

Encounters with Christ

Week 3 — **Hemorrhaging Woman & Jairus' daughter**

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

Prepare...

As you begin, take a moment to pray and focus on the Lord as you come into his presence and study his word.

“So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.” Hebrews 4:16

This encounter appears in three of the Gospels—Matthew, Mark and Luke. As you read these accounts, keep in mind that each of the gospel writers had different personalities, different audiences, different points that they were trying to make, etc.

- Matthew wrote to a primarily Jewish audience to prove that Jesus is the Messiah. You will notice that his account is quite brief and differs regarding the timing of the death of Jairus' daughter. Matthew was not so much interested in details of the account, as he was in showing Jesus to be the Messiah. To him, the important point was that Jairus' daughter was dead, and Jesus restored her to life.
- Mark wrote to present the purpose, work and teachings of Jesus.
- Luke, a Gentile doctor, wrote to present “a careful account so that believers would be certain of the truth.”

As you read through these passages, think about how recording these two encounters—with the hemorrhaging woman and Jairus—might serve each of the Gospel writers' purposes.

Begin... by familiarizing yourself with the text. Read the passage two times.

Answer the questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

Record in detail what you learn about the hemorrhaging woman.

Record any other questions or thoughts you have about the text. Are there parts you don't understand? What spoke to you the most?

Memory Verse for the Week...

²⁸“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30

Some background

Numbers 15:37-40

³⁷"The LORD said to Moses, ³⁸"Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'Throughout the generations to come you are to make tassels on the **corners of your garments**, with a blue cord on each tassel. ³⁹You will have these tassels to look at and so you will remember all the commands of the LORD...'"

Malachi 4:2

²"...for you who fear my name, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with **healing in his wings. And you will go free...**"

In his book *Velvet Elvis*, Rob Bell writes, "The word Malachi uses for **wings** is *kanaf*—the same word in Numbers that refers to the edge (corner) of a garment, to which the tassels were attached. So **a legend grew that when Messiah came, there would be special healing powers in his *kanaf*, in the tassels of his prayer shawl.**

Fast-forward to the time of Jesus: A woman has had an illness for twelve years and no one can cure her. She pushes her way through a crowd to get to Jesus and when she gets close to him, she grabs his cloak. Now remember, Jesus is a Torah-observant Jewish rabbi who keeps the Scripture commandments word for word, including passages like Numbers 15, which means Jesus would have been wearing a prayer shawl."

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More than a miracle worker

"Faith involved more than simply believing Jesus could perform miracles. Healing faith for Mark [the Gospel writer] in these two stories means more than faith in a miracle worker. Both Jairus and the woman displayed faith that God was somehow at work in Jesus." (Robert Guelich, *Word Biblical Commentary*)

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Food for thought...

In Exodus 29 Moses gives instructions regarding the altar and then in verse 37 says "*the altar will be most holy, and whatever touches it will be holy.*" The altar was used for offering sacrifices to atone for sin. Anything that intentionally or unintentionally came in contact with the altar made it holy and had to be set aside and not used in common everyday life anymore. In Jesus' day, the

Let's take a closer look...

1. Imagine having your period continually for 12 years! Besides the physical suffering, as a woman in this culture you have an additional stigma—you are considered unclean during your period. You cannot go to the synagogue or temple, people are ill-advised to have contact with you for fear of becoming unclean themselves, if married you cannot have physical relations with your husband. In addition, many people take the attitude that your physical uncleanness is part of a larger spiritual uncleanness. How would you feel about yourself? About your situation? About life?

2. Why do you think this woman decided to simply touch Jesus' garment rather than ask to be healed as others with illnesses had done?

3. Read "some background" in the sidebar. What does this say about the woman's understanding of who Jesus is?

4. Jesus was touched by an unclean woman. According to Jewish law, this would have made him unclean. He would have had to be ceremonially cleansed before he was considered clean again. But what does Jesus say about uncleanness? Read Mark 7:15 and Matthew 23:25-26.

5. Jesus knew that someone had "deliberately" touched him and he wanted to know who it was. Why do you think he made an issue of it?

