

Luke 8D

How did you like the sermon?" "I liked it fine," she replied, "but it seems to me you missed several excellent opportunities."

"Several opportunities for what?" he asked. "To quit." she snapped

Daddy, why do you close your eyes and bow your head for a moment before you give the sermon?

Pastor: Because, my dear, I'm asking God for help with the sermon.

Daughter: Then why doesn't He?

- Declaring Jesus to be Messiah
 - John was considered the Messiah
 - Then Jesus was baptized and declared himself in Nazareth to be the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy
 - But no one believed
 - Then began to perform miracles, which attracted crowds
 - But still no mention of anyone declaring Jesus to be the One
 - Then Jesus cures a man of leprosy, a miracle only the Messiah was said to be capable of
 - Just ever larger crowds
 - Jesus confronts Pharisees, collects disciples, declares men forgiven of sin, teaches the Beatitudes...but still no declaration of Who He is
- Then Jesus hears from the Roman centurion who acknowledges that Jesus is the creator Himself
 - Faith that Jesus said He had not seen in all Israel
 - Then Jesus showed His authority over the wind, waves and demons
 - So where is Jewish recognition of their Messiah?
 - It's the elephant in the room for the reader

[Luke 8:40](#) ¶ And as Jesus returned, the people welcomed Him, for they had all been waiting for Him.

[Luke 8:41](#) And there came a man named Jairus, and he was an official of the synagogue; and he fell at Jesus' feet, and *began* to implore Him to come to his house;

[Luke 8:42](#) for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying. But as He went, the crowds were pressing against Him.

[Luke 8:43](#) ¶ And a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and could not be healed by anyone,

[Luke 8:44](#) came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped.

- This passage in Luke is really a miracle within a miracle
 - Luke begins by describing Jairus, an official of the synagogue
 - And this official asked Jesus to come heal his daughter
 - A synagogue official not a priest but rather a minister or caretaker of the local gathering place for Jewish worship
 - He has a 12 year old daughter who is near death and he implores Jesus to come heal her
 - He man's urgent request of Jesus suggests a strong faith in Jesus healing powers, though we don't know to what degree they possessed faith in Jesus as Messiah
 - But before Jesus makes it to Jarius' house, He has this experience with the woman in the crowd
 - It's interesting that all three of the synoptic gospels record these two miracles intertwined
 - There would appear to be a relationship between them
 - And certainly there is...
- Begin with the healing of the bleeding woman
 - Luke sets the scene for us with Jesus in a dense crowd
 - He's attempting to move toward Jarius' house, but naturally the crowd is making that journey very slow and difficult

- And the crowd is working hard to get near Jesus, to seek healing or see the next miracle
- You can imagine the crowd is noisy and is shoving and pushing
- And Jesus is no doubt being jostled while the disciples are trying in vain to protect Him
- Somewhere from behind Jesus comes this woman
 - The scripture says she had been hemorrhaging for 12 years – she was bleeding internally in a way that caused her to be considered defiled and an outcast
 - Lev 15 gave the Jews strict rules for how to contend with a woman who was bleeding outside her normal menstrual cycle
 - She would be considered unclean, everything she touched would be considered unclean and those who touched her or her bedsheets or garments would be unclean
 - Basically, she was a pariah in the community – and this had been going on for 12 months
- So the woman began to approach Jesus without announcing herself
 - She did this probably for two reasons
 - First, she would have assumed that any rabbi, any holy man would not have been willing to touch her or even speak with her since she was an unclean member of society according to the law
 - So she believes she needs to come to Jesus secretly and touch Him without Him knowing she was there
 - Secondly, she would be afraid of telling anyone else in the crowd of her situation because they would have forced her away
 - Had they known that she was unclean, they would not have allowed her to approach Jesus for fear they would touch her and become unclean
 - So she wants to blend into the crowd and be invisible

