

# OpenTheo

## Matthew 9:18 - 9:26



### Gospel of Matthew - Steve Gregg

Steve Gregg explores Matthew 9:18-26 in his lecture, highlighting Jesus' miraculous healing of a ruler's daughter and a woman suffering from twelve years of ailment. The compressed story emphasizes Jesus' ability to heal and restore faith in those who believe in his power. Gregg notes the importance of faith in procuring healing from God and how Jesus can resurrect us spiritually from death in sin, leaving listeners with a message of hope and faith.

### Transcript

As we continue studying the life of Jesus in the New Testament, we turn today to Matthew chapter 9, beginning with verse 18, where we read, And suddenly a woman, who had a flow of blood for twelve years, came from behind and touched the hem of his garment. For she said to herself, If only I may touch his garment, I shall be made well. 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. And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, he said to them, Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping.

And they laughed him to scorn. But when the crowd was put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. And the report of this went out into all the land.

This account in Matthew is a good illustration of how the stories of Jesus' life are sometimes treated or reported a little differently in different Gospels. These differences, in a sense, are evidence of their veracity, because if these stories were not true, one would expect that those who wrote the stories would have consulted with each other as to how they would tell the story, so that they didn't end up contradicting each other. Well, Matthew doesn't contradict anyone else about this, although Luke also tells the story of this healing in Luke chapter 8, and there are different ways in which Matthew and Luke tell the story.

Luke gives a much more detailed account, and what Matthew has done has rather compressed the story. Now, Matthew does this from time to time, and so do other Gospel

writers. They compress the story in the sense that they just give the broad outlines of the story, rather than giving all the details.

For example, Matthew says that the ruler came to Jesus and said, My daughter has just died. Come heal her. But actually, in Luke, we have a more detailed account, and actually the man came to Jesus before the daughter died, and asked Jesus to come and heal her.

And as they were approaching his house, messengers came and told the man that his daughter had now died. And Jesus said, Don't worry about it. I'll come in any way, and I'll heal her, and just have faith.

So, we see that Matthew kind of skips over some of that detail, in order to just tell the basic story. Here's a man whose daughter died, and Jesus healed her. And likewise, the story of the woman with the flow of blood, who touched the hem of his garment.

There's far more detail given in Luke than there is in Matthew. But this is only because Matthew sought not to give so much detail, and he compressed the story. So, as we look at this story in Matthew, I'd like to supply some information that we get from Luke's parallel.

When it says this man who came to Jesus was a ruler, it should be understood he was not a ruler like a Roman official. He was not a magistrate. He was not a king, or a governor, or a proconsul.

This man was a ruler of the synagogue, and the ruler of the synagogue was not really a high authority in Israel. But he was like the MC. He was the guy who directed the service at the synagogue.

Many things happened at the synagogue, and there needed to be someone to orchestrate the activity. And the ruler of the synagogue did this. He might not even preach at the synagogue.

He might select somebody else to do so. But he was the one who kept the synagogue service orderly. So this was not some high-ranking official, and yet he was a recognized religious leader in his own community, in that synagogue.

Luke also tells us, and Matthew does not, that this man's name was Jairus. And his daughter was 12 years old, and died. But actually the man came to Jesus before she died.

In fact, perhaps it would be good for me to just look at the passage in Luke, and read that so that we'll see some additional information. In Luke chapter 8, verse 41, it says, And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet, and begged him to come to his house, for he had only one

daughter, about 12 years of age, and she was dying.

But as he went, the multitude thronged him. Okay, now he's on his way to Jairus' house to heal this girl who has not yet died. And on the way there, another thing happens, another miracle is performed.

And it was as Jesus was thronged, or crowded with people all around him, that he did not even initiate this miracle at all. It just happened to him, and then he was aware of it only after it happened. Because it says, Now a woman, having a flow of blood for 12 years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians, and could not be healed by any, came from behind, and touched the border of his garment, and immediately her flow of blood stopped.

And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, Master, the multitude's thronged you and pressed you, and you say, Who touched me? But Jesus said, Somebody touched me, for I perceived power going out from me. Now, when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling and falling down before him. She declared to him, in the presence of all the people, the reason she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

And he said to her, Daughter, be of good cheer. Your faith has made you well. Go in peace.

Now, let's talk about this story as a separate story. I mean, it's right in the middle of the story of Jairus' daughter. Jairus has approached Jesus, asked him to come and heal the daughter, but before Jesus gets there, this other thing happens.

What is this other thing? Well, here's a woman who's been sick just as long as Jairus' daughter has been alive. We're told that Jairus' daughter was 12 years old. This woman has had an ailment for 12 years.

Now, this woman, her ailment was an issue of blood, which means she had internal bleeding, and it was apparently constant or intermittent for a whole period of 12 years. Now, that would be a concern to any woman, having these kinds of feminine problems, and not having any exact science available, medical science, to help out. It would be very unnerving to just be continually bleeding in this way, but more than unnerving, in Jewish society, it was worse than unnerving.

