

## Matthew 9:18-34 – “Healing In His Wings”

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### 1. Exercises of Faith – 9:18-26

**9:18-19 - *While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, “My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live.”*** <sup>19</sup> ***So Jesus arose and followed him, and so did His disciples.***

A **ruler** of the synagogue. He’s the local synagogue official. He manages the services and the building and how the synagogue functions. He’s a highly respected man in the community but he comes with great respect and reverence to Jesus – he worshipped Jesus. In fact, Mark 5:22 and Luke 8:41 tells us that this man fell down at Jesus’ feet.

- For a man of his position to do this would have put him in potential disrepute with his associates and religious leaders.
- Only God was to be worshipped and this man could have been accused of blasphemy and potentially sentenced to death. This was a big deal!
- But this man of position and prominence has met a Man of promise. He sees something in Jesus that warrants this sort of response.

Mark and Luke say in their gospels that this ruler is Jairus and that his daughter was at the point of death when he approached Jesus. So as Jesus travels to his house, this girl who is 12 years old, dies. This is why Matthew records that he says she is dead. It’s because Matthew is just jumping ahead to the inevitable outcome.

And this man Jairus is asking Jesus to just lay His hand on her and she will live.

- His faith is not where the Centurion’s was when he asked Jesus to just speak the word and his servant would be made well (Matthew 8:8).
- Yet we’re going to see in our passage today the different approaches of faith and how Jesus graciously responds to each one.

So, Jesus goes on His way with Jairus and it’s on His way that He encounters an interruption. An interruption of inconvenience, at least to Jairus. Time isn’t on his side with his daughter’s condition. But it’s in these interruptions that God often wants to do a work that stretches us yet reveals in a greater way the work and power of God.

It's in this time that Jairus' daughter will succumb to her illness and die, but it's not the end for her. Jesus is going to do a greater work.

- Jairus' name means, *whom God enlightens*. And Jairus will truly be enlightened in God's greatness through all that transpires.

**9:20-21 - *And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. <sup>21</sup> For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well."***

This woman comes to Jesus in great need. For 12 years she's had an issue. And this is not a minor problem. This was an issue that would have kept her isolated and away from any social contact.

- According to Leviticus 15:19-28, she is deemed unclean, and anything or anyone that she touches is also unclean.
- For 12 years she's been an outcast. She hasn't experienced normal life at all. She hasn't been able to go to the temple, or to a synagogue.
- She has been suffering and one of the only things worse than suffering is suffering in isolation. Nobody to hug her, hold her, help her along. This is an agonizing condition physically, psychologically, and socially.

It's an interesting comparison of what sin does in our lives. Not to say this condition is a result of sin, but it's a picture of what sin will do.

- Sin will rob you of life. It will drain you. Its only purpose is to destroy.
- Sin will take you further than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to spend.
- The only cure is to reach out to Jesus. And as she does, she doesn't just become a picture of the damage sin brings in a life, but she's a picture of the saving grace that is available through Christ by faith!

She knows Jesus is in the area and so she makes her way through the crowd knowing that if she can just touch the hem of His garment she will be made well. She comes behind Jesus. She doesn't want Him to see her and potentially be stopped because of her ritualistic impurity. So, she pushes through, and grabs hold of Jesus' garment and something wonderful happens.

**9:22 - *But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour.***

Now we miss a little bit of the situation when we don't look through Mark and Luke's gospel. Because in Luke 8 we read:

- **Luke 8:43–48**, *"Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, <sup>44</sup> came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. <sup>45</sup> And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?' " <sup>46</sup> But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." <sup>47</sup> Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. <sup>48</sup> And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace.""*

When this woman touched Jesus she was healed immediately. She recognized it and Jesus recognized it. He perceived that power had gone out from Him. That word for power is *dunamis*, the same word used of the power we receive when the Holy Spirit comes upon us (Acts 1:8).

What's humorous is that Jesus turns around and asks, *'Who touched Me?'* I'm sure the disciples are wondering, *'What is He talking about? Everyone is touching Him!?' Someone get Him some water or a granola bar, He's withering under the sun.'*

- Luke 8:42 says the *multitudes thronged Him*. That word 'thronged' means to be suffocating. This is worse than a Saturday afternoon at the Costco check out.

