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WRFD	10:00 AM	880 Dial	Columbus, OH
KXEL	10:30 PM	1540 Dial	Waterloo, IA
WRVA	7:04 AM	1140 Dial	Richmond, VA
WRVA	9:30 PM	1140 Dial	Richmond, VA
WSM	7:00 AM	650 Dial	Nashville, TN
WIBC	7:30 AM	93.1 Dial	Indianapolis, IN
WHAS	7:30 AM	840 Dial	Louisville, KY
KAAY	9:30 PM	1090 Dial	Little Rock, AR
WMCL	8:30 AM	1060 Dial	McLeansboro, IL
WWVA	9:30 PM	1170 Dial	Wheeling, WV

Saturday

WOAI	10:30 PM	1200 Dial	San Antonio, TX
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Short Wave Radio

AFRICA:

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(1800 UTC) 7190 kHz on Dial

BEACON of HOPE N. AFRICA:

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ALL CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR MINISTRY ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

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Issue 6

THE CENTURION

MATTHEW CHAPTER EIGHT

The rank of centurion in the Roman army was a very select fraternity. Seven of them are mentioned in the New Testament in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and in the Acts of Apostles.

The first mention of a centurion was when Jesus entered into Capernaum, and there came unto Him a centurion, beseeching Him, and saying, "Lord my servant lieth in the house sick of the palsy, grievously tormented." If the centurion had asked me to come, I would have said, "I will come and pray for him." If he had asked the doctor to come, he would have said, "I will come, examine him, and give him a prescription, or an operation." Jesus said, "I will come and heal him."

This centurion was a man of remarkable faith. Jesus would say of him, "I have not found such great faith, no, not in Israel. His faith was great because of several reasons. The first was he wanted Jesus to heal his sick servant. A ruler in John 4 asked Jesus to heal his son, the leper just before this asked Jesus to heal himself. Jairus in Matthew 9 asked Jesus to heal his daughter and Jesus raised her from the dead. But this centurion was not asking for the benefit of son, daughter or self; he was asking Jesus to heal a slave. My servant is sick of the palsy and asked Jesus to heal his servant.

Other Romans would have sold off the servant as unworthy of care, and buy another slave, and Jesus was impressed with this man because He came into the world Himself as a servant. In Philippians 2 Paul says that Jesus thought not the being on equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself taking upon Himself the form of a servant. Jesus came into this world as a slave. And so Jesus said, "I will come and heal him."

Then again the second reason for his great faith was because he believed that Jesus could heal from a distance. He believed Jesus did not have to be present at the time, nor be able to touch him. Actually we need to have that

same faith today in reverse. When we pray unto God, in Jesus' name we are talking to some One we cannot see and He can hear from a distance.

The third example of his great faith was when he said, "I am not worthy that you should come into my house, just say the word, and my servant will be healed." He had faith in the power of the word of the Lord. The Angel Gabriel said in Luke 2, "No word of God shall be void of power." Would that all had the faith of the centurion, "Just say the word, Lord, just say the word, and it will be so."

Today we may respond, "Yes, but the polls say? We say, "Yes, but this is the 21st century, and that first century response to the gospel won't work today. We say, "Yes, I will tell you what I think, and I'll tell you what the scholars say." All of that will not make any difference to Almighty God.

The centurion at Capernaum had it right when he told Jesus, "Just say the word."

Then the centurion reminded Jesus that he was also under authority, having under himself soldiers. He could obey orders, and he could give orders, and expect unquestioned obedience. I can say to a soldier, "Go," and he goes. "Come," and he comes. "Do this," and he doeth it.

The centurion was in the Roman army, and he looks upon Jesus as the commander of a great army, and he was right. Jesus was the commander of the hosts of heaven. However the centurion did not realize that the Lord has two divisions in his army. There is the Heavenly division; and the Earthly division. However the Earthly division of the Lord's army is not as disciplined as the Heavenly division. When Jesus commands the Earthly division, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," many of the troops won't go. When Jesus commands His troops to do this, in remembrance of Me, many of the troops are AWOL on the Lord's Day. Then when He commands recruits to

come unto Me, they won't come.

