SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

Luke 7

The Word That Heals, Raises and Forgives — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus speaks, and sickness leaves at a distance, death gives back a son, a doubting prophet gets his answer, and a sinful woman goes home forgiven. The only people who miss Him are the ones who think they owe Him little.

00 The Text

LUKE 7 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 When He had completed all His discourse in the hearing of the people, He went to Capernaum.

2 And a centurion's slave, who was highly regarded by him, was sick and about to die.

3 When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking Him to come and save the life of his slave.

4 When they came to Jesus, they earnestly implored Him, saying, "He is worthy for You to grant this to him;

5 for he loves our nation and it was he who built us our synagogue."

6 Now Jesus started on His way with them; and when He was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to Him, "Lord, do not trouble Yourself further, for I am not worthy for You to come under my roof;

7 for this reason I did not even consider myself worthy to come to You, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed.

8 "For I also am a man placed under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, 'Go!' and he goes, and to another, 'Come!' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it."

9 Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled at him, and turned and said to the crowd that was following Him, "I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith."

10 When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.

11 Soon afterwards He went to a city called Nain; and His disciples were going along with Him, accompanied by a large crowd.

12 Now as He approached the gate of the city, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a sizeable crowd from the city was with her.

13 When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, "Do not weep."

14 And He came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise!"

15 The dead man sat up and began to speak. And Jesus gave him back to his mother.

16 Fear gripped them all, and they began glorifying God, saying, “A great prophet has arisen among us!” and, “△ God has visited His people!”

17 This report concerning Him went out all over Judea and in all the surrounding district.

18 The disciples of John reported to him about all these things.

19 Summoning two of his disciples, John sent them to the Lord, saying,
“◷ Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?”

20 When the men came to Him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to You, to ask, ‘Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?’”

21 At that very time He cured many people of diseases and afflictions and evil spirits; and He gave sight to many who were blind.

22 And He answered and said to them, “Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, △ the dead are raised up, the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM.

23 “☆ Blessed is he who does not take offense at Me.”

24 When the messengers of John had left, He began to speak to the crowds about John, “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

25 “But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Those who are splendidly clothed and live in luxury are found in royal palaces!

26 “But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, ⟳ I say to you, and one who is more than a prophet.

27 “This is the one about whom it is written, ‘BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY BEFORE YOU.’

28 “⟳ I say to you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet ☆ he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”

29 When all the people and the tax collectors heard this, they acknowledged God’s justice, having been baptized with the baptism of John.

30 But the Pharisees and the lawyers ⚠ rejected God’s purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by John.

31 “To what then shall I compare the men of this generation, and what are they like?

32 “They are like children who sit in the market place and call to one another, and they say, ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.’

33 “For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon!’

34 “The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, ◷ a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’

35 “Yet △ wisdom is vindicated by all her children.”

36 Now one of the Pharisees was requesting Him to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table.

37 And there was ⚠ a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee’s house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume,

38 and standing behind Him at His ⟳ feet, weeping, she began to wet His ⟳ feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His ⟳ feet and anointing them with the perfume.

39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, “⚠ If this man were a prophet He would know who and what sort of person this woman is who is touching Him, that she is a sinner.”

40 And Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to say to you.” And he replied, “Say it, Teacher.”

41 “A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty.

42 “When they were unable to repay, △ he graciously forgave them both. So which of them will love him more?”

43 Simon answered and said, “I suppose the one whom he forgave more.” And He said to him, “You have judged correctly.”

44 Turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.

45 “You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet.

46 “You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume.

47 “For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little.”

