

Episode #739 - Matthew 9 Part 3-Healing the Girl and the Woman

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. In Matthew 9, the Lord called Matthew, the tax collecting traitor, to be His disciples. When the Pharisees protested the Lord’s friendship with the outcasts, He told them it was not the whole but the sick who need the physician. John’s disciples were confused as to why they fasted, but the Lord’s disciples did not. The Lord revealed that His presence was a time for rejoicing, not sorrowing. His teaching was a new thing, not to be made simply a patch on the old teaching of men. Today, His healing ministry continues as He works two amazing miracles of healing.

III. Two Miracles: the Girl and the Woman. Matthew 9:18-26.

A. Verse 18. The coming of a ruler.

1. The ruler is an *archon*, meaning a first one or chief. In Mark it is *archisunagogos*, in Luke *archon sunagoge*, a ruler of the synagogue. Here it is a civil ruler, and a different story.
2. “Worshipped” is *proskuneo*. Does this mean that he did oriental obeisance? Peter and the mighty angel of Revelation would not accept *proskuneo*, but Jesus Christ did. Did the man realize he was dealing with One Who was more than a Man? Perhaps, when he realized He has power over the dead!
3. She is just now dead. Notice the difference between this and Mark and Luke. There, the ruler came to Him while his daughter was still alive but very sick, and died while the Lord was on the way. Both stories are interspersed with the story of the woman with the issue of blood. Could two different stories have interacted like this twice? Many women in Israel doubtless had issues of blood, that being a common menopausal problem. The Lord could have worked out the interaction purposefully. In Mark and Luke, He calls the woman out, though she tried to hide. This interaction was by Divine arrangement. This man had enough faith to believe the Lord could raise the dead, at least soon after death. There is no indication that the other man did.
4. Notice he had an idea of just how the Lord should do it. He did not think of healing at a distance, as the Roman centurion did!

B. Verse 19. “Arose” means He went into action.

C. Verse 20. This woman has a hemorrhage. Perhaps having to do with menopause. Happens frequently today but easily fixed. Not so easily back then! Our first “twelve” in the New Testament, next time the twelve in Matthew 10. A long time to suffer this! The Lord touched the leper to cleanse him (8:3) and Peter’s mother-in-law to heal her (8:15), but now the woman touches Him. The result is still the same. Touching the hem was a sign of great respect, though of course here it was not done openly.

D. Verse 21. Bullinger points out that she says this to herself, whereas the woman in Mark and Luke seems to have spoken to others. This one did not hide after touching Him, the other did, and He had to call her out. She was right; the slightest contact accompanied by faith healed her. In Greek she says, “I shall be saved.” Deliverance from disease is called “saved” in the New Testament Greek.

E. Verse 22. The woman of Mark and Luke He had to call for and search for. This one did not hide, however. These were two different miracles of the same type. Second

- time He says, “Be of good cheer,” as in 9:2. Again occurs eight times, all eight it is the Lord Who says it. She was saved from the issue of blood from that hour.
- F. Verse 23. Professional mourners were hired at funerals. It was thought that a great show of mourning at a funeral honored the dead. Yet so that this burden would not be on the grieving family, professional mourners would be hired to weep and wail loudly. This might seem a strange funeral custom to us, but what strange customs do we have? The result was a great uproar the Lord did not approve of.
- G. Verse 24. He says, “Withdraw!” They had no business in the house of a living girl. She had not perished, but was sleeping.
1. The Greek for sleeping is *katheudo*, to compose oneself for sleep, to fall asleep purposefully. Thus it is never used as a figure for death. *Koimao*, to fall asleep involuntarily, is used as a figure for death.
 2. Many have compared this to the Lord’s words about Lazarus in John 11:11, “Lazarus sleepeth.” But if we compare John 11:11, 14, “Lazarus sleeps....Lazarus is dead,” with His words here, “The girl is not dead, but sleeping,” how can we say these are the same? In John He uses *koimao*.
 3. No serious Bible student or believer in Jesus Christ can honestly believe that He does not have the power to raise the dead. He raises Lazarus in John 11, and the widow’s son of Nain in Luke 7:11-15, and finally He rose Himself. The issue here is not if He could raise a girl from the dead, but if He did, when He Himself says she was not dead.
 4. Most have ignored the Lord’s words here and have assumed the girl was dead. Yet whom are we going to believe in this regard; the Author of life, or the wisdom of men? At any given time (I challenge my listeners to do so) one could go on the Internet and read of multiple cases of people waking up after they were supposed dead, usually in third-world countries, sometimes at their own funerals. Identification of death is not so straight-forward as we might think. This has been exaggerated; there was a great scare in Europe about being buried alive that was largely unfounded, but there are plenty of legitimate cases of misidentification of death. I have found multiple documented cases where the victim was a young girl like this one. Why do we assume that they were right and the Lord was wrong?
 5. Christ was emphatically stating that she was not dead. Will those who say He did not mean this tell us how, if she had really been alive, He could have stated this more plainly? I do not believe that she was dead. He merely recovered her from her illness, as He did so many others.
 6. They derided Him, made fun of Him. Believers do not laugh at Him today, but many still fail to believe His words and assume, with the deriders, that she was dead. Most Bibles even label this miracle as the raising of a dead girl.
- H. Verse 25. He throws the crowd out. He did not seek an audience. He put all the gawkers out; they did not deserve to see the miracle after their lack of faith. He took her by the hand, and she arose from her death-like state. Same word as Him going into action earlier. Used of raising the dead as well, but she was not dead.
- I. Verse 26. This spread abroad, but even then it was probably reported, not as a healing, but as a resurrection, and so it is still reported today, contrary to His words.

IV. Conclusion: The Lord's power to heal was demonstrated once again, first by healing a woman with an issue of blood when she merely touched His hem, and second by healing a young girl who appeared to all to be dead, though the Lord affirmed she was still alive, and raising her up. The Lord has all power over sickness, and the Author of Life knows all there is to know about death and how to reverse it. Do we believe in the Lord's power over disease and death? I pray all my listeners know the One Who can heal all our infirmities.