The sad part about the Earthly division is the fact they like to drill every week in their resplendent uniform of light, drink a cup of coffee, eat a few donuts, then be complimented for their fine appearance, but have no idea there is a war going on, and the enemy even now is at the gates. The gospel song can be changed somewhat to read like this:

“Backward Christian soldiers marching as in fear
With the cross of Jesus going to the rear.
Christ the royal Master leads against the foe
But we going backwards, our banners do not flow.
Like a bunch of weaklings moves the Church of God
Brothers we are treading where no saints have trod.
We are all divided not one body we
United in dissensions, and one in apathy.”

Then the fourth evidence the great faith is at the point in the narrative when Jesus marveled. What does it take to make Jesus marvel? There are only two times that we are told that Jesus marveled at something while on earth.

He marveled here at the faith of this Gentile centurion, and in Mark 6 He marveled at the unbelief of the people in Nazareth when He returned to preach to the place where they knew Him best, and they admitted He had done mighty works, and then said that He was no more than a carpenter. Jesus marveled at their unbelief.

Israel had a great heritage. Their ancestors had crossed the Red Sea on dry ground, and they had crossed over Jordan on dry ground into the Promised Land. They had such great prophets as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; they had the prophet Elijah who was taken up to heaven in a fiery chariot.

They had been sustained by manna from heaven during forty years in the wilderness, and yet they kept asking Jesus to show them a sign from heaven.

The Roman centurion had no such heritage and yet he was content, and had faith enough to say: “Just say the word and my servant shall be healed.”

Then the Lord declared: “I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven: and the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness, there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.”

Jesus said that they shall sit down. That is a promise we can depend on, we shall sit down. Jesus said to the church at Laodicea in Revelation 3:21; “He that overcometh, I will give to sit down with Me on My throne, even as I overcame and sat down with my Father on His throne.”

Sitting on a throne indicates reigning over something. The gospel song says it for us:

“We shall reign with Him, Share the throne with Him,
When in glory He comes again;
Love Him day by day, Serve Him all the way, In the
fullness of glory we shall reign.”

And now this final statement about the centurion's faith: Jesus said, “Many shall come from the east and the west and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in

the kingdom of heaven, but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness. There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth?”

Peter in his first sermon that day explained it was the fulfillment of the prophecy: “And in those days I will pour forth my Spirit on all flesh.”

Certainly his Spirit was not poured out on every individual. It was poured out on all flesh; all flesh is both Jew and Gentile.

On the day the church began all 3,000 who became members of the church were Jews, and when the number increased to about 5,000 they were all Jews, and continued to be Jews; until the tenth chapter of Acts when Gentiles were included.

Jesus had predicted this event in John 10 when He said: “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock, one Shepherd.” Then the church was one; composed of both Jew and Gentile.

So when Paul says in Romans 11:26, “All Israel shall be saved.” All Israel is both Jew and Gentile. There is no difference in how they are saved; all are under the same plan, both Jew and Gentile. On the Day of Pentecost when the Jewish audience asked what they must do? Peter said unto them, “Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him.” In other words one plan fits all - all Israel shall be saved.

This emphasis is made plain according to Paul in Galatians 3:27-29; “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond or free, there can be no male or female; for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus. And if ye are Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to promise.”

And that brings us back to the faith of the Roman centurion of whom Jesus said: “Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.” And Jesus said unto the centurion; “Go thy way; as thou hast believed so be it done unto thee.” And the servant was healed in that hour.