But Jesus knows something significant has happened, that there's been an exchange of faith and power.

But He's not asking this because He doesn't know, but because He wants to draw this woman into a greater understanding of Who He is.

Jesus speaks to her, ***Be of good cheer, daughter***... These were deeply impactful words for this woman to hear. It's the only time in the gospels Jesus used this term of endearment toward someone. It meant to be 'acceptable to God'. It was time for her to be of good cheer because this condition no longer ostracized her. She's not lost in the crowd, she's not ignored by Jesus, she's received and accepted. And Jesus confirms that her faith has made her well. She's free to live a new life.

- This is the same response to all that reach out to Jesus to be made well.

Before we continue on, let's discuss what her faith was really all about. Why did she say, '***if only I may touch His garment.***' Was this some superstitious type of action? Not when you see why this was important for her.

Every Jew according to the Mosaic law was to have these tassels on the 4 corners of the outer garment. This was to be a perpetual reminder of the law of God and their responsibility to keep it.

- **Numbers 15:38–39**, *"Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners. <sup>39</sup> And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them, and that you may not follow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined,"*

This tassel in Hebrew is *tsitsit*. These sat on the four corners of the outer garment called the *tallit*. It was a rectangular cloth that draped over the body and hung down close to the ground. This is also known as the prayer shawl. These tassels on the corner were what this woman sought to touch. This was the '*hem*'. The tassels held special significance because of their reminder of the law of God.

- The people of Gennesaret brought their sick to Christ for a similar purpose (Mark 6:53-56).
- The Pharisees began to enlarge these tassels as a display of spirituality (Matthew 23:5).

But there's even more to this. This woman's faith was not in some knotted thread hanging on the border of the tallit. It was more so on Who was wearing this tallit. She believed Jesus was the Promised Messiah.

There was a messianic prophecy given in Malachi 4:2 which said: *"But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves."*

- This term *Sun of Righteousness* was a Messianic term. Malachi was looking ahead to the arrival of King Jesus and the dawning of His kingdom. When He comes, He will have *healing in His wings*. That word for wings is the Hebrew *kanaph* which is the same word used for corners in Numbers 15:38, where the tassels were.
- This woman was embracing the promise that the Messiah had healing in His wings and that Jesus was the Messiah. She looked upon Jesus and believed that He was who He claimed to be. When she had touched the hem of His garment, it was the same as touching Him.

May we all recognize who Jesus is and that He has the power to heal and save. It's not great faith that's needed, it's just simple faith in a great God.

Now think for a second about what must have been going through Jairus' mind. *'Jesus, I came to you first! This woman is budding in line!! Stop delaying, my need is very urgent!'* This I'm sure to any of us would seem fair. But Jesus knows all that is going on and He's actually going to use this delay to do a greater work. Not only is He going to heal a sick girl, He's going to show the power He has over life and death!

- There are times I'm sure we can question the timing of the Lord. *'Why God are You not healing this person now? They're getting worse!!'* But God is not bound to our timing. Nor is He bound to our demands or wishes. He does what He does for His purposes and glory, which sometimes goes beyond our own little world. He's sovereignly working all things out to further display His greatness and glory. But if we're living our lives for that purpose too, we'll have joy and peace in the times of waiting.
- Jesus demonstrated this with Lazarus in John 11:1-15.

**9:23-24 - *When Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, <sup>24</sup> He said to them, "Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him.***

When Jesus arrived on the scene the girl had died, and the place was overtaken by the professional mourners. Yes, in this day when a loved one died, you would hire mourners to come in and the louder they were showed the depth of grief you had for the deceased.

Then Jesus says something remarkable, *'make room, or basically, get out, because she's just sleeping.'* When the professional mourners heard this, they ridiculed Him; they laughed and scorned Him.

- Now Jesus knew she had died, but to Him it was just temporary, as though she was just sleeping.
- This became an idiom for death for the believer in the New Testament. Isn't that a great way to view death, like sleep? Now we're not talking about soul sleep or anything like that. We're talking about falling asleep in this world and awaking to eternal life in heaven.
- With Jesus, death is as temporary as sleep.