48 Then He said to her, “Your sins have been forgiven.”

49 Those who were reclining at the table with Him began to say to themselves, “Who is this man who even forgives sins?”

50 And He said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Marked in the text

- **v7** “just say the word, and my servant will be healed” — God — His character & actions
- **v8** “I also am a man placed under authority” — Time / place / contrast
- **v9** “not even in Israel have I found such great faith” — Promise / blessing
- **v12** “the only son of his mother, and she was a widow” — Time / place / contrast
- **v13** “He felt compassion for her” — God — His character & actions
- **v13** “Do not weep” — Command / instruction
- **v14** “Young man, I say to you, arise” — God — His character & actions
- **v15** “Jesus gave him back to his mother” — Promise / blessing
- **v16** “God has visited His people” — God — His character & actions
- **v19** “Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?” — Time / place / contrast
- **v22** “the dead are raised” — God — His character & actions
- **v23** “Blessed is he who does not take offense at Me” — Promise / blessing
- **v28** “he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he” — Promise / blessing
- **v30** “rejected God’s purpose for themselves” — Sin / warning
- **v34** “a friend of tax collectors and sinners” — Time / place / contrast
- **v35** “wisdom is vindicated by all her children” — God — His character & actions
- **v37** “a woman in the city who was a sinner” — Sin / warning
- **v39** “If this man were a prophet” — Sin / warning
- **v42** “he graciously forgave them both” — God — His character & actions
- **v44** “you gave Me no water for My feet” — Sin / warning
- **v47** “her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much” — Promise / blessing
- **v47** “he who is forgiven little, loves little” — Sin / warning
- **v48** “Your sins have been forgiven” — God — His character & actions
- **v49** “Who is this man who even forgives sins?” — Time / place / contrast
- **v50** “Your faith has saved you; go in peace” — Promise / blessing
- **v4** “worthy” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v9** “I say to you” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v38** “feet” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

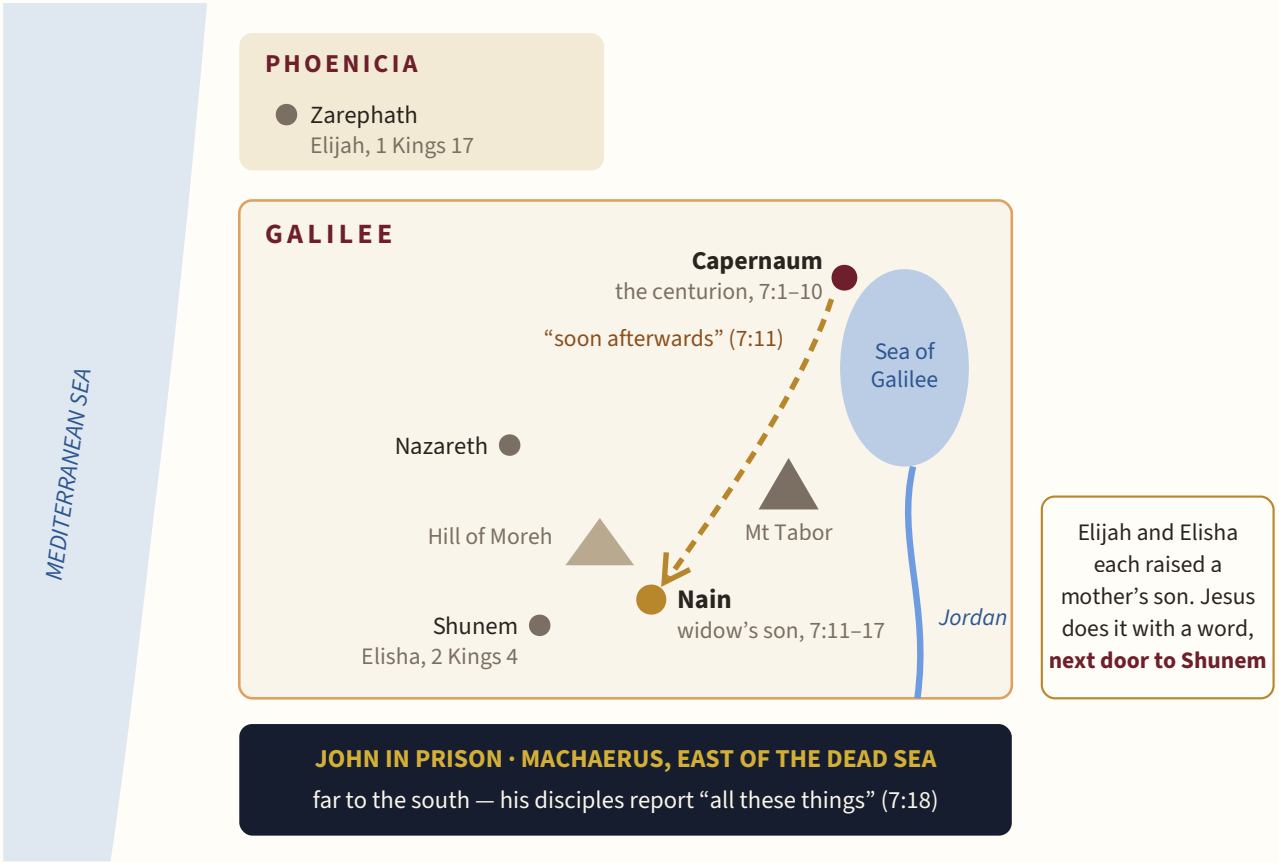
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · LUKE 7:7