- The more important question to ask is why did the woman want to touch Jesus? Why did she think that would heal her?
 - Remember, there were throngs of people all around Jesus
 - He was being touched on all sides by people who desired healing, and it must have been evident that these other people in the crowd were not being healed in this way
 - Yes, Jesus was probably healing some of them from time to time, but only when He desired to heal them
 - The rest of the time, there is no reason to think that people were being healed merely touching Jesus
 - So, this woman is holding onto a unique idea
 - She believes that merely touching the fringe of Jesus' tunic will heal her
 - What does she know that the rest in the crowd don't?
 - Is this superstition on her part? Some kind of wishful thinking? No.
- To fully understand what's going on here, we need to take a few moments to become familiar with one of the more obscure prophecies of the Messiah out of the Old Testament
 - We'll begin with understanding the clothes that were typically worn by a Rabbi
 - Typically, men wore two garments, a light inner tunic, almost like underwear
 - And a heavier outer garment worn over the tunic called a tallit, sometimes called a prayer shawl today
 - At the corners of the tallit were tassels of knotted thread call tsitsityot
 - These tassles were knotted five times to represent the 5 books of the Torah: Genesis, Exodus, Lev, Num, Deut
 - Interwoven in the thread was as single blue thread to remind the nation of Israel that they were a kingdom of priests

[Num. 15:37](#) ¶ The LORD also spoke to Moses, saying,

[Num. 15:38](#) “Speak to the sons of Israel, and tell them that they shall make for themselves tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and that they shall put on the tassel of each corner a cord of blue.

[Num. 15:39](#) “It shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the LORD, so as to do them and not follow after your own heart and your own eyes, after which you played the harlot,

[Num. 15:40](#) so that you may remember to do all My commandments and be holy to your God.

- Over time, these tassels had become a very important part of Jewish society
 - They were a part of someone’s very reputation and personality
 - To remove the hem of a Jewish man’s garment was an act of humiliation
 - Tablets have been found with impressions of a man’s tassels as his signature on a document
 - A man could divorce a woman by cutting off the hem of her tallit
 - Remember in 1Sam 24 when Saul is pursuing David in the wilderness, and as Saul is sitting using the bathroom in a cave, David sneaks up from behind and quietly cuts off the hem of his garment
 - He wasn’t merely showing how he showed Saul mercy while he was vulnerable, he was adding to Saul’s humiliation by removing the hem of his garment
- By Jesus’ day, the tassled hem on the tallit also came to represent the status and importance of the wearer in society
 - Ordinary people only worn their tallit on special occasions
 - But Pharisees had taken to wearing them regularly as an outward show of piety and importance
 - In fact, the Pharisees took the practice even farther by increasing the length of their tassels beyond the customary length in an effort to show off their extreme religiosity

[Matt. 23:2](#) saying: “The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses;

[Matt. 23:3](#) therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say *things* and do not do *them*.

[Matt. 23:4](#) “They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with *so much as* a finger.

[Matt. 23:5](#) “But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they broaden their phylacteries and lengthen the tassels *of their garments*.

- The phylacteries were small boxes tied to their hair that hung down around their head
- In the boxes were small sections of scripture
- This was done according to instructions in Exodus and Deut
- But the Pharisees taken to making these boxes larger and larger to show off
- Likewise, they had started to lengthen their tassels to make a show to men – something that we all need to be on guard against – especially me
- In the OT, a prophecy had been given by the prophet Malachi that the Messiah when he came would have the power of healing in his tassels

[Mal. 4:1](#) ¶ “For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze,” says the LORD of hosts, “so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.”

[Mal. 4:2](#) “But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall.

- In verse 2, there is description of the sun of righteousness
 - The word for sun (shemesh) means the sun in the sky
 - The fact that it sounds like son is just a consequence of the English language
 - In Hebrew the word son is ben
 - But the context of the verse still allows us to see the picture of the sun rising to be euphemistic of the rising of the Messiah
 - The context of Malachi chapter 4, in fact the entire book, reinforces this interpretation

- The other interesting part of these verse is the reference to healing in his wings
 - Wings is another euphemistic way of describing the tassels on a man's garment
 - In fact, the word translated corner in Num 15:38 is kanaph, which means wing
 - So the Jewish nation had grown up with the understanding that the Messiah would have the power of healing in His wings or tassels
- So here we have in Luke 8 a woman who is quietly approaching the Messiah as he walks in a dense, pushing shoving crowd hoping to touch the Messiah
 - We know she is trying to get close enough to touch the tassels because in Matt's account we hear this detail:

[Matt. 9:20](#) ¶ And a woman who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for twelve years, came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak;

[Matt. 9:21](#) for she was saying to herself, "If I only touch His garment, I will get well."