UPDATE: IKE & LEE PERTY

Here we are all doing very well by the grace of God. Work at Agona Nnkwanta yesterday was very successful. We baptized three souls who had promise to the past one month and we were so glad that they re-affirmed their commitment to the Lord and so they were baptized yesterday. That means they will also worship with us come Sunday. We are praying that we are able to set up the church there for them so that they won't be traveling to our town to worship with us. The sabbatharian too was baptized last Sunday with a man who has seriously been worshipping with us for about six months last Sunday, and we are very

glad to see these people given themselves to God through our collaboration. We are monitoring all these souls so that they won't go back into the world. When you pray, pray for these souls. The cripple too is very, very active and serious with his church attendance and planning to live in our town so that he won't be traveling from his village. At Fanko, a man who took the studies in the Bible course and later invited us for series of questions for almost one month now also gave himself to Christ last Sunday.

We will go to a village 9 miles away from home this evening for Ed's sermon translation program. This time we are hiring a generator for light as we are shown Christian film or movie today to attract more people. The driver promised us a time he will leave so we have to be prompt as children of God.

(One week later)

Thank you very much for your prayer. God is so good there was no rain and so everything was very successful. PTL! We had over 300 people coming from various villages and three nearby towns to see the Christian film and hear Ed's sermon but we were able to record 281 names on our list. We show religious films like the birth, times, death and the resurrection of Christ. We also show the "Pilgrim Progress". We have these DVDs in both English and in our local languages. Showing them attract more people to listen to the word of God. We had 25 people out of the large crowd from various towns and villages baptized. We were so happy. These people are going to come from their various villages to worship with us on Sundays. All the 25 attended church service last Sunday with 15 others who are not yet baptized. The work is becoming bigger and bigger and we are so glad because it won't make us lazy for the Lord. We thank God that He made us to implement this Ed's sermon translation program. We have been asked by the people and the elders of the town to come back. According to the chief, he was so glad that we came to teach his subjects the life that will let them to not lead an immoral lifestyle, especially, the youth. Going back again will cost us more; hiring of the amplification machines, the projector and the big screen, generator and the vehicle, but we shall see what to do. We are also planning another big one at Fianko upon the request from the brethren in the congregation.

We found a snake in our bedroom last Saturday and it very terrifying that Lee does not know what to do though it was killed. We just don't know how it got in there. It was a black and white colored snake we have not seen such before. God is very wonderful! I went to take my bath in a separate bathroom we have constructed outside our building. just about pouring water on me, I realized that I had no soap there so I went back to get some, but something struck me to get into the bedroom only to see the snake trying to get a place to hide. I quickly reached out for our sweeping brush and hit it with the stick several times when Lee brought me a stronger stick to killed it completely. It was God who asked me to go back into the bedroom or it would have been very dangerous for us living in the room with that deadly snake.

We praise the Lord for all He's doing for us. We praise Him for His continuous protection. Please, join us to praise

the Lord for His mercies on us! PTL!

We thank you very much for all your support and prayers for the work we are doing here. At least we can say that our efforts and yours are not in vain.

May the good Lord bless you all.

L E T T E R S

Dear Ed and Naomi

Christian greetings to you in the precious and mighty name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Master. I thank God for this ministry and for all He is doing through you. Your radio program had a tremendous effect on our lives. We are so grateful to God for the Holy Bibles you sent us. We are writing to thank you for your faithfulness please pray for all of us. We are humbly requesting more Bibles and at least one copy of your sermon book. Please continue to keep up the good work in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. May God bless you richly!

Your brother in Christ Amanuel from Ethiopia

Dear Radio Pastor,

Greetings to you in the wonderful name of our risen Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We thank God for our conversion. At last we received Jesus through your wonderful programme on Radio Africa which our chaplain helped us in turning to your broadcast on Radio Africa. We were touched by your wonderful message which we heard. We know Christ through your programme and we will continue to hear your weekly message of freedom. We are lepers writing to you this letters of request in which we hope will meet you in good health. In your programme we realized that Jesus died for our sins and also Jesus is the only way to eternity. We attended fellowship with our chaplain and we receive teaching through him. We have no Bibles to read and we are eager to have but due to the nature of our illness as lepers we are not allowed to move out of lepers' camp neither are we allowed to associate with people outside. We the lepers hereby plead for your kindness and mercy there are 23 of us: Here are our names: (Names omitted). May God continue to bless your ministry always.