6. What does she do when she realizes she can't keep her action a secret?

7. Considering the fact that she was unclean, what do you think those in the crowd, especially Jairus, might have thought of her?

8. Jesus does not rebuke her for "touching" him, as she, or the others in the crowd, might have been expected. Instead, he publicly connects her healing with her faith. Why do you think he did that?

9. Jesus not only restored this woman physically he restored her in other ways. What were they?

10. Read "Food for thought" in the sidebar. Just as items that touched the altar became holy and could no longer be used in common everyday life, when we "touch" Jesus, we too become holy and are to no longer live a common everyday life. 1 Peter 15-16 says we are to be holy as Christ is holy. As God's holy people how are we to live our lives? Read Colossians 3:12-17 and Ephesians 5:1-20.

11. Jesus declares the woman healed then says “Go in peace (*shalom*).” Read about “*Shalom*” in the sidebar. Life had been pretty miserable for this woman. How do you think her encounter with Jesus changed her life?

12. Jesus wants *shalom* for us. Read John 14:27 and Philippians 4:6-7. In what areas of your life do you need to seek healing from Jesus and feel the *shalom* of God?

We have looked at this portion of scripture mainly in light of the bleeding woman’s encounter with Jesus. Let’s look at it briefly from both Jairus’ and Jesus’ perspective.

13. Who is Jairus and how did he approach Jesus?

14. Jairus was in a hurry. His only daughter was dying and he needed Jesus’ help. The crowd may have even parted when this important man approached Jesus. Jesus goes with Jairus, but stops because someone in the crowd touched him! He takes time to seek her out. What thoughts might have been going through Jairus’ head?

15. A servant arrived during the delay to tell Jairus his daughter is dead! No point in bothering the teacher further. But Jesus tells Jairus “Don’t be afraid; just believe.” Jesus sees things from a different perspective. He is working in God’s time, not “real” time. He sees the situation in light of the future—a miracle which is about to take place—and his purpose. Read also the account of Lazarus in John 11:1-45. Here, Jesus intentionally delayed. Why do you think he did that? How might things have been different if Jesus had not delayed?

16. What was the outcome of Jairus’ encounter with Jesus?

17. What do these two encounters with Jesus—the bleeding woman and Jairus—have to say to us today?

altar was located in the temple. In John 2:19-21, while Jesus was clearing the temple, the Jews confronted him and Jesus says, ¹⁹“Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.” ²⁰The Jews replied, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?’ ²¹But the temple he had spoken of was his body.” Rather than the woman making Jesus “unclean” when she touched him, Jesus made the woman holy.

1 Peter 1:15-16

¹⁵...just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; ¹⁶for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

Shalom

The Hebrew word for peace is *shalom*. *Shalom* carries the idea of wholeness, wellness, fullness, completeness.

“Shalom is the presence of the goodness of God. When Jesus tells the [hemorrhaging] woman to go in peace, he is placing the blessing of God on all of her. Not just her physical body. **He is blessing her with God’s presence** on her entire being. For Jesus, being saved or reconciled to God involves all of you. God’s desire is for us to live in harmony with him—body, soul, spirit, mind, emotions—every inch of our being.” (Rob Bell, *Velvet Elvis*)

More shalom

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you; **my peace I give you**. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Philippians 4:6-7

⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And **the peace of God**, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

These two encounters are filled with contrasts. A lowly, unclean woman. A synagogue leader. Hoping not to be noticed, the bleeding woman merely touched the hem of Jesus garment. Jairus, in front of the whole crowd, fell at Jesus feet and pleaded with him. The hemorrhaging woman was instantly healed. Jesus delayed on this way to Jairus’ home. Jesus publically links the bleeding woman’s healing to her faith and to him. Jesus says nothing about Jairus’ faith, restores Jairus’ daughter in private—only Peter, John, James and the girls parents are witnesses to miracle—and then tells them not to say a word. (Although, Matthew tells us “The report of this miracle swept through the entire countryside!) **Think about what additional lessons might be gleaned from these two intricately entwined encounters!**