

Healed by Faith

Matt 9:18-26

SS Lesson for 06/20/2021

Devotional Scripture: Acts 3:11-16

OUTLINE

LESSON BACKGROUND AND KEY VERSE

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Key Verse: Matthew 9:22

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

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- Request during worship in the splendor of God's holiness (Ps 29:2)
- Request during worship to bring glory to God's name (Ps 86:9-10)
- Request during worship to our God and Maker (Ps 95:6-7)
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- Request during worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:24)

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Lesson Background and Key Verse

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Have you ever had to see a specialist? You went to see your regular physician, and, for whatever reason, he or she sent you on to a specialist—someone better trained or with more experience for your situation. When the need is critical, you want the very best help. Jesus is the ultimate specialist! He specializes in the critical needs of the body and of the soul. As people need to have confidence in a physician's knowledge and skills to treat our needs, so our text challenges us to put our faith in Christ, even in (or especially in) the darkest hours. When others are not specialized enough to help, Jesus is!

Today's lesson takes place late in the second year of Jesus' public ministry. He conducted much of the early part of his ministry around the Sea of Galilee. Specifically, much of the ministry was on the north end, in and around the village of Capernaum. Jesus' popularity was very high (example: Luke 8:4, 19). He taught about life and the kingdom of God in the rural areas and towns along the western side of the sea (example: Matthew 5-7). His teaching was pointed, his spirit magnetic. And having already healed so many people, his reputation had spread far and wide. But public opinion had begun to polarize. People watched and listened to Jesus very closely, but for different reasons. Not everyone adored him. Today's text occurs in a section of Matthew that contrasts Jesus' authority and power, as demonstrated in miracles, with the objections of religious leaders. Jesus raised their ire by forgiving sins (Matthew 9:2-3), by associating with marginalized people (9:11), and by violating certain traditions (9:14). Despite the objections of the powerful, Jesus brought God's grace to bear for the blessing of God's people. As Jesus dealt with the crowds, he never lost sight of the individual (example: Matthew 8:1-3). Our text today witnesses to two examples in this regard. Both circumstances involve tragically common instances of human suffering. The events considered occurred after Jesus ended his response to a controversy over fasting. He was doing something fundamentally new in God's plan, something that required people to lay aside the old (Matthew 9:16-17). This was no time for mourning and fasting but instead for rejoicing because God's promised redeemer had arrived (9:15). The deeds that followed provided a glimpse of that newness in the kingdom of God. (Mark 5:21-43 and Luke 8:40-56 offer parallel accounts.)

Key Verse: Matthew 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.

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

9:1-8. Returning from the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee, **Jesus went to His own town, Capernaum.** There the faith of **some men** was evident when **a paralytic, lying on a mat** was brought to Jesus. Mark explained that four men lowered him through the roof (Mark 2:3-4). Several religious leaders were present and heard **Jesus** tell this man, **Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven.** (The words "Take heart" are from the Gr. word *tharseō* used here for the first of seven times in the NT [Matt. 9:2,22; 14:27; Mark 6:50; 10:49; John 16:33; Acts 23:11]. It means "to take courage or cheer up.") Apparently the illness had resulted from his sin. Jesus was claiming divine authority, for only God can forgive sins (Mark 2:7; Luke 5:21). The leaders stumbled over this and **said to themselves, Jesus is blaspheming!** This was the first opposition of the religious leaders to Jesus. **Knowing their thoughts, Jesus** asked them whether it **is easier to say one's sins are forgiven, or to tell him to arise and walk.** While either statement could be *spoken* with ease, the first would be "easier" in that it could not be disproved by onlookers. If, however, Jesus had first said, **Get up and walk,** and the man remained paralyzed on his mat, it would be clear Jesus was not who He claimed to be. Jesus therefore spoke not only the easier words, but He also spoke of healing, thereby proving He has power to perform both acts, healing and forgiving sin. As a result **the crowd** was **filled with awe** (this

word *ephobēthēsan* differs from the word for “amazed” [*ethaumasān*, from *thaumazō*], the disciples’ reaction after the storm [Matt. 8:27]). They recognized the **authority** behind such actions, and **they praised God**.

