

## Luke 7

Written by K B Napier  
Monday, 25 March 2013 09:31

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Jesus healed people with ease. He could do it with ease because He had, and still has, the power that built the whole universe! He did not need to work at it. He did not have to get it from outside Himself, like people who eat certain foods and do extensive exercises to build their muscles. The power *is* integral to His person, part of Who He is.

God just 'is'. Jesus just 'is'. He is the epitome of 'isness'. That is what makes Him the great "*I AM*"

. He IS greatness. He IS power. He IS the only One Who has it. We are only "*wonderfully made*"

– we do not have "isness". Any power we experience is from and in Him. We have nothing of our own, though thousands of deluded charismatics really think they have it, to use as they wish!

Here we see Jesus healing without being anywhere near a man. He did not have to think it. He did not have to work it up like an emotion. His very being exuded power. A man was not just healed – he was brought back to life from the dead, because it was in God's will. This is the power of the Almighty, the One Who extends His love, care and power to us, His creatures; those whom He saves. He does this even when we fail miserably.

Many complain that they have no spiritual power. Yet, we are told in scripture that the Holy Spirit resides in EVERY saved man and woman! That means we have the same power known to God, but in limited form. It has to be limited because otherwise we would BE God; we are made in His image, so we are not God Himself. Even so, we have God's power in our persons. That is why Paul wanted to see the power in a person who claimed salvation, and not just hear the words.

### Verses 1-5

1.

Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.

2.

And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

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3.

And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

4.

And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:

5.

For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

Verse one either means Jesus was previously speaking to the people outside the walls of Capernaum, or, that he later travelled to Capernaum ('village of comfort'). We cannot be sure. Capernaum was on the western shore of Lake Galilee, close to the Jordan tributary.

Jesus was again surrounded by people, all wanting to be healed and to hear what He had to say. During His visit, a centurion sent a message to him by way of Jewish elders. The soldier's servant, one whom he loved dearly, was dying, and he wanted to ask Jesus to come to his home to heal him. It would seem that the centurion thought Jesus would not accept a direct request from an occupying Roman commander. A message brought by several Jewish elders might work better! (In cities outside Jerusalem and the Temple, Jewish elders were instrumental in applying justice and administrating city affairs, so held high office. In Jerusalem elders belonged to the ruling Sanhedrin).

In this text the 'elders' are older in years; they were the *presbyteros* or presbyters. This is the same word used to describe Christian pastors or bishops; all three words are used interchangeably. As we can see, they were not minions, but influential Jewish religious and civil leaders. Did they come willingly? Or, did they fear refusing a centurion? It does not seem from their words that they were afraid.

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The elders pleaded with Jesus to go to the centurion's home, giving him a glowing testimonial. They told Jesus that the centurion was a good man who loved Israel – he even built a synagogue for Capernaum. In modern days, some unsaved men will show goodness towards Christians. Some even help financially or in other ways. We should not spurn such offers if there are no 'strings' attached, and they know what local Christians stand for... God may be using them for His own ends.

### Verses 6-10

1.

Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now 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:

2.

Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

3.

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.

4.

When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled 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.

5.

And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

On hearing the testimonial, Jesus went with them. Of course, in terms of His eternal decrees, this had already been part of His plan, even before the servant became sick. As they neared the centurion's house, his friends came to Jesus with another message – this time the centurion humbly said that he was not worthy enough for Jesus to come under his roof, or even for him to

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meet with Jesus.

However, he recognised that Jesus could heal, whether or not He was in his home. Perhaps, then, He would heal from a distance? The centurion added that as a man of authority he could command people to do his bidding. It seems he was saying that Jesus had the power and authority to command healing, while at a distance *or* while present with the person to be healed, such was His authority.

Jesus was impressed by the man's humility and faith. He stood still and turned to face the crowd behind him, saying, "*I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.*" Jesus was telling them that a Gentile foreigner had greater faith than anyone who was a Jew! This was the most illustrious commendation Christ could give to anyone. What of

*my*

faith? What of

*yours*

? Is it sufficient to attract Jesus' attention?

The Jewish elders returned to the centurion's home and found the previously dying servant on his feet, whole and well. When you pray, do you expect an answer? The question is at the root of just about all modern spiritual ailments... for it asks if God intervenes in the world today. Does He? Or, are the cessationists right? If they are, then what hope do we have on this earth? Think hard about your faith!

### Verses 11-16

1.

