

Matthew 8:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me:
and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come,
and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

Analysis

The centurion's analogy comparing Christ's authority to his own military command structure reveals profound theological insight. Just as the centurion's word commands soldiers who obey without question, Christ's word commands creation with absolute authority. This demonstrates understanding that Jesus possesses divine authority over sickness, demons, and nature. The centurion grasped what many theologians miss—Christ's word alone is efficacious, requiring no physical presence or elaborate ritual.

Historical Context

Roman military structure operated on absolute chain of command. A centurion's word carried full authority of Roman power behind it. The centurion recognized Jesus possessed infinitely greater authority—divine sovereignty over creation itself. His faith recognized Jesus' word as performative, accomplishing what it declares.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does the centurion's understanding of Jesus' authority teach about the power and efficacy of Christ's word?
2. How should recognition of Christ's absolute authority over all creation transform your trust in His promises?

Interlinear Text

καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος εἰμι ὑπ' ἐξουσίαν ἔχων ὑπ'
and For I a man am under authority having under
G2532 G1063 G1473 G444 G1510 G5259 G1849 G2192 G5259

ἐμαυτὸν στρατιώτας καὶ λέγω τούτῳ, πορεύεται, καὶ
me soldiers and I say to this he goeth and
G1683 G4757 G2532 G3004 G5129 G4198 G2532

πορεύεται, καὶ ἄλλῳ. ἔρχεται, καὶ ἔρχεται, καὶ τῷ
he goeth and to another Come and Come and G3588
G4198 G2532 G243 G2064 G2532 G2064 G2532

δούλῳ μου, ποιεῖ τοῦτο, καὶ ποιεῖ
servant to my Do this and Do
G1401 G3450 G4160 G5124 G2532 G4160

Additional Cross-References

Colossians 3:22 (Parallel theme): Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God:

Luke 7:8 (Parallel theme): 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.

Titus 2:9 (Parallel theme): Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;

Psalms 148:8 (Parallel theme): Fire, and hail; snow, and vapour; stormy wind fulfilling his word:

Psalms 119:91 (Parallel theme): They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all are thy servants.

Luke 4:39 (Parallel theme): And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

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