9:9 (Mark 2:13-14; Luke 5:27-28). While it is not clear from either of the two preceding illustrations whether those men did follow **Jesus**, the third illustration is perfectly clear. The Lord met **a man named Matthew sitting in a tax collector’s booth**. He collected taxes on customs paid at ports, in this case, Capernaum. To him Jesus issued the command, **Follow Me**. Immediately **Matthew got up and** began following Jesus. As King, Jesus had the right to select His disciples. Matthew was no doubt profoundly impressed with Jesus’ person, teaching, and authority. **9:10-13 (Mark 2:15-17; Luke 5:29-32)**. After Matthew began to follow the Lord (Matt. 9:9), he held a **dinner at his house**. Since he had invited many of his associates to this dinner, **many tax collectors and “sinners”** were present. Perhaps this was to introduce them to the Savior. The Jews hated tax collectors, for they collected money to support the Romans, and tax collectors often took in more than necessary and pocketed the difference. Thus **the Pharisees**, who would never eat with such people, **asked Jesus’ disciples why He** was eating with them. The Lord’s response demonstrated that His ministry is directed toward those who realize they have a need: Only **sick people need a doctor**. The Pharisees did not think they were **sinners** (sick) so they would never have sought out the Lord (the Physician). The Pharisees always brought the proper sacrifices, but they were totally lacking in compassion toward sinners. When **mercy** is lacking, then religious formalities are meaningless (cf. Hosea 6:6).

9:14-17 (Mark 2:18-22; Luke 5:33-39). Not only did **the Pharisees** question Jesus’ participation in this feast with tax collectors and “sinners,” but **disciples** of John the Baptist also **came and asked** Jesus a question about taking part in such feasts. It was right for John and his disciples to **fast**, for they were calling people to repentance and to the coming kingdom. But John’s disciples asked why Jesus’ men were not fasting too. **Jesus answered** that the kingdom is like a great feast (cf. Matt. 22:2; Isa. 25:6), in this case a wedding banquet. Since the King was now present, it was inappropriate for Him or His disciples to fast. At a wedding, people are happy and are eating, not mourning or fasting. Jesus did, however, anticipate His rejection for He added that a **time would come when the bridegroom would be taken away**. Then He pictured the relationship between His ministry and that of John the Baptist. John was a reformer seeking to bring about repentance among those steeped in the traditions of Judaism. Jesus, however, was not out to **patch up an old system**, like sewing a new **unshrunk cloth on an old garment**, which would then **tear**, or pouring **new wine into old wineskins**, which would then **burst**. His purpose was to bring in something **new**. He had come to lead a group out of Judaism into the kingdom based on Him and His righteousness. True righteousness is not built on the Law or on Pharisaic traditions.

9:18-26. In this section two miracles are described. **A ruler** (of the synagogue [Mark 5:22] probably at Capernaum), called Jairus in Mark and Luke, came to Jesus and requested healing for his **daughter** who, Luke added, was 12 years old (Luke 8:42). She had **just died**, Jairus said, but he believed Jesus could give her life. In the parallel Gospel accounts the father said she was “dying,” not is “dead” (Mark 5:23; Luke 8:42). This apparent discrepancy is explained by the fact that while Jesus was speaking to Jairus, someone came from his house to tell him the girl had died. Matthew did not mention that detail, and therefore included the report of the girl’s death in Jairus’ request. As **Jesus... went** on the way to deal with Jairus’ daughter, He was interrupted by **a woman who was healed** as she in **faith** reached out and touched Jesus’ **cloak**. Interestingly the duration of her hemorrhaging was the same as Jairus’ daughter’s age—**12 years**. The woman was ceremonially unclean (Lev. 15:19-30). Jesus stopped and called her **Daughter** (*thygatēr* an affectionate term; cf. “the girl” [Matt. 9:24], *korasion*, possibly also an affectionate word like the Eng. “maiden”). Jesus said her faith was the reason she was **healed**. Undoubtedly Jairus’ heart must have been encouraged by this act, for he too had faith in Jesus. On the words “take heart” (from *tharseō*) see comments on verse 2. When the party arrived at Jairus’ home, **the flute players and the noisy crowd** (of mourners, Luke 8:52) had already assembled to weep for the family. They believed the child was **dead**, for when **Jesus said the girl was merely asleep... they laughed**. Jesus was not denying that she was actually dead. He was simply comparing her dead condition to sleep. Like sleep, her death was temporary, and she would rise from it. **After the crowd** was dismissed, Jesus restored the girl to life. Such power truly belongs only to God, and **news of** the event spread throughout the land (cf. Matt. 9:31).