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.

2.

Now 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.

3.

And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

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4.

And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

5.

And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

6.

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.

Jesus left Capernaum and, next day, He entered the city of Nain/Nein ('beauty'). This was more of a 'village-size' city in Galilee at the base of Little Hermon mountain. Mount Herman is the highest mountain in Israel. As usual a crowd followed, plus many disciples. As they neared the city gate, a long procession was coming out, with the body of a young man, the only son of a widow.

Jesus looked at the weeping mother and had compassion for her grief. He lightly touched the bier, the funeral couch on which the son was carried. *(Interesting note: one of the most influential figures in modern political history is George Soros, a Marxist multi-billionaire who funds the break-up of societies in order to spread godless Marxist regimes. It is interesting only because his name means an urn containing bones of the dead. His name thus reflects his demonic purposes).*

The men who carried the bier stood still as Jesus looked upon the young man. He then plainly commanded him to stand up. "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." Can you imagine the shock and amazement of the funeral party, and the grieving mother? They did not yet know Who this stranger was, and no-one had asked Jesus to perform a miracle – yet He did, out of compassion for this crying Jewess.

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The young man sat up on the bier and spoke. Jesus handed the son to the mother, as a gift of life. Mostly we pray for something we desire. But, here, Jesus miraculously gave the woman what she desired above all else, even though she had not asked. God knows our needs, even before we know them ourselves. And, often, He moves our time and events on earth so that what is most needed is given, without our knowing, and when we have not asked.

The crowd following Jesus, and the crowd of mourners, all stood open-mouthed at what had just happened! They gave glory to God and, at the same time, knew great fear. This is a common response to a wonderful act of God; first rejoicing and then fear, as it dawns on people that God has just acted in our midst. A proper response.

The people did not fully understand Who Jesus was, but they at least recognised He was from God, a "great prophet" Who brought God's presence to their village and people. Do you recognise God in our midst? Do you even *expect* Him to be in our midst? Or, like so many who claim to believe, do you say with your mouth that He intervenes, but disbelieve it in your heart and in your actions? For, if He does not intervene today, we are a sorry people, without hope.

### Verses 17-20

1.

And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about.

2.

And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.

3.

And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

4.

When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

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Today, we use the word 'rumour' to refer to something that may not be true. In this text it is used in a sense most readers do not realise – the original word is *logos*. It is not used in this verse to refer to Jesus Christ, but is used in its more common sense, simply meaning words passed on to others – one person told another, then another, so that the name of Jesus became famous. This was fame upon fame upon fame... the name of Jesus resounded throughout Judaea and was on everyone's lips.

The disciples of John, devout Jews, had gone to see Jesus preach and perform miracles, and carried back their report to John the Baptist. He immediately sent two of his disciples back to Jesus with a question – 'Are you the Messiah? Or, must we continue to wait for Him?' The two men rushed to find Jesus and asked the questions.

You might wonder why John should ask the question, when it was he who baptised Jesus in the river before He began His ministry. The answer has to be straightforward. There can be no confusion or contradiction. With this in mind, I would suggest that John had heard of Jesus' exploits and did not keep track of Him. For all he knew this could be a genuine Jewish prophet performing miracles and not the same cousin he had previously baptised. After all, there were no photos or news services to confirm whether or not this was the same man!

Miracles were not enough to make a man the Messiah. So, not having seen the man everyone was talking about for a while, maybe about 18 months or so, he simply wished to know if it really was Jesus, the One he baptised and who he knew to be the Messiah, or if he was a prophet doing similar things. This is a reasonable explanation.

### Verses 21-23

1.

And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight.

2.

Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.

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3.

And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

Jesus immediately went about healing the crowd of every disease and physical infirmity, and cast out many demons. The blind were made to see. Jesus did all this as a sign to the followers of John. He turned to them and said – ‘You have witnessed what I have done; you have heard what I have preached. The blind see, the lame walk, lepers have been cured, the deaf can hear, I have raised the dead, and I have preached the Gospel to the people. The man who believes me will be happy, if he is not induced to fall away because of me.’

In this way Jesus gave a word of proof to John the Baptist, that he would know his work was not in vain. John finally knew that his ministry bore fruit and the Messiah was now in place. Do you witness to the people around you that Jesus did all these things? Or, do you stay quiet because otherwise they might make you look foolish? If you do the latter, then do not be surprised if you see nothing divine in your life and do not witness God at work.

