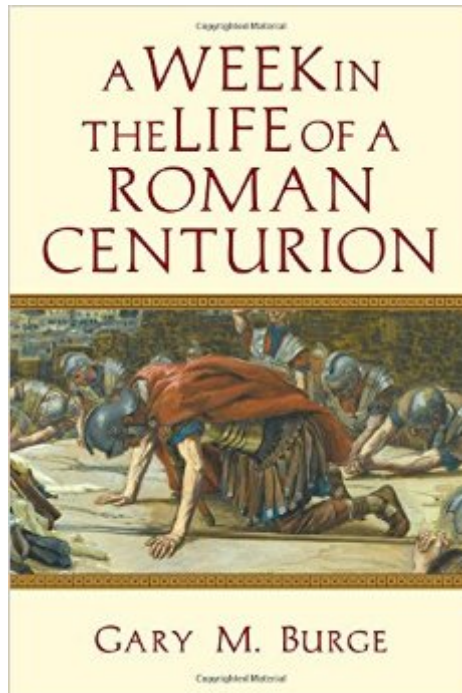


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# A Week In The Life Of A Roman Centurion



## Synopsis

Enter a world of warfare and treachery, of duty and honor, of love and loyalty, interwoven with the inner workings of a Roman centurion's household. And then trace it as the road curves toward little Capernaum. Follow the story of Appius, a proud centurion, and Tullus, his scribe and slave. From a battle with the Parthians, through a tragic personal crisis, to the gladiator arena at Caesarea Maritima, their tale finally leads to the backwater village of Capernaum on the shores of Galilee. There, in a culture not their own and during a week they will never forget, they encounter a Jewish prophet from Nazareth. *A Week in the Life of a Roman Centurion* gives us a first-century view of the world of the Gospels. In entertaining historical fiction, splashed with informative sidebars and images, we capture a view of Jesus' world from the outer framework looking in.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Fiction is not really the genre of New Testament scholars for the most part. Very few would consider writing a fictional account in order to sell a book or convey information. Fortunately, that very few does not include Gary Burge. Burge has written a book about the story of a centurion who meets Jesus (The one found in Luke 7 and Matthew 8) to give readers some insight into the New Testament world and what it would be like to be in the household of a centurion. You get to see life mainly through the eyes of a servant captured in battle and taken to live with the centurion as he describes all the events that take place. Since this is a fictional account, I can't really tell too much about the book, although it is based on the above Biblical passages, with some artistic license

certainly granted. After all, we don't really know anything about the back story of this centurion or the slave in his household. Still, I found the story to be exciting and I could easily remember who the characters were and found myself drawn into what was happening. Since we live in an era where we have TV shows like A.D. going on, I found myself intrigued with the thought of what it would be like if this was made into a filmed version, even if only one that goes straight to TV. Along the way, Burge makes sure the reader learns about important concepts surrounding life in the ancient world. I was particularly pleased to note the time that Burge dedicated to the topic of honor and shame. This is such an important concept in the ancient world and it is one that we moderns do not realize when we read the Bible. The average person in the pew unfortunately looks at the Biblical world and thinks that the world was just like theirs.

Author: Gary M. Burge  
Title: A Week in the Life of a Roman Centurion  
Publisher: IVP

Academic Reading Level: Leisure  
Pages: 189  
Infused with historically accurate characters and details, *A Week in the Life of a Roman Centurion* by Gary M. Burge tells a story rich with potential. The tale culminates in a biblical text, developing backstory as well as backdrop. Unfortunately, much of that potential is hidden behind awkward formatting, textbook storytelling, and weak plot lines. Burge undertakes the novelization of a New Testament story to teach about Roman history and Jewish culture in a more relatable manner. Obviously well researched, the dispensing of information overshadows character development and the story's flow. Large text boxes discoursing factual, and interesting, historical, religious, and biographical topics are interjected with no regard for the story's progression. As these subject boxes interrupt storyline events they break a reader's engagement and focus. In focusing on a peripheral character, Burge begins in an outlying campaign where Rome has overthrown the city and either killed or taken captive most of its inhabitants. What could be a dramatic, emotion-laden journey of one man into and through captivity, and ending up at death's door unless miraculously saved ends up reading like a textbook. The dialogue is stilted and the third person point of view seems to shift between limited and omniscient. Although developing interesting characters, experiencing earth-shattering events "all true in historical representation" the story falls flat. Not only does Burge struggle to make a human connection with his characters, there are also some glaring holes in the plot.

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