9:27-31. As **Jesus traveled on**, He was **followed by two blind men** who appealed to Him on the basis of the fact that He is the **Son of David** (cf. 12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31). This title clearly related Jesus to the messianic line (cf. 1:1). The persistence of **the blind men** was seen as they followed Jesus into a house where He miraculously **restored their sight**. Their faith was genuine for they truly believed He was **able to** heal them (9:28). They affirmed His deity for they acknowledged Him as **Lord**. Their sight was restored in

keeping with their **faith**. In spite of Jesus' warning to tell no one **about this** event, His fame continued to **spread** throughout the **region** (cf. v. 26; 12:16). His warning was probably given to keep multitudes from thronging to Him merely for the purpose of physical healing. While Jesus did heal many from physical diseases, His miracles were for the purpose of authenticating His claims. Jesus came primarily for spiritual healing, not physical healing.

9:32-34. As the two former blind men were leaving the house, a **demon-possessed man was brought to Jesus**. The demon had prevented the man from speaking. Jesus immediately healed him. When the **dumb man spoke, the crowd** marveled (*ethaumasan*; cf. 8:27) **and said, Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel**. However, the religious leaders did not draw the same conclusion. They believed that Jesus was performing His miracles by the power of Satan, **the prince of demons** (cf. 10:25; 12:22-37).

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Request for Healing (Matt 9:18-19)

18 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."

19 So Jesus arose and followed him, and so did His disciples.

Request during worship (18)

Request during worship with reverence (Ps 2:11)

11 Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling.

Request during worship in the splendor of God's holiness (Ps 29:2)

2 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness.

Request during worship to bring glory to God's name (Ps 86:9-10)

9 All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, O Lord; they will bring glory to your name. 10 For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God.

Request during worship to our God and Maker (Ps 95:6-7)

6 Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; 7 for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care. Today, if you hear his voice,

Request during worship to serve God only (Matt 4:10)

10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Request during worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:24)

24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth."

Request answered by Jesus' attentiveness (19)

Attentive because His eyes are on the righteous (Ps 34:15)

15 The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry;

Attentive because He knows the righteous (Ps 1:6)

6 For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Attentive because He never sleeps, but is always vigilant (Ps 121:3)

3 He will not let your foot slip — he who watches over you will not slumber;

Attentive because He sustains those in need (Ps 146:9)

9 The Lord watches over the alien and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

Attentive because God's awareness is deliverance (Ps 33:18-19)

18 But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, 19 to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine.

Attentive because He know how to rescue (2 Peter 2:9)

9 if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

Healing by Faith (Matt 9:20-22)

20 And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment.

21 For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well."

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.

Faith of needs being fulfilled (20-21)

Fulfilled through eternal fellowship (1 Cor 1:9)

9 God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

Fulfilled because God always does what He promises (1 Thess 5:24)

24 The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.

Fulfilled through Jesus being faithful over God's house (Heb 3:6)

6 But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.

Fulfilled through hope (Heb 10:23)

23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

Fulfilled because He is the creator (Rev 3:14)

14 "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation.

