

Jesus had instructed the disciples to take Him to the Decapolis region. On the way there, a storm almost sank the boat in which Jesus was sleeping. The disciples saw the amazing power of Jesus when the wind and waves went still at Jesus command (8:24ⁱ). Then they witnessed the demons in a man declare that Jesus is Son of the Most High God (8:28ⁱⁱ). Jesus sent the demons into a herd of pigs all of which ran into the lake and drowned. Seeing the man in his right mind and the loss of the herd of pigs, the locals asked Jesus to leave. The account continues when Jesus arrived back in Capernaum.

The passage is about two people. One needed to touch Jesus, and the other needed Jesus' touch. The first was a woman who had dealt with hemorrhaging for many years. Her condition surely left her weak, and according to Levitical law it made her unclean (Leviticus 15:25ⁱⁱⁱ). That meant she was not supposed to be in the company of others and could not attend synagogue meetings. The law was designed to keep infections of the blood from spreading to others. Like the leper we studied previously, she would not have had the comfort of human touch. She was isolated from her culture, looked down on, and suffering physically and emotionally.

⁴⁰ Now when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him. ⁴¹ And there came a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue. And falling at Jesus' feet, he implored him to come to his house, ^{42a} for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying. Luke 8:40-42a Jesus had returned to Capernaum to the welcome of the crowds. That is because He had healed many of the town's people from their infirmities. The ruler of the synagogue, Jairus, made his way through the crowd and fell at Jesus' feet and implored Him to come to his home and save his twelve-year-old daughter who was dying. Knowing Jesus had healed many people in the town, Jairus believed Jesus could heal his daughter too.

My understanding of "ruler of the synagogue" in those days was that he was the one who oversaw the elders. He would choose which one would preach that week's Scripture passage. He also oversaw teaching the children five to twelve-years-of-age. The children were learning to read and write Hebrew and memorize the Torah. We don't know what he previously felt about Jesus, except that he had let him preach one sabbath. But now Jesus is his only hope to save his dying daughter.

^{42b} As Jesus went, the people pressed around him. ⁴³ And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone. Luke 8:42b, 43 On the way to Jairus' house, the crowds, who were glad to see Jesus had returned, packed around Him to see a miracle and hear any teaching. Sneaking through the crowd was this woman who had hemorrhaged for years. I would guess that she is from another town and heard of Jesus healing people. If the townsfolk recognized her she would have been chased from the crowd, for by touching them she would be making them unclean according to the Law.

Luke the physician gives a jab at his own profession by saying she had spent all her money on doctors for which she was none the better. Today we call that a chronic illness. There are many people who live with chronic illnesses. As advanced as modern medicine has become, there are still many mysteries about the human body and microorganisms that are difficult to treat. Man will never have all the answers. Creation is too complex (Psalm 139:14^{iv}).

⁴⁴ She came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, and immediately her discharge of blood ceased. Luke 8:44 In that age there was a tradition that the Messiah's tunic tassel would have the power to heal. The Jews had a Law that directed the men to take the ends of all the threads that made up their shirt and let it dangle down with five knots in it to remind them of the five books of the Torah (Numbers 15:38,39^v). Jesus rebuked Pharisees for making their tassels extra-long and showy as if to say they were very holy or had great authority (Matthew 23:5^{vi}). This woman must have known the tradition. Desperately she wove her way through the crowd until she was able to get close enough to reach out and touch Jesus' tassel (translated here as 'the fringe of His garment'). It was expressing her conviction that Jesus must be the Messiah and that power would come from Him to heal her.

Like the leper whom Jesus touched (Luke 5:13^{vii}), the moment she touched the tassel she was whole. It was instantaneous. **It was as if her faith grounded her and made her a conduit for God's power to flow from Jesus.** Jesus' previous miracles involved Him reaching out and touching others, even those considered unclean like the leper. But here we see someone reach out in faith and touch Him.

