

DEATH IS NOT A PROBLEM FOR JESUS

Matthew 9:18-26; Mark 5:21-43; Luke 8:40-56
Yeshua §69

Cathy and I were wed on April 28, 1984. After that day many things in our lives changed. One of the shifts that took place was in our relationship with my parents. It was the policy of my parents that once we children were married, my parents no longer voluntarily offered advice. In other words, if we wanted or needed my parents' advice or opinion, we needed to ask for it.

As I said, this shift took place after our wedding day. It was a shift both Cathy and I appreciated as it gave us freedom to establish our family in the way we saw fit and it made it very easy to relate to my parents.

As we are discovering, major shifts took place in Jesus' ministry after a specific day; the day of rejection. Teaching in parables represents one of the major shifts; on the day of rejection Jesus began teaching in parables to hide the truth from those who rejected Him and to reveal truth to the remnant.

Our study today will reveal yet another shift; a shift in Jesus' performance of miracles.

Our text is Mark 5:21-43. Our story takes place upon Jesus' return from His encounter with the man possessed by Legion.

MARK 5:21-43 (ESV)

²¹ And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea. ²² Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell at his feet ²³ and implored him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live."²⁴ And he went with him.

And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. ²⁵ And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, ²⁶ and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse. ²⁷ She had heard the reports about Jesus

Part 1.	The Coming of the King
Part 2.	The Authentication of the King
Part 3.	The Controversy over the King → No Rush
Part 4.	The Training of the Twelve by the King
Part 5.	The Opposition to the King:
Part 6.	The Preparation of the Disciples by the King
Part 7.	The Official Presentation of the King
Part 8.	The Preparation for the Death of the King
Part 9.	The Trial of the King:
Part 10.	The Death of the King
Part 11.	The Resurrection and the Ascension of the King
Part 12.	The Sequels

and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. ²⁸ For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well." ²⁹ And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. ³⁰ And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?" ³¹ And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?' " ³² And he looked around to see who had done it. ³³ But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. ³⁴ And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

³⁵ While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" ³⁶ But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe." ³⁷ And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of James. ³⁸ They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. ³⁹ And when he had entered, he said to them, "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping." ⁴⁰ And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was. ⁴¹ Taking her by the hand he said to her, "Talitha cumi," which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." ⁴² And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement. ⁴³ And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat."

Jesus has crossed back to the Jewish side of the Sea of Galilee at Capernaum after His encounter with the man possessed by Legion. It is only a couple days since He was rejected.

A synagogue ruler named Jairus fell at Jesus' feet pleading Jesus come and heal his 12-year-old daughter. This was extraordinary particularly in light of Jairus' prominence as a synagogue ruler. Was this desperation, worship or both? It was both; his daughter lay at death's door, but Jairus believed Jesus could heal her. More telling is the fact that Jesus went with Jairus. Post-rejection, Jesus healed only those who had faith. That Jesus agreed indicates Jairus' faith was genuine.

As they made their way to Jairus' house, their journey was interrupted. A woman with a blood disorder touched Jesus' robe. According to the Mosaic Law in Leviticus 15:19-32, this woman had been perpetually unclean for the twelve years of her illness. She had been untouchable for twelve years. She had exhausted her finances seeking cures.

In rabbinic writings there were many ways of curing a woman of a blood disease. Here are some of the prescribed cures:

Make a mixture of gum of alexandrium, alum, and a crocus in equal parts and give to a woman with wine. Say "arise from your flux." If that doesn't work:

Drink a purge of onions boiled in wine. Say "arise from your flux." If that doesn't work:

Set her in a crossroads, let her hold a cup of wine in her hand and let someone come up from behind and scare her. Say "arise from your flux." If that doesn't work:

Dig seven ditches, burn some cuttings of trees younger than 4 years old, and have her sit over all seven ditches. Say "arise from your flux."

These "cures" may very well have been the sort of things prescribed her without success.

At this point in her life she was hopeless, isolated, bankrupt and ailing.

Like Jairus, she was desperate. Somehow, she came to believe that touching the tassels of Jesus' robe would bring healing. Even with the crush of people she managed to touch His tassels; instantly she was healed. Her plan was to sneak away unnoticed, but Jesus called her out.

