

A SICK WOMAN'S ONLY HOPE  
Mark 5:21-34  
Matthew 9:18-22; Luke 8:41-48

Intro: This miracle is recorded in all three of the Synop-  
tics, and always in connection with the raising of  
Jairus' daughter from the dead. The Lord was going to heal  
Jairus' daughter when He was interrupted by the woman who had  
suffered from "an issue of blood" for twelve years. These  
miracles show how busy the Lord was and how many demands were  
made upon Him. At the same time it shows that, regardless of  
how busy the Lord was, or how many people were around Him, He  
was always aware of every person He healed.

Let us notice, first,

I. THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THIS PARTICULAR WOMAN (Mark  
5:25, 26).

It is useless, and really unimportant, for us to try to guess  
what was wrong with this woman. We must assume that she was  
a Jewess. She had a physical problem which had caused her to  
bleed for 12 years! This is the meaning of the word "issue,"  
a flowing. It would seem that the very fact that she was  
still alive, was miraculous.

During those 12 years she had seen many doctors, and they had  
tried many remedies in order to help her. But none of the  
remedies had worked. In fact, the outcome was twofold:

- 1) She had spent everything that she had.
- 2) Instead of getting better, she was worse. Therefore, it  
seems correct to say that in her present state she did  
not have much longer to live.

This was not an indictment of the doctors of the day; it  
simply meant that she had a physical problem which was beyond  
what the doctors of the day could correct. Consequently, she  
was desperate!

The next thing that we read about had to do with:

II. THE WOMAN AND THE LORD (Mark 5:27-34).

Remember that the Lord had already had a very busy day, but  
again we see the providence of God in the fact that when the  
Lord came back over the Sea of Galilee, the woman was there.  
How gracious God was to order the Lord's steps and this  
woman's circumstances so that they were both in the same  
place at the same time. Quite obviously the hand of God was  
evident in all of this.

She knew Who the Lord was. What she had heard, we do not

know. But it is safe to say that she had heard of those who had been healed by Him. Her acquaintance with Him was minimal from what we can learn from all three of the Gospel records. And it is also evident that her faith left much to be desired. Whether or not she was superstitious, we cannot say. I think it would be better to say that God was dealing with her, and she had the faith to believe that, even though she did not talk to Him, if she could only touch, not Him, but His garment, she would be healed.

I said earlier that it would seem that we are safe in saying that she was Jewish. If this were the case, then she would have known what the Scriptures had to say about any woman with an issue of blood. The latter part of Leviticus 15 indicates that she was unclean, unfit to take part in any of the ceremonies connected with the Tabernacle. Anything that she touched, bed, table, chair, or whatever was unclean. And anybody who had anything to do with her was also unclean.

Therefore, she could have been charged with making the Lord unclean by touching Him. That may have been the reason that she decided to touch His garment, but not touch Him. However, even touching His garment would, under the Law, have had the same defiling effect.

Anybody who is facing death like she was, will do whatever is required to be healed. And so, in spite of the crowd, which according to Luke was pressing upon the Lord in a way which made it practically impossible for Him to move, she pressed into the crowd, and touched the Lord's garment.

Instantaneously she was healed! Her trouble of twelve years was suddenly gone, and she knew it! But Someone else knew it, too. And they were the only two in the whole crowd who were aware of what had happened.

Let me re-read verses 29 and 30 in our text. Notice the word "straightway" in verse 29, and "immediately" in verse 30. (Read.)

She knew, and He knew. She knew that she was healed; He knew that power had gone out from Him to heal her.

And then the Lord asked a question which seemed to be ridiculous to His disciples. He did not say, "Who touched Me?" He said, "Who touched my clothes?"

Now all of us should know that people can touch our clothes without our ever knowing what they had done. And that would have been especially true of that day when the men wore long robes. But adding to that the fact that the Lord was in a

tremendous crowd, with people pressing against Him constantly, it was almost amusing that He would say, "Who touched my clothes?"

The disciples thought it was amazing that He would ask such a thing, but He asked it, and He meant it. The Lord knew that something had happened, that someone had been healed.

Now it seems that we can say that the Lord knew who it was who had touched Him, but He wanted her to confess what she had done both for the benefit that it would be to her, as well as for the disciples and those who were standing close to Him.