Faith answered by healing (22)

Healing physically (Matt 14:14)

14 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

Healing spiritually (Isa 53:5)

5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

Healing through His abiding (John 15:1-4)

1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

Healing through prayer, repentance and obedience (2 Chron 7:14)

14 if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Healing through His compassion (Matt 14:14)

14 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

Restoration of Life (Matt 9:23-26)

23 When Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing,
24 He said to them, "Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping." And they ridiculed Him.
25 But when the crowd was put outside, He went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose.
26 And the report of this went out into all that land.

Life is full of crowds who do not understand (23-24)

Can't understand because God's thoughts are not man's (Isa 55:7-9)

7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. 8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. 9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Can't understand because God's ways are higher than man (Job 11:7-9)

7 "Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty? 8 They are higher than the heavens — what can you do? They are deeper than the depths of the grave—what can you know? 9 Their measure is longer than the earth and wider than the sea.

Can't understand because no man can know the things of God (Job 42:1-6)

1 Then Job replied to the Lord: 2 "I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted. 3 [You asked,] 'Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge?' Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know. 4 ["You said,] 'Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me.' 5 My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. 6 Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes."

Can't understand because the plans of God thwarts the purposes of man (Ps 33:10-11)

10 The Lord foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. 11 But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

Can't understand because God's thoughts are too profound for man (Ps 92:5-6)

5 How great are your works, O Lord, how profound your thoughts! 6 The senseless man does not know, fools do not understand,

Life is restored through Jesus (25)

Restored through the renewal by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:3-5)

3 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. 4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,

Restored because of God's face shining on His people (Ps 80:3)

3 Restore us, O God; make your face shine upon us, that we may be saved.

Restored so that God's people can serve (Jer 15:19)

19 Therefore this is what the Lord says: "If you repent, I will restore you that you may serve me; if you utter worthy, not worthless, words, you will be my spokesman. Let this people turn to you, but you must not turn to them.

Restored through the refreshing of God (Acts 3:19-21)

19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, 20 and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you — even Jesus. 21 He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.

Restored after suffering for doing good (1 Peter 5:10)

10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

Life restored should be a cause to witness (26)

Witness because Jesus commanded it (Matt 28:18-20)

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Witness through the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8)

8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Witness through teaching (2 Tim 2:2)

2 And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

Witness starts at home (Luke 8:39)

39 "Return home and tell how much God has done for you." So the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him.

Witness about what God has done for us (Ps 66:16)

16 Come and listen, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Commentary Thoughts from Allen Ross

Observations on the Text

The passage is dealing with life and death issues. In both the case of the woman and the case of the little girl, life had ceased (in different ways). The miracles in both cases show that Jesus has the authority to restore life. This is the main point of the passage.

But now we are dealing with women specifically. A woman has been suffering with bleeding for twelve years. We are not told what kind of bleeding this is. We assume, and it is only an assumption, that it is connected to her womb. If it is then she would be unclean according to Leviticus 15:25-33, meaning that she could not go to the temple to worship, could not participate in normal marital relationships, and should not even touch someone else. But when Jesus healed her He was showing that He could solve such uncleanness--He could meet the demands of the Law and make clean what was unclean. He would not be defiled by her touch, but she would be made whole by His power. So this very special emphasis in the gospel narratives shows that Jesus cared for the suffering of women in this plight. And it was not simply a difficulty she had to live with from time to time. It was hopeless--Jesus was her last hope.

Then we have a sick girl who died, and Jesus came and raised her from the dead. She was twelve--the same age as the length of time that the woman had been afflicted with the flow of blood (and prevented from having a child). The woman had missed out on twelve years, perhaps on having a twelve year old daughter; the parents were about to lose their twelve year old daughter to death. The first represents the effect of the curse at the source of life with pain and bleeding; the second represents the effect of the curse on life with actual death. Jesus gave the life of the girl back to Jairus and his wife; and He gave health and the ability to produce life back to the woman. In both cases it was a provision of life for women over the effects of the curse.