Mark tells us she, too, fell at Jesus' feet with fear and trembling. Was Jesus going to rebuke this unclean woman for touching Him, a rabbi? What about all the people she touched and defiled getting to Jesus? What kind of treatment would she receive from the crowd once her story was told?

All three gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke emphasize the crowd was tightly packed around Jesus. The disciples balked at Jesus' quest to identify the person who had touched Him. So many were touching Him. But that's the point - many were touching Jesus, but only one was healed.

Why?

Because of her faith. This is what Jesus emphasized when He affirmed her saying, "Daughter, your faith has made you well, go in peace, and be healed of your disease." Touching His garment didn't heal her, it was her faith in Jesus that brought about her healing.

As Jesus concluded His interaction with this woman, Jairus received news his daughter had died. Mark records the assumption of the messengers, "Why trouble the Teacher any further?"

What was their assumption?

They assumed Jesus could not do anything in the face of death.

Jesus overheard their statement and encouraged Jairus, "Do not fear, only believe." What would Jairus fear? He would fear what the messengers assumed – that Jesus would not be able to do anything now that his daughter has died.

As they approached Jairus' house they heard the familiar sounds of death. Family and friends packed the house weeping and wailing. Once inside, Jesus asked what seems like a completely inappropriate question: "Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping." Because we know the story it might not seem that inappropriate to us, but to those who were there, it was. The girl was dead; they knew how to verify the death of a body. She was dead dead. That's why they were weeping and wailing. To say she was sleeping was offensive and insensitive.

It's interesting Jesus chose to use the euphemism of "sleep" to describe the girl's condition. Throughout the rest of the New Testament, believers who die are referred to as those who have "fallen asleep". A sleeping person is very much alive; while sleeping they have temporarily ceased from normal physical activity. After we sleep, we wake up. Believers who die are very much alive. After a time of physical inactivity we will come back to this life in the resurrection. Jesus was speaking the truth when He described the little girl as "sleeping" in this sense. Jesus was going to "wake her up" by bringing her back to this life; by resurrecting her. Jesus wasn't denying she was dead, He was simply describing her death from His perspective. And I think He was again hiding the truth from them as He was doing through the parables. As we will see, after resurrecting Jairus' daughter, Jesus directs Jairus, his wife, his daughter and Jesus' disciples to tell no one what happened. As a result, the rest of Jairus' family and friends would be left hanging and in doubt as to what really happened.

After clearing the house, Jesus took Jairus, Jairus' wife, Peter, James and John into the room where the little girl lay. Tenderly Jesus took her little hand in His and called her back to this life. Notice this miracle was done in private and that He instructed those present to tell no one what had happened.

The healing of the woman and the resurrection of Jairus's daughter mark a shift in Jesus' ministry following His rejection.

Prior to the rejection, when Jesus healed someone there was no requirement for the individual to have personal faith because the miracle was for the purpose of authenticating Jesus' claim to be Israel's Messiah. After the rejection, Jesus did miracles only for those who believe; for people like this woman and Jairus.

Prior to the rejection, when Jesus healed anyone, He told them to proclaim what great things God had done for them. After the rejection, He prohibits recipients from telling others. The change is from "tell all", to "tell no one."

The healing of the woman and the resurrection of Jairus' daughter revealed Jesus' authority over disease and death. With regard to death and resurrection, Jesus has the authority to restore the human soul to its physical body. That's exactly what Jesus is going to do at the Rapture when He brings the souls of all church age believers from Paradise to earth to be reunited with our resurrection bodies.

Throughout the New Testament, believers who die physically are referred to as having "fallen asleep". This is a euphemism, a softer way of expressing a painful truth. But it is a very apt figure of speech. Those who sleep are very much alive; sleeping is the temporary cessation of normal physical activity. That's true of believers who have died; they are very much alive with Jesus, but for a time they have ceased from normal physical activity. At the Rapture we all will receive our resurrection bodies and be active in serving Jesus' kingdom!

Finally, this passage teaches us Jesus longs for us to trust Him. Notice the time and attention He gave to this insignificant, marginalized woman who came to Him in faith. He didn't rush. He healed her. He affirmed her faith and blessed her. From everyone else's viewpoint, Jesus should have rushed on before it was too late for Jairus' daughter. But with Jesus, it's never too late. Death is not a problem for Jesus. Jesus met Jairus' need and his daughter's need with the same calmness and compassion with which He ministered to the woman. Jesus delights in caring for those who truly trust Him.