Savior's compassion was also unique in His loving sympathy. He volunteered, in His tender mercy, His power of resurrection to raise the widow's son from death, without being asked to do so. This indicates His unique commission, coming to save lost sinners ([Luke 19:10](#)), and shows the high standard of His morality, as a Man-Savior, in saving sinners.

[Luke 7:13-15](#) says, “And seeing her, the Lord had compassion on her, and said to her, Do not weep. And approaching, He touched the coffin, and those carrying it stood still. And He said, Young man, I say to you, arise! And the dead man sat up and began to speak; and He gave him to his mother.” Here we see the Man-Savior’s compassion in speaking to the widow and in touching the coffin. When He touched the coffin, those who were carrying it stood still. Then the Lord commanded the dead son of the widow to arise. This is the Lord’s divine attributes expressed in His human virtues.

Luke, who wrote his Gospel according to the sequence of morality, put together the two cases of the healing of the centurion’s slave and the raising up of the widow’s son. In the case of the

healing of the centurion's slave we see the Lord's authority, but in the case of the raising up of the widow's son we see His affection. When the Lord touched the coffin, He showed His sympathy, affection, and love. Therefore, the first case is a matter of authority; the second case is a matter of affectionate sympathy. In both cases we see the Man-Savior in His human virtues with His divine attributes.

Actually, in both cases we see the authority of the Man-Savior. Saying a word that the centurion's servant may be healed implies authority. However, the authority expressed there is not as high as that expressed in the raising up of the widow's son. When we put these two cases together, we see that the Man-Savior, the God-man, was full of human virtues with the divine attributes.

STRENGTHENING HIS FORERUNNER

Luke 7:18 says, “And John’s disciples reported to him concerning all these things.” John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, was in prison. It seemed that the One with authority and sympathy would not do anything for John. Instead, it was as if He had forgotten him. The disciples of John may have been bothered by this, and they reported to him concerning all these things.

They may have been troubled by the fact that the Man-Savior, who healed the centurion's slave and raised up the widow's son, was not doing anything for John the Baptist.

Verses 19 and 20 continue, "And John, calling a certain two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, Are You the One who is coming, or should we expect another? And coming up to Him, the men said, John the Baptist sent us to You, saying, Are You the One who is coming, or should we expect another?" John the Baptist's word here does not mean that he was in doubt concerning Christ. He questioned Christ in this way in order to provoke Him to deliver him. He knew that Christ was the coming One, and he had strongly recommended Him to the people (John 1:26-36). After that, he was put into prison and there he waited, expecting that Christ would do something to deliver him. However, the Lord did nothing for him, although He did much to help others. When John heard this, he was in danger of being stumbled (Luke 7:23). Hence, he sent his disciples to the Lord with such a provoking question.

In 7:22 and 23 we have the Lord's answer to John the Baptist's question: "Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the blind are

receiving sight, the lame are walking, the lepers are being cleansed, and the deaf are hearing, the dead are being raised, and the good news is being brought to the poor; and blessed is he who is not stumbled in Me.” In [verse 22](#) the Lord first speaks of the blind receiving sight. There was no such miracle in the Old Testament. By this, He gave clear evidence to John that only the Messiah could have done such a miracle ([Isa. 35:5](#)).

In spiritual significance, the blind receiving sight is also first. In the Lord’s salvation He first opens our eyes ([Acts 26:18](#)). Then we can receive Him and walk to follow Him.

The lame signify those who cannot walk in God’s way. After being saved, the lame can walk by new life ([John 5:8-9](#)).

The deaf signify those who cannot hear God. After being saved, they can hear the Lord’s voice ([John 10:27](#)).

The dead signify those who are dead in sins ([Eph. 2:1, 5](#)), unable to contact God. After being regenerated, they can fellowship with God with their regenerated spirit.

The poor signify everyone without Christ, without God, who have no hope in the world ([Eph. 2:12](#)). Upon receiving the gospel, they are made rich in Christ ([2 Cor. 8:9](#); [Eph. 3:8](#)).