In both cases touching was an important part of the narrative. Jairus wanted Jesus to lay His hand on the daughter and she would be healed. The woman wanted to touch the hem of His cloak and be healed. (And in the other gospels Jesus is recorded as questioning who touched Him). But it was the faith behind the woman's desire to touch the cloak that made her whole. And it was Jairus' faith that brought him to seek Jesus. (And, according to the parallel gospel's Jesus told Jairus not to be afraid, only believe).

And one other observation: all of this began to unfold while Jesus was answering the question about fasting. While the bridegroom is with them, Jesus said, why should the guests of the bridegroom mourn. The time would come for mourning later. So here was Jesus enjoying a meal in Matthew's house because He did not come to spend time with the healthy, but with the sick. Then, while He was explaining this, Jairus came with news of a sick girl. Then, while He was going to the house He met a sick woman. And in both cases He reversed the sickness and made them whole. But at the house of Jairus the people were lamenting and mourning. But why should they be mourning when Jesus was still there. So He put them out of the house and raised the little girl.

The Structure of the Passage

Here again we have a story within a story. In verses 18, 19 we have the request of the ruler for Jesus to come heal his daughter. In verses 20-22 we have the healing of the woman along the way. Then in verses 23-26 we have the raising of the little girl.

In the synoptic gospels the delay to heal the woman is used to show that during that time the girl died. Matthew is not interested in developing that sequence, only in showing that Jesus healed a sick woman on the way to raising a dead girl. The two are connected in Matthew's presentation of Jesus' authority over death.

The quotations also are interesting in this structure. The first is the request of the ruler for Jesus to come and lay His hand on the girl. The second is the thinking of the woman that if only she could touch His cloak she would be healed. The third is Jesus' response to the woman that she was made whole. And the fourth is Jesus' declaration that the little girl was just asleep. The first two are statements of faith in Jesus' power. The last two are declarations of His power--to restore life.

Analysis of the Text

I. Jesus responds to the request of the ruler to heal his daughter (18-19). This first part of the narrative does not need much further explanation, other than to explain how Matthew abbreviated the material. In Mark, for example, Jairus came and said his girl was dying, and that if Jesus came and put his hand on her she would live. It is clear that he was expecting her to die when he asked for help. Then, after the delay, messengers came and told Jairus not to bother the teacher any more because the girl had died. But Jesus said to Jairus not to fear, only believe. Jairus did not initially say come and raise her from the dead. But after he heard that she had died, and after his servants told him not to bother the teacher any more, he obviously still wanted Jesus to come and lay His hand on the girl and (now) raise her from the dead. He did believe as Jesus had told him to because they continued to the house. So Jairus ultimately did want Jesus to lay His hand on the girl and raise her from the dead--he believed Jesus could do that, and knew Jesus would have to do that because she had died. This is why Matthew has simply abbreviated the story and used the last desire of the ruler to express his request that Jesus restore his daughter's life.

The faith of this Jewish ruler (of the synagogue) is interesting and should be probed a little bit, because faith is only as great as the object of that faith. He had to know something about Jesus, because he believed that Jesus could raise his daughter by laying His hand on her. If you break it down the way Mark and Luke have done in greater detail, he believed that Jesus could make his daughter well, and then even after he heard that she died he believed that Jesus could raise her to life. No doubt he had seen the miracles of Jesus in and around the city of Capernaum where he lived--in fact the connection with the Centurion in Matthew 8 may be interesting to study, for that man had built the synagogue for the city--and Jesus had healed his servant. The Centurion, being a Gentile, did not want Jesus to come to his house; but Jairus, being a Jew, welcomed Jesus to his house--and yet Jairus had to go into Matthew's house, the house of a "sinner," to find Jesus, as if he himself had to humble

himself in coming by faith to Jesus. At any rate, there were sufficient witnesses in the region to the power of Jesus so that this ruler came believing that if Jesus touched his little girl she would be well.

And so Jesus got up from the dinner at Matthew's house and went with this man towards his house where the girl was. He immediately went in response to this man's faith in Him.