- Clearly, the woman is thinking about the prophecy in Malachi and has decided that touching the Messiah will make her well
- And of course when she reaches Jesus and touches his garment, she is instantly healed

[Luke 8:45](#) And Jesus said, "Who is the one who touched Me?" And while they were all denying it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing in on You."

[Luke 8:46](#) But Jesus said, "Someone did touch Me, for I was aware that power had gone out of Me."

[Luke 8:47](#) When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed.

[Luke 8:48](#) And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace."

- You can't help but smile a little as you hear the disciples' response to Jesus' question
 - They must have looked back at him with this look that said you've got to be kidding?
 - They might have thought he was joking at first

- You're surrounded by people pushing and shoving, and you want to know who touched you?
- As if He were bothered by the fact that someone touched him
- But as Jesus demanded to know, the crowd might have paused for a moment
 - And no doubt the woman must have shrunk back, thinking she was in trouble
 - And Jesus continued to search for her saying He was aware power had gone out from him
 - This is an interesting moment, if you think about it
 - Jesus doesn't seem to be fully in control of his own healing power
 - He knows he healed but he doesn't know who it seems
 - It seems to reinforce the point we've seen earlier where we saw that Jesus while a man had to rely on the Holy Spirit for insight and power to heal
 - So it seems that Jesus was aware that the Father healed through Him but he's not aware of who he healed
- Now the woman must have been terrified
 - She was sure he would never notice her, but not she realizes that she has been found out
 - The crowd must have begin to back off somewhat as Jesus pressed them for answer to His question
 - Finally the woman comes trembling through the crowd and falls down before Jesus
 - And she gives her public testimony for why she touched Jesus, at which point, Jesus and says her faith has healed her
- Now we can understand what He meant
 - He wasn't commending her faith in the ritual of touching his garment so much as her faith in Him as the Messiah

- A faith that was reflected in how she sought to touch his hem
- Touching the hem of a rabbi's tallit had no special significance, but touching the hem of the Messiah had tremendous significance
- She proved her faith in Him by how she behaved toward his garment
- Consider the dramatic contrast of that moment
 - Here are all these people surround Jesus...pushing to get close to him
 - All of them desiring healing every bit as much as this woman did
 - All of them making as much physical contact with Jesus as they could
 - And yet only she was healed
 - And the difference was only what they thought about who Jesus was
 - That is the only thing that mattered
 - And that's the only thing that matters today
 - Today, just like then, there are a lot of people who want to get close to the Jesus they've heard about
 - They here that he can make our lives wonderful
 - He can make us rich or he can heal us
 - Or he can solve emotional problems
 - So often Christians sell their faith to others as if it were a cure all
- So people who don't know the truth about Christ come into churches or other gatherings much the same way those people in the crowd came
 - They have high hopes and great expectations
 - They truly believe that Jesus can heal or provide or bless them in some way
 - And they are prepared to do whatever is required – whatever ritual, whatever sacrifice - to make it happen

- The only thing that's missing is a faith in who Jesus is
 - Because that's the key – who do you believe Jesus is
 - Not believe in his power or his teaching or whatever else you may have heard about him
 - Do you believe in Who He was – the only true Son of the only true living God – God Himself – the One and only way to know the father
 - On that question rests everything
- Now consider the second miracle briefly

[Luke 8:49](#) ¶ While He was still speaking, someone *came from *the house of* the synagogue official, saying, "Your daughter has died; do not trouble the Teacher anymore."

[Luke 8:50](#) But when Jesus heard *this*, He answered him, "Do not be afraid *any longer*; only believe, and she will be made well."

[Luke 8:51](#) When He came to the house, He did not allow anyone to enter with Him, except Peter and John and James, and the girl's father and mother.