### Verses 24-28

1.

And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

2.

But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

3.

But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

4.

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This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

5.

For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

When John's followers left, Jesus spoke to the crowd about him. 'When you went out into the desert to see John, what did you expect to see? A frail, pliable man without inner strength? Someone who could easily be shaken from his beliefs or mission? A man with soft hands and fine clothing? No, such men live in king's courts!'

Most pastors and preachers today are weak-spined, nothing like John the Baptist. They are not what they ought to be – strong in spirit and mind, unmoved by favour, praise or opposition. They have truth and will never shift from it. Note the great comfort lived in by charismatic preachers!! They wear Rolex watches and soft silk suits, well pressed linen shirts, and live in huge homes paid for by followers. We see what Jesus said about these men!

'So', Jesus continued, 'What did you really go out into the desert to see – a prophet?' If they really went out to see a genuine prophet, then they could not feel comfortable or easy, for the prophets of old seared into the people's minds and hearts like branding irons! Jesus then told them that John was no ordinary prophet... he was the greatest prophet who ever lived! He was the messenger of God foretold in the Old Testament. The text comes from Malachi 3:1.

Note that even Jesus paraphrased the text! (There are many Christians who take pride in remembering texts word for word, and think the less of people who do not. Perhaps they should speak to Jesus). Jesus accurately portrayed the Malachi text as referring to Himself, as the Lord ('*adown*, or the Lord God), and John is identified as the messenger from the Lord (*Yehovah*). Once again, then, Jesus told the people that He was God! This confirms that John the Baptist was the greatest prophet who ever lived. Yet, to give a bigger picture, Jesus said that though John was the greatest prophet, the lowliest believer in Heaven would be greater. If we analyse what Jesus was saying, he was instructing us that no man is greater than another in the kingdom, for all are equal. Never put a preacher, teacher, or pastor on a pedestal!

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### Verses 29-35

1.

And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

2.

But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

3.

And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

4.

They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

5.

For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

6.

The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

7.

But wisdom is justified of all her children.

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All those who were baptised by John marvelled, agreed, and praised God for this truth. They *“justified God”*

. You might say God needs no-one to justify Him, but the word is here used in its medieval sense – to refer to God as righteous, because He is, and to declare Him to be just.

But, note the arrogance of the assembled lawyers and Pharisees who had NOT been baptised by John! They had ignored John, and so they were judged as being hard-hearted and stiff-necked, sinners who did not recognise their own sin, to be repented of. They were seething inside, because their train of thought was now set as flint against Jesus. They refused to repent!

‘What are the men of this time like?’ asked Jesus.’ They are like children who played pipes for their fellows, but they would not dance to the music. They mourned with tears, but the other refused to cry.’ The Pharisees and scribes, then, were impassive, refusing both the blessings and the judgment of God upon themselves; they did not wish to dance to God’s tune. But, they were more than ready to condemn Jesus.

So, Jesus said, ‘According to your logic, John the Baptist only ate what he found in the desert, not eating bread and not drinking wine – so you said he had a devil. On the other hand, I, God incarnate, came eating and drinking normally, but this wasn’t good enough, either – I became a winebibber who loved tax collectors and sinners!’ (Side-Note: This confirms that Jesus drank alcoholic wine!). In other words, Jesus said ‘I cannot win with you’. This should spur us on today, for it does not matter what Christians say to the world, the world will always hate us. This should advise us all not to be too concerned with pacifying our enemies, who will want to hurt us by one means or another, whether or not we do what they wish.

Jesus then concluded by saying, *“But wisdom is justified of all her children.”* That is, only those who know God will declare God to be just and righteous in this matter. This was a definite rebuke of the Pharisees. Today’s preachers ought to learn that Jesus was no soft-touch who always spoke in gentle terms, never upsetting anyone!

In this way Jesus was telling the arrogant Pharisees that they were not the children of God, for they did not see God in what Jesus was saying or doing, just as they never recognised John for who he really was – the one spoken of by God in Malachi and herald of the Messiah. Even today, many Christians would not recognise God in what is said or done, even if it is handed to them on a plate.

### Verses 36-38

1.

And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

2.

And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

3.

And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

When Jesus had finished, one of the Pharisees asked him to a meal. It is possible, I suppose, that the man was genuinely interested. On the other hand, it could be that he wished to 'catch Jesus out' by appearing to be more personal. It could even be that he wanted to know more. It can be that someone wishes to learn more, but, like the rich young man, would not go the 'full distance'.