II. Jesus restored life to a woman afflicted with bleeding (20-22). It is interesting how Matthew can summarize blocks of material in his narrating of the events, and then pay such attention to the smallest detail. The woman came and touched the "edge" of His cloak. This is a reference to the fringe, or perhaps the tassel (Matt. 23:5) of His cloak, which was a sign to remind the Jews to pray. Her touching that portion of the garment was an appeal to His spiritual inclinations; but her touching that portion of the garment of Jesus was an act of faith in His power to heal.

Normally under Israelite Law if her bleeding was from the womb--and that would be the most logical assumption here--then anyone she touched would have been made ceremonially unclean. Anyone but the holy one, that is. She believed that He could heal her, so He would not be contaminated by her.

As already mentioned, the other gospels note how crowded it was, and how He knew someone had touched Him because power had gone out of Him. He was able to discern that in her touch faith was at work; other people touched Him in the crowded street, and perhaps even bumped into Him--but no power went out from Him. Her touch was from faith.

Matthew cuts right to the core of the issue: he picks up where Jesus identified the woman and said to her, "Your faith has healed you." The text uses the perfect tense, "has healed." This assumes what the other synoptics explain, that He saw her after she had touched Him. There was no superstition or magic in touching the garment; the healing was because she had the faith to do it. The woman was healed from the hour (*hora*) of that encounter.

It would be enjoyable to think for a few moments what this would have meant for this woman--even though we know nothing more about her. First, her illness was gone, after years with suffering and with doctors who could not help. All of us have been ill in some way, and know the delight of being well again, not having pain, infections, incapacitating illnesses--to be able to move freely and comfortably in life. Second, she was able to live the normal life of a woman. We do not know if she was married or not, but in any case, she would now be able to have a normal relation with a man, to enjoy a marriage, to have children. For a woman in Israel this was a sign of God's blessing. But third, she could now enter the temple for the first time in twelve years, to be among the ceremonially clean, to hear the Levitical choirs, to offer her praise to God at the altar, and to eat from the holy flesh of the peace offering in the presence of God.

All of this was because Jesus touched her, and reversed the reign of disease and death in her life.

III. Jesus raised the little girl from death's sleep (23-26). Now the narrative returns to the ruler's little girl. When they came to the house they encountered the professional mourners. Matthew alone mentions the flute players and the noisy crowd (Jewish custom prescribed two flutes and one mourning woman). Matthew mentions these because he is showing that Jesus put away the mourning, that He reversed the symbolism of the funeral. Recall that Isaiah had said Messiah would turn the mourning into dancing (Isa. 61:1-3); and Jesus had said back in Matthew's house that while the bridegroom--He Himself--was there, there was no reason for such fasting and mourning. In fact, in Matthew 11 Jesus will say that people criticized Him because He did not mourn when they sang the dirge; rather, He came eating and drinking. Well, here He encountered mourners and ran them off; He then raised the girl and told them to give her something to eat. It was a time for living, because Jesus was there.

Jesus said that she was just asleep. But they laughed at Him. His use of the word "sleep" for death introduced for all who believe a different way of looking at death. It was a comparison of death with sleeping--for with Jesus the awakening from either is possible through His simple command. One of the best examples is in the story of the raising of Lazarus from the dead (John 11). Jesus said to His disciples that Lazarus was asleep and they had to awaken him. The disciples did not understand; so Jesus had to say plainly that Lazarus was dead. This little girl was dead; everyone knew it. But Jesus said she was asleep, because He could awaken her.

They mocked Him. The point is that a word from Jesus was laughed at. It all sounded too incredible to them (and a good deal of what Jesus said does sound incredible). They laughed because this great healer did not get there in time, and then He seemed to have gone too far to want to try His skills on a corpse. He would surely make a fool of Himself. But in such situations Jesus' words became even more profound.

When Jesus raised the little girl from the dead, He was not simply bringing a corpse to life--He was demonstrating that He has authority over death. And in doing so He was also showing that faith in Him would change despair into hope. His miracle of raising the little girl did not in and of itself prove that Jesus was more than a prophet, for other prophets had raised the dead (1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:17-37; and Acts 9:36-42). But those prophets and apostles never claimed to be more than prophets or apostles. Jesus constantly made much greater claims than they ever thought to make; and so when He did these kinds of miracles He was authenticating His claim to be the giver of life, the Messiah, the one who holds the keys of life and death (see also Rev. 1:18).