Sister Regina from Nigeria, W. Africa

Dear Brother Ed,

Yesterday I received the Bibles that you posted in February 2008. Thank you for the gift. I distributed a case of these Bibles to the Christians that work at the Post office in Monrovia, Liberia. They all prayed for you and your ministry as Bibles are difficult to afford by most Christians in my country. Do you still have access to communion trays and cups? I need them for the few new Christian Churches the Lord had planted in the interior part of Liberia. Keep the good work in the Lord, Brother Ed; the Lord has a crown for you in glory that you will one day receive.

In Christ, Mike from Liberia

Dear Ed and Naomi,

I hope that you're enjoying spring in Lynchburg. I've got an address for a man in Uganda. I hope to meet him, if

I'm able to go there this year. Could you send him 2 sets of lessons? One set would be for him. The other would be for his son. (He's studying theology.) Here is his information. J. K. (Kampala church of Christ) Kampala Uganda, East Africa. He's a man that Doug Willis met over there about 20 years ago. He would probably love your sermon books Ed. Thanks so much. God bless your work. Because of the Lord,

Barry Kermeen from Columbia, KY

Dearest Ed and Naomi....

Grace and peace of the Lord be with you for now and forevermore.....

This is a message from everyone in here.....we are indeed so much thankful to your enormous support. Dearest Ed, I will send you very soon a letter of gratitude from everyone in the congregation....we are really, really grateful to your ministry. You have indeed helped us very much in the clothing you send us. Some of the clothing I have already sent them to fellow brothers in jail. We are really grateful to your ministry..... if I can I will send you the picture of me and my family. I am able to cover my naked body indeed....We Eritreans have suffered from inflation rates to much and clothing price is very high here. It helped us a lot the clothing you sent. Thanks a lot and we still need some women clothing if you can get us. Last time the trouble I had is now solved and a good news to tell they have allowed me to receive used clothing now so send me freely under this address....and my mom's name.....for this time being....AA Asmara, Eritrea... We still do need any material help you may find for us .we are underground church so we need your help Ed. We never forget and I am sure God knows how great your help is here..... after you send the clothing please let me know and I get ready the custom fees....May God Bless You

NG from Eritrea, E. Africa

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Faith,

I'm writing you this letter to ask if you could help me say a prayer for my younger brother, Calvin out of Rapid

City, S. Dakota. I just got word from my oldest brother Melvin that Calvin has cancer of the liver and lungs. He's been ill the past few months but the doctors all said he had a stomach virus. Out of the 5 sisters and brothers I thought I would be the first to go because of the kind of life style I've had, but prison saved me from dying, because this is where He thought I should be. I know you all are doing such a great job through out the world with all of your work for spreading God's word. I just hope that Jesus will please let me be with my brother before he goes. They said if he takes chemo pills he could live 7 months, I get out in 5 1/2 or 6 months. I pray that Jesus would please let me hold my younger brother before he is gone. I would really like that. Thank you.

David from Low Security Correctional Inst. In Butner, NC.

Dear Ed and Naomi Bousman,

I have received the Bible and all the lessons of the first course. I'm very happy. May the God of heaven and earth bless you may He bless you when you come in and when you go out. I want to thank you for the great job you are doing. Please don't get worried in fail to the answers in time because I am unemployed so money for some stamps might be a problem here and there as you know that in Zimbabwe we are suffering but I want to promise you that I am going to finish the course with the help of our Lord Jesus Christ. May you pray for me please I want to give but I have got nothing to give. Sometimes I see someone I look at him or her or he or she is in need of some help then I look at myself I have got nothing to give. That's why I am saying pray for me so that God may bless me in this project of upholstery that I want to start. Pass my greetings to everybody.

D. J. from Zimbabwe, S. Africa

THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

To the response so many of you have made to our plea of "PLEASE HELP US" in our May GIJAPA newsletter! We're going to make it because you gave a special gift over and beyond your usual gift.



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