Jesus, being God, knew the man's heart and went to his house anyway. On many occasions I will not strive hard to discover what a person is about, but will go with him in his train of thought. It does not mean I comply with him, or that I oppose. It simply means I am curious – and one never knows when a straightforward discussion will change a mind or heart. This kind of approach requires you to have a mind that can get past the opposition of the other – something many people cannot do. Jesus could do it because He was perfect!

It is interesting how easy it was for people to enter the home of another – for a woman walked in from the street with an alabaster box containing ointment. The text simply says she "*was a sinner*"

This may be a roundabout way of calling her a prostitute; it means the woman was known to be a resolute sinner, wicked, known for certain sins that are not specified. A strange visitor to the home of a Pharisee! Even though he allowed her to remain, there can be no doubt that he had a

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highly judgmental view of her.

The box contained ointment of high worth, for alabaster was used to preserve it and keep it from leaking out. The box would have been sealed down, and the seal broken before the ointment could be used. We are not told what the ointment was, but the etymology of the word tell us it was a thick juice or sap. The way the woman used it, it was obviously useful for the skin. Another possible meaning is myrrh-oil, a spikenard used to prepare a body for burial. Thus, many assume it was used to have a prophetic meaning.

It is probable that she had heard Jesus speak in the street, and was affected deeply, for she was crying. The tears were allowed to drop on Jesus' feet, and the woman dried the feet with her long hair, before applying the ointment in an unassuming way.

### Verses 39-43

1.

Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

2.

And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

3.

There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

4.

And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

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5.

Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

As she did so, with real devotion and humility, the Pharisee was agitated and thought ill of her in his mind. IOs this not like so many pastors and teachers today? They claim humility but think ill of others who they dislike? Thus, they smile outwardly but seethe or become angry inside. This is the picture we have of the Pharisee, who clearly thought that if Jesus was a genuine prophet then he would have known what kind of woman was now before him, and would throw her out.

But, Jesus knew men's minds and thoughts, and *"answered"* the Pharisee, even though the Pharisee had not outwardly said anything. Jesus turned to the man by name – Simon – and said He wanted to tell him something. Despite the ill-will towards the woman in his heart, Simon asked Jesus to speak. Jesus then spoke in a parable:

Two people owed a man money. One owed 500 pence (denarius: silver Roman coins; one denarius equalled about a day's pay) and the other owed one tenth of that amount – 50 pence. When neither man could repay their debt, the one they owed money to just forgave them both equally. Jesus asked Simon *"Which of them will love him most?"* Was it the one who owed the most, or the one who owed less? Simon said, I suppose it was he who owed the most. Jesus answered *"Thou hast rightly judged."* And thus Jesus prepared Simon for His own judgment of his Pharisaical attitude towards the woman

### Verses 44-50

1.

And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

2.

Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my

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feet.

3.

My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

4.

Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

5.

And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

6.

And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

7.

And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

Jesus did not spare Simon's feelings – unlike so many Christians today, who put emotions above truth. He bluntly said that when He entered the house, Simon did not give him water to wash His feet, as was commonplace, and yet here was a woman who washed His feet using her own tears of humility, and her own hair as a towel. Simon did not anoint Jesus' head with oil, as was the custom when hosting a stranger, and yet this woman anointed His feet with expensive oil, with no expectation of getting anything back.

Therefore, said Jesus, though her sins are great, I forgive her because she showed me so much love... but those who love little tend to feel there is little to be forgiven for (an obvious rebuke to Simon, who thought he was above the need for forgiveness).

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Jesus then turned to the woman and told her *“Thy sins are forgiven.”* Her heart must have leapt with joy! As others had done before, those who also sat at the meal mumbled amongst themselves – ‘Who does this man think he is, forgiving others – only God can do that!’

Jesus, ignoring their bitter hearts told the woman the best news she could possibly have: *“Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace.”*

She entered the room an unforgiven sinner destined for hell, she left a forgiven woman, ready for Heaven! Meanwhile, Jesus had again caused arrogant men to mark Him down for earthly judgment. He knew their hearts but did not fight them. He had a task to perform until He received the ultimate hatred, crucifixion, and nothing would deter Him... He certainly did not bother to pacify his opposers with soothing words! Let this be a lesson to all who try to win the approval of their peers rather than the approval of the Lord!

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