It was something for which a person would be ostracized, because under the law, either male or female, if they had internal bleeding, or they had any issue of blood, they would be called unclean until such a time as the bleeding stopped. In fact, every woman, once a month, was unclean for that very reason. But here was a woman whose feminine problems continued incessantly for 12 years, and that would mean that she would be unable to go to the temple, she was unable to go to the synagogue, she was unable to

associate with people.

If anyone touched her, according to the law, if anyone touched her in this condition, they would be unclean, and they too would not be allowed to go to the temple or associate with others for a period of time after that contact. So, you can see that her condition was more than just a physical problem. I mean, in terms of what made it difficult, it was more than just the physical discomfort and the uncertainty of what was wrong with her that would be tormenting to her, but she was isolated from all people, and from the temple, and from the synagogue, and if anyone had any contact with her, they would become unclean, and so people avoided her.

More than that, she had spent all the money she had on physicians, such as they had in those days, and the physicians had not been able to solve her problems either. So, she was hopeless, almost. She had heard about Jesus.

Jesus had a reputation of going around and touching sick people, even lepers, and healing them. Now, would Jesus touch a woman with an issue of blood and heal her? Would this not be to make himself unclean? According to the law, if he would touch her, he would be unclean, as she was. Did she dare hope that he might? Now, of course, if she would touch him without his knowing it, he would not be responsible for keeping himself as an unclean person.

I mean, he would not know it. She was sure that the power was there to heal her if she would touch him, and so she wanted to do it secretly. She wanted to sneak up behind and just touch the hem of his garment, where he wouldn't feel it.

And then he wouldn't be obligated to keep himself separated as an unclean person, because he would not know about it. And yet, she was sure she would get her healing this way. Now, she was hopeful.

You know, of course, she didn't have to do it this way. I believe Jesus would have touched her anyway. And the reason is because he did the same thing once when he confronted a leper.

And under the law, if you touch a leper, you're unclean. But Jesus touched the leper, and he did not become unclean. The leper became clean.

Therefore, we have no reason to doubt that Jesus would gladly have touched her and healed her, had she come in the normal fashion. But she apparently had no certainty about this, and she didn't want to take her chances. So she thought she'd come up behind and somehow just touch his clothing in a very nonchalant way that would not draw much attention to herself, and then she'd be healed.

Now, this is tremendous faith on her part. She not only had the faith to believe that Jesus could heal, but she believed that he could heal without knowing he was healing. Now,

that's an important thing, because there are people who seem to affect cures and healings and who are actually doing tricks.

There are people who fake a power to heal. I don't have to name any, but there have been some on television in recent years. Some of them have been exposed.

There's always been charlatans who've always claimed the ability to heal and done fake things that weren't real healing at all, but gave themselves the reputation of it. But she knew Jesus was not one of these. She knew that his healing power was real and from God, so much so that God would heal her whether Jesus knew it or not, if she would just come into contact with him.

Now, this notion that if you have physical contact with a holy man, that there would be power that would be transmitted from that man to you is one that has some justification even in the Old Testament. We know of a case in 2 Kings 13 where a man had been killed in battle and his friends threw him into a cave to quickly dispose of his body because the enemy was coming and they wanted to get his body out of the way. And the cave that they threw his body into happened to be the place where Elisha the prophet had been buried.

And Elisha by this time was just bones. He was decomposed. But the Bible says when this man's dead body touched the bones of Elisha, the dead body came alive, not Elisha's, but the other man's.

So that Elisha, the man of God, who had walked in such power of the Holy Spirit, by contact even with his bones, was able to raise the dead. Although Elisha certainly was not conscious of it. This was clearly a miracle that God did, which God did in association with his messenger Elisha.

God did these kinds of things in order to show that these men were his messengers. Even after Elisha had died, God wanted to remind Israel that Elisha was God's messenger. And therefore God did a miracle in this way.

And it was associated with Elisha by the fact that the man touched the bones of Elisha, which gave further credentials to the words that Elisha had preached to them. Now Jesus was God's messenger and this she knew. She knew that healing operated through him and so the power was there.

And she felt that even if Jesus was not aware, just like the bones of Elijah, of Elisha were not aware when the man's dead body touched them and yet the man sprang to life, she was sure that if she touched the hem of Jesus' garment that she would be able to live again and have her sickness, which the doctors had not been able to cure, remedied by the power of Jesus. And so she touched him in the crowd and Jesus immediately felt power go out of him. The power of God was in him and apparently it was in him in such a

way that he could sense whenever that power was operating.

Now it's interesting because it did not operate at his will. Jesus possessed the power of God but he did not dictate when the power of God would heal someone and when it would not. That was not Jesus doing, that was the Father's doing.

Because this woman got healed without Jesus knowing that she had touched him. He only knew after the fact that power had gone out from him. And he said that her faith had healed her.

Now of course what he meant by this is that her faith in him had procured for her her healing from God. And it was not Jesus himself but the Father who honored her faith. And Jesus just discovered that it had happened after the fact.