The corpse of a person also could make someone unclean by contact. People who had to bury a corpse would be unclean til sundown, then would have to wash in purification water, and then go through the re-entry into the sanctuary. But Jesus took her by the hand--and she was made clean, whole, alive. He was not defiled.

Interestingly, in the other gospels Jesus told them not to tell anyone about this, probably because He knew what He needed to do before the issue of His deity was to be challenged by the religious leaders--it was not the time for that confrontation yet. But Matthew reports that news of this spread throughout all the region--understandably so.

(Adapted from URL:<https://bible.org/seriespage/13-authority-over-death-matthew-918-26>)

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Matthew introduced the interaction between Jesus and the synagogue but then interrupted it with a second encounter before returning to the first story to wrap it up; the parallel accounts in Mark 5:21-43 and Luke 8:40-56 do so as well. By this arrangement, we note related themes in the two accounts. The themes are that of (1) a 12-year-old girl who had not yet attained womanhood when she died and (2) a woman for whom womanhood has become the source of suffering for as many years as the girl had lived. Perhaps you see in yourself characteristics of the people in these two accounts. Perhaps you are like a family member of the dead girl, mourning the loss of someone you love. Perhaps you are like the sick woman, suffering with a chronic condition that does not improve. Certainly we all know that grief and suffering will come for us, even if we presently enjoy a moment of calm. The miraculous power of Jesus does not assure us that we will have no loss or pain. But our text tells us what we can do in the midst of suffering and loss: we can put our trust in the Lord. Our ultimate destiny is a life in which the Lord wipes away our tears (Isaiah 25:8; Revelation 7:17). Even if our pain lasts for years, the Lord will heal it when he raises us with all his people to live with him forever (21:4). Even when death separates us from those we love, even when we face that separation in our own death, the Lord will reunite his people when he returns (1 Corinthians 15:51-57). We sometimes refer to Jesus as “the great physician.” But he is more than a great medical doctor who knows how to treat and cure diseases. There is power and authority in Jesus, power that eradicates not only disease but also death. There is the power and authority in the resurrected life in Jesus—power and authority for life both now and in eternity.

Concluding Thoughts from the Echoes Commentary

A Frantic Parent - Jairus, one of the chief rulers in the synagogue, humbled himself before Jesus. As Jairus worshiped the Master, he also requested His help. Jairus's only daughter had died, but Jairus believed Jesus could restore her. Jesus, His disciples, and several followers immediately headed toward Jairus's home. However, along the way, a woman suffering from a severe illness came up behind the Savior, also seeking healing. Both Jairus and the woman believed in—and found—Jesus' life-giving power.

A Suffering Woman - This woman suffered from a disease that caused bleeding. She reached out to Jesus, even though as an unclean woman she should not have done that. Her situation dictated isolation from the public. Jewish law declared her ceremonially unclean, unfit to stand in the presence of a priest or religious leader (Lev. 15:26). Yet, she believed if she only touched Jesus' flowing garment or robe, she'd be delivered and made whole. That's precisely what happened. The sick woman touched His garment, and He healed her. Jesus turned, saw the woman, and spoke kindly to her. There was no need to be afraid, Jesus told her. He acknowledged her as a daughter and commended her faith in Him.

A Healed Daughter - Jesus continued to Jairus's house. The professional team of mourners had already gathered, and Jesus told them to leave the child's room. They laughed when Jesus said the girl was not dead, only asleep, but once everyone cleared the room, Jesus took the deceased little girl by the hand and restored her life. Every person on this earth is dead in his or her trespasses and sin (Eph. 2:1). On our own, we have no hope nor the possibility of deliverance from our sins. However, the Father sent His Son Jesus to be the life-giving source. He's ready to save those who choose to reach out to Him.