What would you have said if you had been John and had received the word spoken by the Lord in Luke 7:22? Perhaps you would have said, “I don’t want to hear this kind of report. Lord, what will You do about me? You give sight to the blind, You make the lame to walk, You cleanse the lepers, You cause the deaf to hear, You raise the dead, and You bring good news to the poor. I would like to hear some good news concerning my situation. Lord, what will You do for me? I am still in prison. Didn’t You declare the jubilee and proclaim release to the captives? Lord, I want You to liberate me.”

In verse 23 the Lord said to John, “Blessed is he who is not stumbled in Me.” This word implies that John the Baptist was in danger of being stumbled because the Lord did not act on his behalf according to his way. Here the Lord encouraged him to take the way the Lord had ordained for him that he might be blessed.

In verse 23 the Lord seemed to be saying, “John, I have done many things for others, but I shall not do anything for you. Do not be stumbled in Me. Blessed is the one who is not stumbled in Me.”

I believe that the Lord’s word in verse 23 strengthened John for his coming martyrdom.

John knew that Christ could do anything, but He would not do anything for him. Although the Lord could have done something, it was right for Him not to do anything. John must have been convinced by the Lord's word and strengthened by it.

In 7:24-28 the Lord Jesus spoke to the crowds concerning John the Baptist. In verse 26 the Lord Jesus said that John the Baptist was “much more than a prophet.” In verse 27 He went on to say concerning him, “This is he concerning whom it is written, Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You.” Malachi 4:5 prophesied that Elijah would come. When John the Baptist was conceived, it was said that he would go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17). Hence, in a sense, John may be considered “Elijah, who is about to come” (Matt. 11:14). However, the prophecy of Malachi 4:5 will actually be fulfilled in the great tribulation, when the real Elijah, one of the two witnesses, will come to strengthen God’s people (Rev. 11:3-12).

In Luke 7:31 and 32 the Lord Jesus went on to say, “To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? They are like young children sitting in a marketplace and

calling to one another, and saying, We played the flute to you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.” The Pharisees and lawyers (v. 30) thought they were experienced and knowledgeable in the law of God. But in [verse 32](#) the Lord likens them to young children.

Christ and John the Baptist “played the flute” to preach the gospel of the kingdom, but the Pharisees and lawyers “did not dance” for the joy of salvation. John and the Lord Jesus also “sang a dirge” to preach repentance, but these ones “did not weep” for the grief of sin. The righteousness of God required them to repent, but they would not obey. The grace of God afforded them salvation, but they would not receive it.

In [verse 33](#) the Lord continues, “For John the Baptist has come neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, He has a demon!” John the Baptist, who came to bring men to repentance and cause them to grieve for sin, had no taste for eating or drinking ([1:15-17](#)). Because John the Baptist lived in a strange and peculiar way, not eating and drinking in the regular way, the opposers accused him of being demon-possessed.

In [Luke 7:34](#) the Lord says, “The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, Behold, a gluttonous man and a wine drinker, a

friend of tax collectors and sinners!” Christ is not only the Savior, but also the Friend of sinners, the One who sympathized with their problems and sensed their griefs. He came to bring salvation to sinners and cause them to rejoice in it. Hence, He had the joy of eating and drinking with them.

In [verse 35](#) the Lord concludes, “And wisdom is justified by all her children.” This wisdom is Christ ([1 Cor. 1:24, 30](#)). Whatever Christ did was done by the wisdom of God, which is Himself. This wisdom is justified by all her children. Those who believe in Christ are the children of wisdom, those who justify Christ and His deeds and follow Him as their wisdom.

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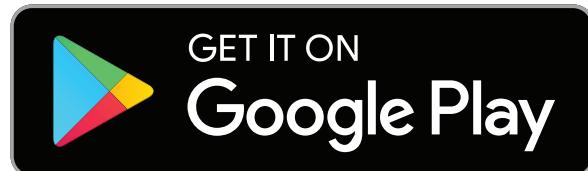
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