"for this reason I did not even consider myself worthy to come to You, but △just say the word, and my servant will be healed."

FIGURE · GALILEE IN LUKE 7



From Capernaum Jesus walks to Nain, just over the hill from Shunem where Elisha raised a son; far south, John waits in Herod's prison.

Setting. After the Sermon on the Plain Jesus enters Capernaum, where a centurion's slave is dying (vv1–10). "Soon afterwards" He reaches Nain and meets a widow's funeral (vv11–17). John the Baptist, in prison, sends two disciples with a question (vv18–23), and Jesus speaks to the crowds about John and "this generation" (vv24–35). The chapter ends at dinner in the house of Simon the Pharisee, where a woman known as a sinner anoints Jesus' feet (vv36–50).

Structure:

- vv1–10 — **just say the word:** a valued slave about to die (v2); Jewish elders plead "He is worthy" (vv3–5); friends bring the centurion's message — "I am not worthy … just say the word" (vv6–7); a man under authority (v8); Jesus marvels — "not even in Israel have I found such great faith" (v9); the slave in good health (v10).
- vv11–17 — **young man, arise:** two crowds at the gate; an only son, a widow (vv11–12); "When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion" — "Do not weep" (v13); He touches the coffin: "Young man, I say to you, arise!" (v14); the dead man sits up and speaks; He gives him back to his mother (v15); "God has visited His people!" (vv16–17).
- vv18–23 — **the Expected One:** John sends two disciples (vv18–20); at that very time Jesus heals many (v21); "Go and report to John what you have seen and heard" (v22); "Blessed is he who does not take offense at Me" (v23).
- vv24–35 — **more than a prophet:** not a reed, not a courtier — a prophet and more (vv24–26); Malachi's messenger (v27); none greater than John, yet the least in the kingdom is greater (v28); the people justify God, the Pharisees reject His purpose (vv29–30); children in the market place (vv31–32); John fasting, the Son of Man feasting (vv33–34); wisdom vindicated (v35).
- vv36–50 — **her sins forgiven:** Jesus reclines at a Pharisee's table (v36); a sinful woman with perfume, tears, hair and kisses (vv37–38); Simon's silent verdict (v39); two debtors, 500 and 50 denarii (vv40–43); "Do you see this woman?" — no water, no kiss, no oil (vv44–46); "her sins, which are many, have been forgiven" (vv47–48); "Who is this man who even forgives sins?" (v49); "Your faith has saved you; go in peace" (v50).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "say / said / saying" ×28 — vv4, 6, 7, 8, 9 (×2), 13, 14 (×2), 16, 19, 20, 22, 26, 28, 32, 33, 34, 39, 40 (×2), 43 (×2), 44, 47, 48, 49, 50; the phrase "I say to you" ×5 — vv9, 14, 26, 28, 47.
- "come / came / comes / coming" ×12 — vv3, 4, 6, 7, 8 (×2), 14 (×2), 20, 33, 34, 45.
- "John" ×10 — vv18, 19, 20, 22, 24 (×2), 28, 29, 30, 33.
- "feet" ×7 — vv38 (×3), 44 (×2), 45, 46.
- "see / saw / seen" ×7 — vv13, 22, 24, 25, 26, 39, 44.
- "sins / sinner(s)" ×6 — vv34, 37, 39, 47, 48, 49; "forgave / forgiven / forgives" ×5 — vv42, 43, 47 (×2), 48 (plus "forgives" in v49).
- "sent" ×6 — vv3, 6, 10, 19, 20, 27 ("send").
- "God" ×5 — vv16 (×2), 28, 29, 30; "woman" ×5 — vv37, 39, 44 (×2), 50; "house" ×5 — vv6, 10, 36, 37, 44.
- "Pharisee(s)" ×5 — vv30, 36 (×2), 37, 39.
- "hear / heard" ×5 — vv3, 9, 22 (×2), 29.
- "love / loved / loves" ×4 — vv5, 42, 47 (×2); "prophet" ×4 — vv16, 26 (×2), 39.
- "worthy" ×3 — vv4, 6, 7; "Lord" ×3 — vv6, 13, 19.
- "weep / weeping" ×3 — vv13, 32, 38; "kiss / kissing" ×3 — vv38, 45 (×2); "perfume" ×3 — vv37, 38, 46; "dead" ×3 — vv12, 15, 22.
- "faith" ×2 — vv9, 50: great faith at the start, saving faith at the end.