Now notice how John Mark described the woman, and what she had done. Why was she afraid? Why was she trembling? Why did she fall down before the Lord, and then confess what she had done?

She knew that according to the Law she had defiled the Lord. And she also knew that doing what she had done, she would have been subject to the penalty of death. She was completely at the mercy of the Lord, and she knew it. The job that she had experienced over being healed was suddenly gone, and she knew that she could die for an entirely different reason.

What did the Lord say? Did He condemn her? Did she question her severely as to why she would defile Him and defile everybody else she had touched in the crowd?

No, He did not condemn her. Instead He said the words which are recorded for us in verse 34. (Read.)

What did the Lord mean by "daughter"?

Obviously, it was a term of endearment, an expression of His love for her. That word alone would have brought peace to her heart. That word was enough to dispel her fears, and to reduce the fast beat of her heart.

But it also meant that she was a daughter of Abraham, and a member of the family of God. The Lord was recognizing her as one of the elect. Her faith was to go far beyond the mere physical healing. It seems clear from the Lord's words to her that she had experienced something far greater than the healing of her twelve-year problem. She experienced the healing of her soul. Her faith, though expressed in a very unorthodox way, was nevertheless true faith, and the Lord recognized it as such.

And with this the story ends. Mark actually recorded more

than Matthew and Luke, but still we wish that he had written more. However, we can be sure that, although the Lord moved on to the house of Jairus, yet this woman had found what she needed, and even more, and forever afterwards was under the constant care of her heavenly Father.

Concl: Now let me take this miracle beyond the realm of a physical healing. We do not know that physical healings always resulted in salvation. I believe that most of them did, but there seems to be no question about this healing. Everything points to her salvation. God used that disease, as long as it had lasted, as expensive as it was, and as much as she had suffered and then been disappointed -- the Lord used that disease to bring her finally to the Lord Jesus Christ. And so we have in this miracle a wonderful picture of salvation.

Although the description may not exactly fit this miracle, God has given us in Ezekiel's prophecy a picture of Israel's spiritual condition. Please turn to Ezekiel 16:1-6.  
(Read.)

Do not this picture in Ezekiel, and the miracle we have considered tonight, picture what we all are spiritually?

Spiritually we are afflicted with a deadly disease. It is called sin. It has defiled us, making us unclean, unfit for the presence of God. And, unfortunately, that defilement is spread to anyone who has anything to do with us.

It is very common for people to try every other possible remedy before they will turn to the Lord. Lots of money is being spent today on counseling, and projects of various kinds, and remedies which promise great things, but none of them works! The problem with the human heart is sin. Sin is not cured by 100,000 more police officers. I am for all of the police that we can get, but the remedy is not there. We can spend billions of dollars trying to turn people around, and trying to change society, but the problem is too great for such human remedies. Our own country can be forced into financial ruin (if we are not there already) by our pursuit of false remedies for the needs of society today.

It is not until we have run out of money and out of hope that we finally turn to the Lord. And it is the Spirit of God who tells us that all we need to do is to touch His garment. We run the risk of defiling Him in order to get the help that we need.

Did you ever wonder why the Lord Jesus Christ was not defiled permanently when our sins were placed upon Him. Cf. Isa.

53:6. And 1 Pet. 2:24. If we were under the condemnation of God because of our own sin, what must have been the risk to the Lord Jesus Christ when the sins of all of the Lord's people were placed upon Him.

What is the difference?

The Lord took our sins upon Himself, and went to the Cross. But there He put them away. He did not arise from the dead with our defiling sins upon Him. They were purged, and we were forever cleansed.

And to top it all, we are told in Heb. 2:11 that because of what He did for us, He is not ashamed to call us "brethren." This is like the Lord said to that woman: "Daughter."

Cf. 2 Cor. 6:17, 18.

And how do we get such healing, such cleansing? Is it because we deserve it? Did the Lord say to that woman, "You deserve to be healed because you have suffered long enough, have spent all of your money, and have tried so hard to be healed in every other way?" No, the question of what she deserved did not enter into it at all. Her healing was an act of the grace of God, and the Lord caused her to seek it, and find it, as she finally turned in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ.

I trust this is a picture of what has happened to you. If not, perhaps the Lord brought you here tonight so that you would forsake all other remedies for the needs of your heart, and turn in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ. May God grant that it will be so.