[Luke 8:52](#) Now they were all weeping and lamenting for her; but He said, "Stop weeping, for she has not died, but is asleep."

[Luke 8:53](#) And they *began* laughing at Him, knowing that she had died.

[Luke 8:54](#) He, however, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Child, arise!"

[Luke 8:55](#) And her spirit returned, and she got up immediately; and He gave orders for *something* to be given her to eat.

[Luke 8:56](#) Her parents were amazed; but He instructed them to tell no one what had happened.

- As the incident with the woman was ending, a messenger comes to tell Jesus not to bother coming to the house, for the daughter has already died
 - Jesus then turns immediately to the father, who must have still been walking with Jesus and says don't be afraid but believe and she will be made well
 - Now imagine what was going through the mind of the father at that moment
 - He had just witnessed this woman being healed – but the point had been made in a very obvious way for that crowd that her faith had come because she believed in who Jesus was
 - Now the father had his opportunity to see healing on the basis of faith

- Don't we see the grace and mercy of God even in this small detail?
 - A man who might have otherwise been given over to despair had reason to hope and believe because of the miracle God did before him as they walked to his house
 - That's the God we serve
 - He delights in building our faith one small step at a time, showing us little victories along the way – whether they are our own or someone else's
 - So that we will have reason to hope in Him and trust in Him
 - Don't ever fail to take notice of the work of God in the people around you, because I assure you that God is not placing those events before you merely for entertainment purposes
 - He is trying to get your attention and teach you even as He may be preparing to do great things in your life according to your faith in Him
- When Jesus arrives at the home, however, he is greeted by anything but faith
 - When Jesus declares that the girl is sleeping, the crowd laughs
 - Now we need to know from Matt that Jesus directed his comments about the girl sleeping to the crowd outside, and it was this group that was laughing, not the disciples and the parents
 - He probably limited those he brought into the room because of the small size of the girl's room
 - And He brought these disciples because they would be the leaders of the church
 - He then proceeds to go in and raise the girl from the dead, command that she be given food, which amazes everyone there
- When Jesus said she was sleeping, He wasn't joking and He wasn't speaking euphemistically
 - Jesus is saying that the death of the body is merely a period of time when the body is unavailable and the person is away from us in spirit

- The person has not ceased to exist spiritually
- If we live our life thinking that all that exists is what we can see, then we're fools – life goes on spiritually after death one way or another
- And Jesus proves that He has the power over both realms when He raised people from the dead and places them back into their bodies – something no other religion can claim with the proof of Christianity
 - It was the very fact that Jesus could do what He did that threatened the Jewish and Roman authorities
- In these two miracles, Jesus demonstrates that he has come to heal the sick and raise the dead
 - For those who are spiritually sick and in need of healing from the effects of sin, Jesus is the one who heals
 - But his healing is reserved for those who believe
 - Likewise, Jesus has the power to raise from the dead, because ultimately the only solution for man's sinful condition is the end of this corrupt body and the receiving of a new body
 - But did you notice that though His power to heal us spiritually – to give us a new spirit and everlasting life is dependent on our faith
 - But the His ability to raise the body from the dead is not dependent on faith
 - When Jesus raised the little girl, he was surrounded by people who didn't believe he could do it
 - They laughed at his suggestion that the girl was only sleeping
 - But he did it anyway
 - One day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess – believe and unbeliever
 - And he will raise everyone from the dead, but some will be raised to destruction

- As we seek to bear fruit by our faith and work on behalf of the kingdom, we must never let our good intentions and our desire to see men saved lead us to water down the truth of the gospel message
 - To believe is to believe in a person – in the person of Jesus Christ
 - Thinking He was a good person or a good teacher or a prophet as Muslims say, is pointless because such belief cannot save
 - To bring others to a knowledge of the gospel is first and foremost about bringing them to know who Christ is
 - Secondly, if they refuse to believe, then we should tell with as much love and concern as we can about the consequences for unbelief, for failing to trust for their salvation in Jesus
 - That one day they will stand before him and confess him, but it will be too late to receive His mercy – for they will have rejected him when the opportunity was given