Contrasts: Worthy (the elders) ⟷ not worthy (the centurion) (vv4–7). Not even in Israel ⟷ a Gentile's faith (v9). A crowd following Jesus ⟷ a crowd following a coffin (vv11–12). Do not weep ⟷ a widow's tears (v13). The greatest born of women ⟷ the least in the kingdom (v28). The people justify God ⟷ the Pharisees reject God's purpose (vv29–30). John fasting ⟷ the Son of Man feasting (vv33–34). Simon's cold welcome ⟷ the woman's tears and kisses (vv44–46). Forgiven much ⟷ forgiven little (v47).

Shape of the chapter: four scenes, each built around a word from Jesus. Two miracles (a word sent and a word spoken), then a question and a long answer, then a parable at a table. It moves from a Gentile outsider to a widow to a prophet in prison to a sinful woman — and the outsiders all receive what the insiders miss.

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus' word has authority over sickness, death, doubt and sin. Those who know they are unworthy, grieving, confused or guilty find Him; those who are sure of themselves find fault with Him.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · LUKE 7:22

"And He answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, △the dead are raised up, the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM."

FIGURE · JESUS' ANSWER TO JOHN

JOHN ASKED A QUESTION · JESUS ANSWERED WITH ISAIAH (7:22)

"Are You the Expected One, or do we look for someone else?" (7:19)

the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT	→	Isaiah 35:5; 61:1 (LXX)
the lame walk	→	Isaiah 35:6
the lepers are cleansed	→	(Elisha and Naaman, 2 Kings 5; Luke 4:27)
the deaf hear	→	Isaiah 35:5
the dead are raised up	→	Isaiah 26:19 · Nain, 7:15
the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED	→	Isaiah 61:1

"Blessed is he who does not take offense at Me" (7:23) — the list stops short of "liberty to captives" (Isa 61:1).

Each line of Jesus' reply (left) points John to a promise in Isaiah (right); the works themselves are the answer.