Can we do that today? Can we touch Jesus? Isn't that what prayer is? I like to use what I call 'sanctified imagination' and see in my mind Jesus' hand extended to me. (24:39^{viii}; 1John 1:1^{ix}) I reach out and touch Him and the peace and assurance flows to my mind and heart. It's not magic. It's an act of faith. Isn't our heavenly Father's hand always extended to us in our time of need? Then reach out and take hold of it.

Elianna is getting used to Adam and Rachael's boys. She kept her distance from them for a few Sundays, and then one Sunday she reached out very hesitantly and touched Eli's hand. It was ok. Nothing bad happened. It wasn't long after she was hugging both of them. I think that is the story of many of us. We are hesitant to reach out of our comfortable world to make contact with God. How will He respond? What is it that we fear? When we find out He is welcoming and warm, we long for His embrace. Sure, we may have to put some things out of our lives to continue that intimacy, but we will gladly do so if we want to be spiritually healed and be whole.

⁴⁵ And Jesus said, "Who was it that touched me?" When all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the crowds surround you and are pressing in on you!" ⁴⁶ But Jesus said, "Someone touched me, for I perceive that power has gone out from me." Luke 8:45, 46 Jesus asked who had touched Him. Peter implied lots of people did. But Jesus knew someone had been healed, because He perceived that power had gone out from Him. That is a fascinating statement. Jesus somehow perceived healing flowed from Him even when He did not see the person. Why didn't it flow to those other people who touched Him? It's because they weren't reaching out in faith that He is the Messiah and expecting anything from Him.

Lots of people pray and never see answers. Lots of people claim to believe but live lives that are a contradiction to what they say they believe. Lots of people read the Bible and are not changed. Why are some changed while others go on their way unimpressed? It's because some are grounded with faith that knows God hears and cares. **The faith that sees results is the faith that expects an answer because of who God is.** That does not mean that God does whatever we want whenever we ask or that we are never ill. It means that like this woman we are reaching out in faith and expecting God to be consistent with His nature, whether that means He heals us or not. Either way our lives are changed because

we let God's Spirit conform us to God's ways. Our souls are healed when we touch Him. We long for that communion with Him.

⁴⁷ And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. ⁴⁸ And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace." Luke 8:47,48 Jesus addressed her as daughter. It is the only time He is recorded addressing any woman as daughter. It may have been an abbreviation of "daughter of Abraham" (13:16^x). Perhaps it was to calm her. He affirmed the woman's faith by declaring that it was her faith that made her well. It was faith placed in Jesus as Messiah and healer, not in a magical tassel. Faith must be placed in what is true if we are to see any results (Matthew 9:29^{xi}).

⁴⁹ While he was still speaking, someone from the ruler's house came and said, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher any more." Luke 8:49 Jesus was delayed on His walk to the synagogue ruler's home. When He felt that power flow He could have decided not to stop and address the woman, but He followed the leading of the Spirit and took time to affirm her faith.

Then someone ran to meet Jairus to tell him it was too late. His daughter had died. No need to have Jesus come now. Sometimes interruptions provide an opportunity for a greater miracle. If Jesus had not stopped to speak with the hemorrhaging woman, He may have made it there before she died. Capernaum was not a very large town. We must remember that God allows what we see as interruptions and therefore He has a reason for them. **Interruptions should be seen as God sent opportunities.** If it is a distraction from God's purposes, the Spirit will help us discern that.

Jairus could believe in miraculous healing but raising someone from the dead was only for the great prophets like Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 17:22^{xii}; 2 Kings 4:35,36^{xiii}). Had he heard about how Jesus raised the widow of Nain's son from the dead (Luke 7:14,15^{xiv})? Even if he had, the news of his daughter's death must have been like a knife in the heart Jairus. His beloved daughter was gone.

⁵⁰ But Jesus on hearing this answered him, "Do not fear; only believe, and she will be well." Luke 8:50 What an important expression, "Do not fear, only believe." Jesus was asking the man to have great faith in Him, faith like the woman with the hemorrhage had. What is Jesus asking Him to believe? I think He is asking Him to believe He is the Messiah who is greater than the prophets.

