

UNDERSTANDING AUTHORITY

SEPTEMBER 20, 2017

MATTHEW 8:5-13

Twice in scripture we are told Jesus marveled at something. To marvel means to be filled with wonder or astonishment. Here, He was astonished at the faith of a Gentile, and in **MARK 6:6**, he was astonished at the unbelief of the Jews. Why?

- The Jews had the means to obtain great faith.
- The Gentiles had no means to obtain great faith.

What enabled a Gentile who had no covenant with God to obtain a degree of faith that astonished Jesus?

THE CENTURION

The Bible has much to say about centurions being involved in important biblical events.

- A centurion is mentioned at the beginning and end of Jesus' public ministry. Here, and **MATTHEW 27:54**.
- A centurion reported Jesus' death to Pilate. **MARK 15:44-45**
- A centurion was one of the first Gentile converts. **ACTS 10:1**
- Centurions were involved in rescuing Paul. **ACTS 21:32**
- A centurion rescued Paul from being scourged. **ACTS 22:25-26**
- A centurion provided protection, escorted Paul when he traveled, and cared for Paul's needs. **ACTS 24:23; 28:16**
- A centurion stopped Paul's execution. **ACTS 27:42-43**
- Centurions are presented as men of remarkable character, wisdom and authority.

THE CENTURIONS FAITH

1. Recognized Jesus' authority. **MATTHEW 8:5-7**
 - A. First, the centurion could've sent for Jesus to be brought to Him. Jesus was a citizen of Roman occupied territory. Instead, he recognized Jesus' superior authority and goes to Him.
 - B. He calls Him Lord. For a Roman centurion to call a Jew lord is remarkable. The word means master. Clearly he recognized Him as one with authority that transcends natural powers.
 - C. He beseeched him means he pleaded with Him, not commanded Him. He called upon Him with an urgent request while expressing deep concern for his servant.

- Jesus' response in the Greek: "I, even I, coming, will heal him."
He wasn't going to send someone else!

2. Faith that exhibited humility. **MATTHEW 8:7-8a**

- A. Remember how Naaman exhibited pride before Elisha's servant?
- B. The centurion's approach was different. He came, not called for Jesus; he addressed Him as "Lord"; he pleaded, not demanded! He confessed Jesus' superiority over himself.
- C. Could it be the centurion understood Jewish law and didn't want to put Him in a difficult situation?
 - We've been given authority over all the power of the enemy, but may we never forget who's it is, who gave it to us, and what it took for Him to get it for us.

3. Faith that trusted in the spoken Word. **MATTHEW 8:8b-9**

- A. He understood how authority works. He knew his authority came from the Emperor's authority. When he gave a command people obeyed. Not to do so would disobey the Emperor.
- B. He recognized Jesus possessed authority greater than the Emperor's. He had authority over demons, disease, even death.
- C. He recognized as a subordinate authority, his commands got results. How much more would Jesus, the ultimate authority?

4. Faith that got results. **MATTHEW 8:10-13**

- A. It astonished Jesus.
- B. Jesus called it great faith.
- C. Faith many Jews didn't possess, to their destruction.
- D. Faith that Jesus honored.

CONCLUSION: We been given authority over all the power of the enemy. This authority belongs to Jesus who delegated it to believers. This authority is recognized in Heaven and earth. We can speak the Word with authority only because He who holds all authority authorized us to transact business for Him during His absence here on earth. **EPHESIANS 1:16-23** contains a prayer we should pray for ourselves in order to get a better understanding of our delegated authority.