Why does Luke include the elders and the friends? Matthew tells the story more briefly (Matt 8:5–13), as though the centurion came himself; Luke shows that he spoke through others. Ancient writers often said a man did what his messengers did for him. Luke's detail sharpens the point: the elders plead merit ("He is worthy"), the centurion pleads grace ("I am not worthy"). Guzik: "The elders said he was worthy; he said he was not worthy." Sproul: "The centurion understood grace."

How can Jesus heal at a distance? The centurion reasons from authority: if his orders move soldiers, Jesus' word can move sickness (v8). Guzik: "Jesus' healing power was not a magic trick that required the magician's presence." Sproul ties it to Christ's person — the divine nature is not limited by place — and to creation by a word.

What kind of miracle was Nain? Guzik is careful: "This young man was not resurrected but resuscitated; he rose from the dead only to die again." Spurgeon preaches it as a picture of new birth — "Conversions are miracles which never cease." Both are true. The son died again later; but the miracle points to the day when Jesus' voice will raise the dead for good (John 5:28–29). Luke's wording ("gave him back to his mother") echoes Elijah (1 Kings 17:23), and the crowd rightly says a great prophet has arisen — but Jesus does with a word what Elijah did with prayer and struggle.

Did John really doubt? Sproul: "Obviously, John was confused," and the view that he asked only for his disciples is "a stretch of biblical interpretation." Guzik suggests he expected a different kind of deliverance. John had preached fire and judgment (3:16–17); Jesus was healing and preaching to the poor, and John was still in prison. Jesus answers with Isaiah 35 and 61 and then honors John before the crowd. Honest doubt brought to Jesus is not unbelief.

What does "least in the kingdom … greater than he" mean? Not that John was lost or lesser in character. Sproul: "greater" is a matter of blessedness and place in God's plan — we stand after the cross and resurrection. Guzik: "The least in the Gospel stands on higher ground than the greatest under the law." John pointed to the Lamb; we know what the Lamb has done.

What is "wisdom is vindicated by all her children"? Sproul: "justified" here means shown to be right, as in James, not Paul's declaration of righteousness. God's wisdom in sending both John and Jesus is proved by the people it changes — the tax collectors who "acknowledged God's justice" (v29) and, in the next scene, a sinful woman.

Did her love earn her forgiveness? "For she loved much" (v47) can sound that way. But the parable puts forgiveness first and love second (vv42–43), the perfect tense says her sins "have been forgiven," and Jesus credits her faith (v50). Guzik: her love "was evidence that she had been forgiven." Sproul: "There was no payment and nothing that could be done to earn it." Henry: "Silver and gold will not pay our debt." She loved because she was forgiven.

Who was the woman? Luke does not say. Tradition later identified her with Mary Magdalene (8:2), but nothing in the text supports that, and both Guzik and Sproul reject calling Mary a prostitute (see Luke 8). This is also not the anointing at Bethany in the last week (John 12:1–8).

Word study (Greek):

- **worthy — *axios* (G514):** deserving, the elders' word (v4).
- **worthy, fit — *hikanos* (G2425):** sufficient; the centurion's word for himself (v6).
- **word — *logos* (G3056):** "say the word" — literally "say with a word" (v7).
- **felt compassion — *splanchnizomai* (G4697):** moved in the inward parts (v13).
- **coffin — *soros* (G4673):** only here in the New Testament (v14).
- **visited — *episkeptomai* (G1980):** to look upon and care for (v16; 1:68, 78; 19:44).
- **Expected One — *erchomenos* (G2064):** "the Coming One" (vv19–20; 3:16; 19:38).
- **take offense — *skandalizō* (G4624):** to stumble, to be tripped (v23).
- **acknowledged God's justice, vindicated — *dikaioō* (G1344):** declared or shown right (vv29, 35).
- **purpose — *boulē* (G1012):** God's counsel (v30; Acts 2:23; 20:27).
- **graciously forgave — *charizomai* (G5483):** to give freely, from *charis* (vv42–43).
- **forgiven — *aphiēmi* (G863):** perfect tense, "stand forgiven" (vv47–48).

