

Two More Miracles of Our Lord

Matthew 9:18-26

Matthew 9:18-26 - *“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.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.*

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.”

Background Notes

These two miracles, the healing of a woman with internal bleeding and the raising to life of a young girl, are recorded in all three of the synoptic gospels – Matthew, Mark, and Luke. It is not by chance that they happened together and are recorded together. Remember, the miracles of the Lord Jesus not only demonstrated His divine power as the Son of God, but they carried important teaching with them as well. Our Lord’s miracles were **designed** to teach divine truth. They were not just arbitrary bursts of divine power!

In these two miracles, I believe that we have spiritual pictures of God’s program for blessing His people Israel on the one hand, and His program for blessing the Church on the other hand. From the other Gospels we know that the “ruler” who came to Jesus to ask for the life of his daughter was a Jewish synagogue official named Jairus. In the spiritual picture portrayed by this miracle, Jairus’ daughter who had died represents God’s chosen people Israel, who are spiritually dead at the present time. But the Lord was on His way to heal them, as we see in this miracle and spiritual picture.

Like a parenthesis in time, right in the middle of the miracle of Jairus’ daughter being restored to life, we have another miracle. A sick woman reached out in faith to touch the Lord, and she was healed. In this spiritual picture, the woman represents those who are coming to Christ today, during the “parenthesis in God’s timetable” that we call the “Church Age.” During this time of God’s grace, simply reaching out in faith and receiving Christ as one’s personal Savior will bring healing to anyone who is sick with the disease of sin. Romans 10:13 says, *“For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”* All believers today, Jews and non-Jews alike, make up the Church, the body of Christ.

In the future, after this parenthesis in time, the great truth of Romans 11 will come to pass and Israel will be restored to life. And not only the restoration of the nation of Israel (that's taking place already), but a spiritual awakening will come to the Jewish people. As Jairus' daughter was dead, but was restored to life, so Israel is spiritually dead today. But Israel will be awakened, raised up, and given new spiritual life in the future! All of this is pictured in the two interwoven miracles of Matthew 9.

Doctrinal Points

1. The touch of faith brings salvation.

Q: Why was the woman trying to touch the hem of the Lord's garment? A: Most likely, she was reaching out to touch the tassels and blue cord that were at the edge of His garment, as commanded by the Law. Numbers 15:38-39: *"Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners. And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the LORD and do them, and that you may not follow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined..."*

Over the years, the fringe of a rabbi's garment took on special significance. However, it's important to notice that this woman didn't reach out superstitiously. She didn't think the fringe in itself had some kind of magical powers. No, the Lord Jesus said that **she reached to Him out in faith**. *"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" (v22).*

What a great picture of salvation we have here! The touch of faith brings salvation! Ephesians 2:8-9 says, *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast..."* And it's not the **amount of our faith that counts** – it's the **focus of our faith** that counts. Saving faith is not centered in a church or creed. It is focused and centered in a **Person** -- the Lord Jesus Christ. The woman knew that she was sick and needed to be healed. She reached out in faith and touched the only One who could make her well.

So it is in salvation. We don't need a lot of theological knowledge -- all we have to know is that we are sinners, and if we reach out in faith to the Lord Jesus He can forgive us, because He died on the Cross for our sins. Have you reached out in faith to the Lord Jesus for salvation? Reaching out in faith means more than going to church. It's more than signing a statement of faith, and it's more than raising a hand in an emotional moment. Reaching out in faith means **genuine faith** in the **Lord Jesus** as **Savior**. The touch of faith brings salvation.

2. The touch of God brings new life.

In the case of Jairus' daughter, the question has been raised as to whether she was actually dead, or merely in a coma. Jairus believed that his twelve-year-old daughter had died, but the Lord Jesus said that she was only asleep. *"He said to them, 'Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping.' And they ridiculed Him."* However the Lord Jesus probably used the term "sleep" here in order to indicate that He was going to raise her back to life.

The word "sleep" is used for the death of believers, because death is only a temporary condition for believers. When Stephen was martyred, *"He knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not charge them with this sin.' And when he had said this, he fell asleep" (Acts 7:60).* Speaking to the believers at Corinth, Paul says, *"many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep" (1 Corinthians 11:30).* So we believe that the little girl had died and was raised back to life by the Lord. She was not just awakened from a coma.

The touch of God brings new life. Do you see the spiritual picture here? Not only will the touch of God bring new life to Israel in a coming day, when the heart of the nation will be changed under the New Covenant, but the touch of God brings new life to any individual today who believes. When you become a Christian, you not only receive forgiveness of sins and a ticket to heaven, you receive new life. You are born again! You are born from above! When you're saved, you're regenerated. You have new life, divine life, the life of Christ.

This is the new life that is enabled and empowered by the Holy Spirit. This is the abundant life that our Lord mentioned in John 10:10: *"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."* Ephesians 2:4-5 says, *"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)..."*

Have you experienced the touch of God and new life in Christ? The touch of God brings new life.

Practical Application

Expect interruptions when you're serving the Lord.

Some Christians have the idea that if you're serving the Lord and doing God's will, then everything will run smoothly. There will be no interruptions or disruptions in their lives. But nothing could be further from the truth! The Lord was interrupted twice in this passage – once by Jairus, and once by the sick woman. Did our Lord get rattled and annoyed about this? No! Our Lord remained poised and gracious.

Sometimes when we're interrupted, whether in our day-to-day lives or in our Christian service, we get bent out of shape and annoyed and impatient. Can you identify with that? The phone rings when you least expect it, or when you least want it to ring. Someone needs help right away, when you're in the middle of a project. Can you handle it? We need to follow the model of our Lord. Interruptions will come. God allows them! We don't always understand why, but we should expect interruptions when we're serving the Lord.

A few years ago I experienced an unexpected interruption – I was scheduled to preach at a spring youth conference in Hartford, Connecticut. Because I was going to be away from home for a few days, my wife, Margie, decided to visit family during that time. She had already left town when the call came through that the youth conference was being canceled because of a major snowstorm that was hitting the East Coast – roads and airports were being closed, so that there was no way that the conference could be held. Even the “locals” couldn't make it to the conference site, never mind the out of town folks, and the speaker, Dave Reid, flying in from Chicago! This certainly was an unexpected and unwelcome interruption. I had blocked out this conference time in my schedule, and Margie had already left town, so here I was home alone for three days with nothing scheduled! Why had God allowed this interruption? This youth conference was the work of the Lord! I was involved in Christian service!

I'm sure that the Lord had many reasons why He allowed this conference to be canceled. However, it became clear to me that the Lord had allowed this interruption so that I would have time to finish a particular project that I had not had time to complete. I had finished my lectures for the Christian Evidences course that's on our website, but the handouts, charts, diagrams and outlines were not complete, and would take some time to finish. So the Lord provided the time! For three days I worked almost around the clock to produce all the handouts! God used that interruption.

The same kind of experience will be true in your life as a believer. Sometimes the interruptions are major and life changing, and sometimes they may be very difficult to handle, but they will open new doors of service or ministry. The life of Todd Beemer's wife Lisa was tragically interrupted by his death on Flight 93 on 9/11, but she is using that interruption and drastic life change for the Lord. Expect interruptions when you're serving the Lord.