- I don't know about you, but I love sleep. I look forward to sleeping. I don't ever get afraid of having to put my head on my pillow at night. That's how we should treat death when Jesus is our life.

**9:25-26 - *But when the crowd was put outside, He went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. <sup>26</sup> And the report of this went out into all that land.***

Imagine this testimony that went out into all the land? There is not just a miracle worker and healer, there is One among them who has power over life! There are three accounts in the gospels of people who were raised from the dead – the widow of Nain's son (Luke 17:11-17); Jairus' daughter (Matthew 9:23-26); and Lazarus (John 11). All of these sadly were raised back to life to have to eventually die again.

But all these accounts were to build people's faith and point to the ultimate resurrection of Jesus Christ who brings eternal life to all who believe in Him.

“It is interesting that Jairus and this woman—two opposite people—met at the feet of Jesus. Jairus was a leading Jewish man; she was an anonymous woman with no prestige or resources. He was a synagogue leader, while her affliction kept her from worship. Jairus came pleading for his daughter; the woman came with a need of her own. The girl had been healthy for 12 years, and then died; the woman had been ill for 12 years and was now made whole. Jairus' need was public—all knew it; but the woman's need was private—only Jesus understood. Both Jairus and the woman trusted Christ, and He met their needs.” <sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Blind Are Given Sight – 9:27-31

**9:27-28 - *When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, “Son of David, have mercy on us!” <sup>28</sup> And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.”***

These two blind men saw more clearly than many of the religious leaders of the day. They knew that Jesus was the long awaited for Messiah. They called Him Son of David which was a Messianic title. The Promised One that would occupy the throne of David forever.

<sup>1</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 35). Victor Books.

And one of the signs of the Messiah was to give sight to the blind (Isaiah 35:5-6).

**9:29-31 - *Then He touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith let it be to you.”<sup>30</sup> And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, “See that no one knows it.”<sup>31</sup> But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country.***

Jesus healed them because they believed He could. ***According to your faith*** didn't mean let your healing be in proportion to your faith. Aren't you glad Jesus doesn't operate that way? He healed simply because they believed He could.

The gospels give us six accounts of blindness being healed. Here and in John 9; Mark 8:22-26; Matt. 20:29-34; Mark 10:46-52; and Luke 18:35-43.

Again, this was a promised Messianic activity and it revealed the darkness people were in. It's only through Jesus can we see clearly.

Many believe that seeing is believing, but here it shows that believing is seeing.

- Don't wait for God to prove Himself before you accept Him. He's already done that. Believe and then you will see clearly.

***See that no one knows it...***

“Jesus wanted to discourage the masses from coming to Him for physical healing alone, because His primary purpose was spiritual healing. Physical healing simply served to authenticate His claim to be the promised Messiah.”<sup>2</sup>

### 3. Questioning By the Pharisees – 9:32-34

**9:32-33 - *As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a man, mute and demon-possessed.<sup>33</sup> And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And the multitudes marveled, saying, “It was never seen like this in Israel!”***

Jesus continues to do a great work, this time casting out a demon that caused a man to be mute. The multitudes are amazed. People are blown away by Jesus. As we all should be. But notice the reaction of the Pharisees.

**9:34 - *But the Pharisees said, “He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons.”***

They saw that this was a supernatural work that Jesus did, but they attribute it to Satan rather than to God. Later in Matthew 12 this is what led Jesus to speak of

<sup>2</sup> Radmacher, E. D., Allen, R. B., & House, H. W. (1997). *The Nelson Study Bible: New King James Version* (Mt 9:30). T. Nelson Publishers.

the unforgiveable sin. It was blaspheming the Holy Spirit – seeing what God was doing yet denying it in unbelief.

I believe that's something we all need to be cautious of. We see so many wonders of God all around us, but let's be sure we don't write those things off as nothing more than common happenstance. When we do we plant the seeds of unbelief and it leads to a hard heart. One that will be unable to receive Jesus. That's the unforgiveable sin because you never come to repentance.

This passage shows clearly the greatness of Jesus who reaches out with compassion and love. Nobody is out of His reach. He heals, He saves, He brings life. I pray you are enjoying this blessed life.