- **saved — *sōzō* (G4982):** "Your faith has saved you" (v50; 8:48).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Worthy and not worthy** — merit versus grace (vv4–7).
2. **Distance is no problem for His word** (Guzik, Sproul).
3. **The widow did not ask** — her tears were the prayer (v13).
4. **Greater than Elijah** — a touch and a word (1 Kings 17).
5. **Honest doubt is not unbelief** — "Obviously, John was confused" (Sproul).
6. **The answer is the works** — Isaiah fulfilled "at that very time" (Henry).
7. **You can refuse God's purpose — for yourself** (v30).
8. **Love is the fruit, not the root** (Guzik).
9. **Tears belong in faith** (Spurgeon).
10. **"Who is this man?"** — the One who forgives sins (v49).

Cross-references: 1 Kings 17:17–24; 2 Kings 4:18–37; 5:1–14; Psalm 2:12; 32:1; 118:26; Isaiah 26:19; 35:5–6; 61:1–2; Malachi 3:1; Matthew 8:5–13; 11:2–19; Luke 1:68, 78; 3:16–20; 4:18–19, 27; 5:21; 15:2; 19:44; John 5:28–29; 12:1–8; Acts 10:1–2; Romans 5:1; Hebrews 4:15.

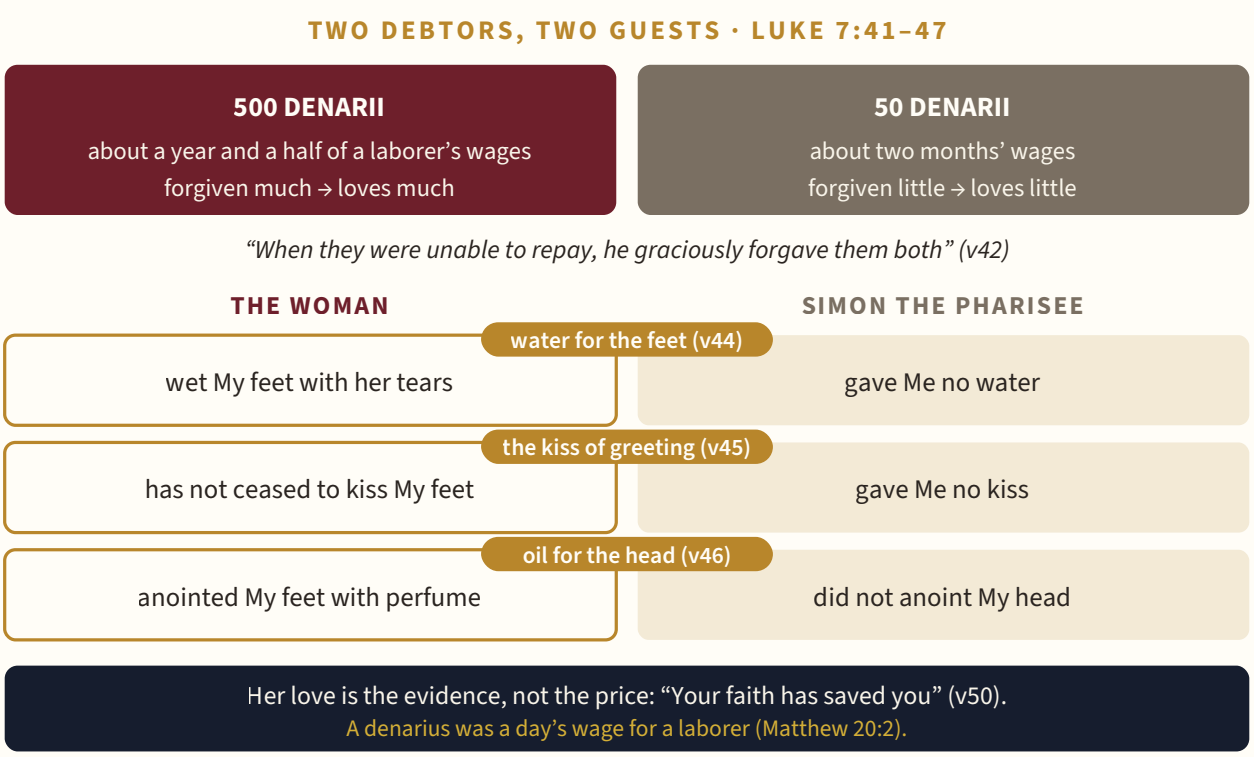
03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · LUKE 7:50