It makes me wonder about Jairus. He had seen so many in the town healed. He saw demons cast out. This was greater power than any former prophet for most of the healings and deliverances in the town took place in one day (Luke 4:40^{xv})! At the same time Jesus seemed to preach against some of what the ruler would have considered orthodoxy. Was his heart in turmoil? Had any of the Pharisees warned him about Jesus? But at that moment, He was desperate. Jesus was asking for total faith and trust to be placed in Him. Desperation can break through our walls of routines and cultural mindsets and open us up to an encounter with God.

⁵¹ And when he came to the house, he allowed no one to enter with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the child. ⁵² And all were weeping and mourning for her, but he said, "Do not weep, for she is not dead but sleeping." ⁵³ And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. Luke 8:51-53 The mourners had already gathered, and the weeping and wailing had begun. Jesus told them

not to weep for the girl was only sleeping. That was heaven's perspective. Perhaps Jesus did not want more people to know He could raise the dead at this point in His ministry. The crowds were already large and constantly seeking help. Think of how many would be pleading to have their loved one raised if word got out.

Jesus left all the wailing mourners outside, all those who were just sure there was no hope. He only took with Him the parents and His three closest disciples. There was her lifeless body now growing cold on the bed. Her chest was no longer rising and falling. Her eyes would have been dilated and her mouth half open.

⁵⁴ But taking her by the hand he called, saying, "Child, arise." *⁵⁵ And her spirit returned, and she got up at once. And he directed that something should be given her to eat.* Luke 8:54,55 Jesus spoke to that lifeless body, "Child, arise!" At Jesus' command her spirit rushed back into her body and she got right up. Because we have so many resuscitations now, there are many accounts that confirm the spirit leaves the body and can re-enter. But in all those accounts, I never read of anyone who was suddenly well and immediately got up out of bed. Whatever caused the people in those accounts to have their heart stop was still causing their body distress. But like Peter's mother-in-law whom Jesus healed, this young girl was up on her feet instantly (Luke 4:39^{xvi}). When Jesus heals, He does so totally!

Her malady had probably kept her from eating before she died, and her now healed body was hungry for nourishment. Jesus directed them to feed her something. That's another sign that she was totally well and of Jesus' compassion.

What did Jairus think then? He and his wife were amazed and overjoyed, but what was going on in their hearts? Jesus had to be at least as great as the greatest prophet. I think it must have convinced them that Jesus was the Messiah.

⁵⁶ And her parents were amazed, but he charged them to tell no one what had happened. Luke 8:56 The account ends with Jesus telling them not to tell anyone. There is a time for everything. What a contrast with the so-called healers of today! They want it publicized quickly. If they could heal like Jesus, every malady including death, they'd be inundated with urgent pleas night and day as Jesus was in these accounts.

This is a picture of what happens when a person is touched by Jesus for the first time. We walk around dead inside because all we know is the physical world. Then Jesus touches us and suddenly our spiritual eyes open and we are alive, born again (John 3:3^{xvii})! We rise and begin walking in the Spirit. People are amazed at the transformation. Now that the victory was won on the cross, we can tell everyone.

Years ago, my wife was feeling weak and winded. She knew something was wrong. The first time she went to the doctor he told her to get used to getting older. But about a year later it was much worse, and she constantly fought asthma and bronchitis. We went back to the doctor again and then he could hear the problem. Her mitral valve had a distinct murmur. It was so distinct that a cardiologist recorded it to teach his interns. The cardiologist our doctor sent us to was new to the area and happened to specialize in the mitral valves. What a wonderful coincidence! (God incidence) After tests were done, he determined we needed to schedule an urgent surgery.

We warned the surgeon and his assistant that my wife had a unique condition, an extremely large bundle of arteries called an hemangioma on top of her liver. It had been discovered years earlier. He told us they would not be near it. The open-heart surgery went well, and recovery was on schedule until they accidentally gave her something she

was allergic to and her heart went out of rhythm. Nothing helped to stabilize it until Karen Richards called. The minute Mariko heard her voice, her heart went into the proper rhythm. The nurse said to have her call anytime.

