

TESTIMONIES OF THREE CENTURIONS



As YAHSHUA went into Capernaum, a centurion came up to Him, begging Him, and saying, Lord, my servant boy is lying at the house paralyzed and distressed with intense pains. And YAHSHUA said to him, I will come and restore him. But the centurion replied to Him, Lord, I am not worthy or fit to have You come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant boy will be cured, for I also am a man subject to authority, with soldiers subject to me. And I say to one, Go and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes; and to my slave, Do this and he does it. When YAHSHUA heard him, He marveled and said to those who followed

Him, I tell you truly, I have not found so much faith as this with anyone, even in Israel... Then to the centurion YAHSHUA said, Go; it shall be done for you as you have believed. And the servant boy was restored to health at that very moment (Matt. 8:5-10,13). A centurion was a man of great distinction by their courage and skill in battle. They were captains over 100 soldiers. A centurion started as a soldier working his way up the ranks. Their good conduct and truthfulness were in general the causes for their promotion to the command of a centurion.

The centurion, who met YAHSHUA at the point of the need of his servant, was a man of great faith noticed by the words he uttered to YAHSHUA. A Roman, he had to have the courage and the humbleness embedded in his faith to seek a Jew for healing, when he had doctors available to him. Undoubtedly, he heard about YAHSHUA'S and believed in Him to compel him to meet YAHSHUA. His faith was the force that carried him to YAHSHUA in belief that He could heal his servant. Remarkable is the fact that he had come on behalf of a servant of his; He hadn't come to seek help for himself, nor for a family member. Without a doubt, his servant was of great value to him to cause him to leave his comfort zone to plead for him to YAHSHUA, a Jew. His humble attitude mingled with faith caused YAHSHUA to say, I tell you truly, I have not found so such faith as this with anyone, even in Israel. That's the best compliment a man –Jew or Gentile can be given by God Himself. If this centurion believed in YAHSHUA for the healing of his servant, he would also have believed Him as God. That encounter with YAHSHUA marked the time-line in his life, when he changed and things changed for him, as YAHSHUA told him that it shall be done for him as he had believed. No longer had he believed others about YASHHUA, but he believed Him because he had experienced Him.

This centurion's faith marveled YAHSHUA. First, he was a Roman Gentile and as a Roman, his nation was polytheistic. His position of a high rank centurion gave him reason for being proud and self-sufficient, for he had accomplished much to get where he was. But he had come to a point in his life when that was not as important as to plead for a servant of his. YAHSHUA saw his heart and marveled at what He had heard. "I tell you truly, YAHSHUA said, I have not found so much faith as this with anyone, even in Israel." Yes, even in Israel, who had experienced God for forty years in the desert through supernatural miracles never heard of before; who had heard His voice and His presence manifested through fire and sounds of trumpets when He had come down on Mount Sinai to covenant with

them, to whom the Torah was given from the hand of God with instructions how to live a holy life, even Israel's faith did not measure up to that of that centurion, who knew nothing concerning that Man who he had come to seeking healing for his servant. His action of faith paid him well, for YAHSHUA honored his faith and healed his servant. I am sure that this centurion from that time on was a witness confirming YAHSHUA'S divinity.

There are other centurions mentioned in the Bible worth mentioning here. Cornelius in Acts 10, of whom was said to be just and upright, who, directed by God, sent messengers to find Peter to bring him to his house. Meanwhile, he gathered family and close friends to hear Peter. And when he arrived at his house, the centurion fell down at his feet, making obeisance, paying worshipful reverence to him (Acts 10: 25). Correcting Cornelius, Peter raised him up, saying Get up; I myself am also a man. For His surprise, Peter, when entered the house, found a large number of people waiting for him. Peter then asked the centurion why he had sent for him. Cornelius answered, This is now the fourth day since about this time I was observing the ninth hour (three o'clock in the afternoon) of prayer in my lodging place; a man stood before me in dazzling apparel and he said, Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and harkened to, and your donations to the poor have been know and preserved before God. Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon who is surnamed Peter; he is staying in the house of Simon the tanner by the seaside... Now then, we are all present in the sight of God to listen to all that you have been instructed by the Lord to say (Acts. 10:26-32, 33).

The testimony of this Roman centurion is evidence that in God's plan of salvation the Gentiles have an entrance to Him as well as the Jews. In His eyes we are one, without distinction, as Paul so confirmed in Romans 3:29: Or is God merely [the God] of Jews? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also. And again he says, the Scripture says, No man who believes in Him will be put to shame or be disappointed. [No one] for there is no distinction between Jew and Greek. The same Lord is Lord over all and He generously bestows His riches upon all who call upon Him (Rom. 10:11-12). This centurion was justified when he believed in the good news of salvation and through his prayers the Lord came to him with an answer. The centurion, who witnessed the death of YAHSHUA, was in my view one with the most dramatic experience of faith. Mark relates that when he stood facing YAHSHUA, saw Him expire this way, he said, really, this Man was God's Son!" and Matthew said, When the centurion and those who were with him

keeping watch over YAHSHUA observed the earthquake and all that was happening, they were terribly frightened and filled with awe, and said, "Truly this was God's Son!" YAHSHUA'S prayer when on the cross, "Forgive them Father, for they know not what they are doing" was then answered.

Another centurion was obvious when he showed Paul favor in the midst of a big storm while they were in route to Rome in a boat. When the storm intensified the soldiers suggested killing the prisoners, so not to escape. The centurion of the imperial regiment named Julius, disagreed for the sake of saving Paul. Instead, he commanded those who could swim to throw themselves over board first and make for the shore (Acts 27:1,42-43). He had to have some degree of faith to be willing to save Paul, resulting in the salvation of all the other prisoners' lives, too. Although we do not know the extent of his faith in God, we believe his goodness was providential and he was used by God at that moment.

Of all the centurions mentioned in the New Testament three stand up: The one who sought YAHSHUA for the healing of his servant; the one at the cross, and Cornelius. These all showed undisputable faith in God. YAHSHUA praised the faith of the first one; the one at the cross, proclaimed for all to hear that YAHSHUA was the Son of God; YAHSHUA'S prayer when on the cross, "Forgive them Father, for they know not what they are doing" was then answered. Cornelius was visited by the Lord while praying. They all had a voice that lasted until now which shows the love of God reaching out to Jews and Gentiles alike and equality before Him.