"And He said to the woman, "☆ Your faith has saved you; go in peace.""

FIGURE · TWO DEBTORS, TWO GUESTS



Read across each row: everything Simon left undone as host, the woman did — and Jesus says the difference is how much each knew he or she had been forgiven.

Example to follow — the centurion. Everybody around him said he deserved help. He said, "I am not worthy … just say the word." A lot of the men I walk with have only ever heard the opposite — that they are worthless — and some of us cover it by acting like we deserve everything. The centurion shows a third way: I am not worthy, and His word is enough. This week I come to Jesus on His word, not my record.

Promise to trust — the Lord sees the widow. Nobody asked Jesus to stop that funeral. "When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her." He sees the grief I don't talk about — the son I lost touch with, the years I can't get back, the people I buried while I was using. He is not a stranger to my funeral processions.

Truth to face — honest questions. John asked from a prison cell, "Are You the Expected One?" Some of the men I serve are asking that from a real cell. Jesus did not shame John; He sent him the evidence and called him great. I can bring my real questions to Jesus and look for His answer in His Word.

Sin to confess — Simon's heart. It is easy to read this chapter and see myself as the woman. Most days I am Simon — sizing people up, keeping score, giving Jesus the minimum. "He who is forgiven little, loves little." I confess the cold heart that forgets how much I have been forgiven.

Command to obey — go in peace. Jesus told her, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." He did not tell her to keep paying. I will stop trying to work off a debt He already cancelled, and I will walk out the door forgiven.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. The elders said the centurion was "worthy"; he said he was not. Which voice do I listen to when I come to Jesus — my record or His word? (7:4–7) *Strong faith and great humility are entirely compatible (Guzik).*
2. Jesus raised the widow's son without being asked. Where have I been grieving silently, and what does it mean to me that "the Lord saw her"? (7:12–15; Heb 4:15) *The Lord Jesus Christ sees us when we weep (Sproul).*
3. John asked an honest question from a prison cell. What question would I ask Jesus from my hardest place — and where in His Word would I look for the answer? (7:19–23; Isa 35:5–6) *Jesus answered John with Isaiah, not with a scolding.*
4. The people of Jesus' day criticized John for fasting and Jesus for feasting. What excuse do I use to keep God's messengers at arm's length? (7:30–35) *They rejected God's purpose for themselves.*
5. Am I more like Simon or the woman — someone who thinks he owes 50, or someone who knows he owes 500? (7:41–47) *He who is forgiven little, loves little.*
6. Jesus told her, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." What would it look like for me to actually walk in that peace this week? (7:48–50; Rom 5:1) *Peace is the fit result of what the Saviour has done for you (Spurgeon).*

Worship. Lord Jesus, You speak and it is done. You healed a slave You never saw, stopped a funeral and gave a son back to his mother, answered a prophet's doubt with the promises of God, and said to a woman everyone despised, "Your sins have been forgiven." Who is this man who even forgives sins? You are the Lord, God visiting His people.

Prayer. Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof — but just say the word. See the grief I carry, and speak life where things are dead. When I am confused, help me bring my questions to You and not walk away offended. Forgive me for the Simon in me, and give me the woman's tears and love. I owe more than I can pay; thank You for graciously forgiving it all. Let me go in peace. Amen.

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