We signed the papers to go home and the assistant came to remove the pace wires from her heart. One wire came out with a bright red drop of blood. It had nicked her hemangioma. Her blood pressure dropped like a rock. She felt as if she was spinning. They rushed her to an MRI while a surgeon prepared to open her up again, this time to try to find the bleed. The doctor who had long before found the hemangioma had told us that if it was cut, she would bleed out. That was what was happening. Her abdomen began to swell as it filled with blood.

Mariko was crying out to the Lord to have mercy as the spinning sensation made her feel so horrible. My daughter and I were on the floor in CVICU crying out to God, reaching out for the hem of His garment. My wife later told us that at that moment a white warm light came over her and the spinning stopped. She felt ready to die and be with Jesus, for the Great Physician touched her. The nurse was yelling for her to stay awake, but she was in perfect peace like she had never experienced before. The bleeding had miraculously stopped.

They had to rush pints of blood into her body warming the bags with their hands. She looked six months pregnant with all the blood in her abdomen, but she would survive. We touched God. God touched Mariko. Power went out from Him. The hemorrhage was stopped. He kept her from dying. He still answers prayer today. He can still be touched in faith today. He still touches people today.

Why isn't there always a miraculous outcome? Sometimes it is a lack of faith, but I think most of the time it is that God knows things we will never know on this earth. In those cases, faith puts our hand in God's hand and He walks us through the difficulty. We can still trust Him even when we don't understand. That, too, is a miracle.

Have you reached out in prayer and touched Jesus? The first time is when we realize we need the forgiveness of all our wrongs and that Jesus took the punishment we deserve. His hands are reaching out to us with the gift of salvation. Will reach out and accept it and be saved? Then we find we can reach out and touch Him any time in prayer. But we get so busy with life, and sometimes avoid it because we wonder how He might direct us that is different from our intentions. But His ways are always best. We need to understand that to doubt that is foolish. Will you reach out and touch Him even now as we close with a moment of silence? Will you take that time daily to be still with Him?

Questions

- 1 What was the hemorrhaging woman's situation?
- 2 Why would Jairus ask for Jesus to help?
- 3 Why did she risk the ire of the crowd to touch Jesus' tassel?
- 4 Why was her touch different from that of others?
- 5 Why should we see interruptions as God's interventions?
- 6 Why are desperate circumstances often a gift from God?
- 7 How would they have known the girl was dead?
- 8 What did Jesus ask of Jairus?
- 9 How do we know the girl was miraculously healed?
- 10 Have you reached out and touched God or let Him touch you?

i Luke 8:24 (ESV)

²⁴ And they went and woke him, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was a calm.

ii Luke 8:28 (ESV)

²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me."

iii Leviticus 15:25 (ESV)

²⁵ "If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, not at the time of her menstrual impurity, or if she has a discharge beyond the time of her impurity, all the days of the discharge she shall continue in uncleanness. As in the days of her impurity, she shall be unclean.

iv Psalm 139:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.

v Numbers 15:38-39 (ESV)

³⁸ "Speak to the people of Israel, and tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a cord of blue on the tassel of each corner.

³⁹ And it shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the LORD, to do them, not to follow after your own heart and your own eyes, which you are inclined to whore after.

vi Matthew 23:5 (ESV)

⁵ They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long,

vii Luke 5:13 (ESV)

¹³ And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him.

viii Luke 24:39 (ESV)

³⁹ See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have."

ix 1 John 1:1 (ESV)

¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—

x Luke 13:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?"

xi Matthew 9:29 (ESV) ²⁹ Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you."

xii 1 Kings 17:22 (ESV) ²² And the LORD listened to the voice of Elijah. And the life of the child came into him again, and he revived.

xiii 2 Kings 4:35-36 (ESV)

³⁵ Then he got up again and walked once back and forth in the house, and went up and stretched himself upon him. The child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.

³⁶ Then he summoned Gehazi and said, "Call this Shunammite." So he called her. And when she came to him, he said, "Pick up your son."

xiv Luke 7:14-15 (ESV) ¹⁴ Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." ¹⁵ And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.

xv Luke 4:40 (ESV)

⁴⁰ Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them.

xvi Luke 4:39 (ESV)

³⁹ And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.

xvii John 3:3 (ESV)

³ Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."