This agrees with everything Jesus taught about his relationship with the Father, namely that he was not there to do his own will but whatever the Father did. Whatever he saw the Father do, whatever the Father gave him words to say. Jesus was not there to be the replacement for his Father, he was there to bring people to the Father.

And he was there not to do his own will but to do the Father's will. And he said in John 14, it's the Father who does the works in me, not me. So we can see that this woman discovered that by experience.

Jesus did not know who had touched him. But God did and God healed her. Jesus, however, did know that someone had touched him.

He said, who touched me? Peter thought that was a rather unreasonable question to ask because apparently there were throngs of people jostling him and touching him, bumping against him and so forth in these narrow streets quite a bit. And Peter said, what do you mean? Who touched you? Everyone's touching you. And Jesus said, no, not everyone is touching me quite the same way.

I felt power go out from me. Only one person in the crowd had touched him with faith. It's interesting too because the woman hadn't even touched him, had just touched his garment, but he felt that touch.

He didn't notice the jostling and the bumping and all that of other people who didn't have faith because nothing was going out of him into them. They were not contacting him with faith. They were in close contact with him, but they had no faith.

Reminds me of people who go to church a great deal but never have any faith in Christ. They're in contact with Jesus, but no power ever goes out of him to heal them or to help them or to save them because they do not reach out in faith and touch him. They may live their whole lives in close proximity to him.

They may have many contacts with him through church attendance or whatever, but if a person does not have faith, then nothing comes to them from God. The way James put it in James chapter 1, Let a man ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavers is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

For let not that man think that he will receive anything from the Lord. In other words, that man who does not have faith, he shall not expect to receive anything from the Lord. So here's a woman who had faith.

Her faith was in Christ. She touched him. He obviously did not purposefully heal her.

She was healed by God because of her faith in Christ. And that's all that Jesus said. Jesus didn't say, I healed you.

He said, your faith healed you. Of course, to be more precise, God healed her because of her faith, but that's still another way of saying the same thing. And so he told her to go in peace, and sure enough, she did.

She had a new life after 12 years of being dead, as it were, and separated from family and friends and synagogue. Now, when this woman went off, Jesus continued his trip to the house of the man who had a daughter in need. She was sick, last they had heard.

However, in verse 49 of Luke 8, it says, while he was still speaking, that is, while he was speaking to this woman with issue of blood, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the teacher. But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, do not be afraid.

Only believe, and she will be made well. There's something about this little exchange here that has always touched me about Jesus' compassion and sensitivity. Here this ruler of the synagogue had a daughter who was near death.

Nothing could help her except possibly Jesus, if he could get to him in time. And so he comes running to Jesus and begging him to come heal his daughter before it is too late. And Jesus is on his way.

And then Jesus gets interrupted by this business with the woman who had the issue of blood, and he ends up stopping and being delayed a few seconds or a few minutes, perhaps. And he's almost to the man's house, and the news comes, too late, you missed it. Your daughter's dead.

Don't bother Jesus anymore. Let him go. There's no hope now.

How the ruler of the synagogue's heart must have sunk at that moment. He had been almost on time. His daughter might have lived if he'd been a little earlier.

He had been hoping against hope that she might survive if he could just get Jesus there

on time. But the news comes, no, it's too late. It's too late.

Might as well give up honor and let Jesus go his way. Now, Jesus, of course, knew instantly how devastated this man would be at that news. And Jesus didn't speak to the messenger, and he didn't wait for the man to speak to him.

He just turned to Jairus and he said, Don't be afraid. Your daughter will be all right. Your faith... Now, let me read it to you.

He says, Only believe and she will be made well. Now, this man had just seen how a woman who had only believed, her faith had made her well, the woman with the issue of blood. And now Jesus says to him, Your daughter, she's died, but only believe and she'll be made well.

She'll be okay. And when he came into the house, he did not permit anyone to go and accept Peter, James, and John. Now, these three men often were given the privilege of going places with Jesus that the other disciples were left out of.

They're sometimes called the inner circle, Peter, James, and John. They became the main leaders of the disciples after Jesus was gone. And in their training, he let them see more things than the others saw.

He had them on the Mount of Transfiguration with him also. And they saw things the others didn't see there. But these three men and the parents went into the room where the girl was dead.

And it says, Now all wept and mourned for her. But he said, Do not weep, she is not dead, but sleeping. Now, these were professional mourners who were hired in.

They apparently had been lurking like vultures when she was sick, just waiting for her to die. And now that news had come that she died, they just started mourning because they would get their wages for doing that. And they all laughed Jesus to scorn when he said that because they knew that she was dead.

But Jesus put them all out, took her by the hand, and called, saying, Little girl, arise. In the Aramaic, that's talithakumi. Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately.

And he commanded that she be given something to eat. And her parents were astonished, but he charged them to tell no one what had happened. Yet we read in Matthew that the news of it did spread abroad, so apparently they were unable to keep the news to themselves.

So Jesus here raises a person from the dead. This is the first recorded case of Jesus raising someone from the dead, this 12-year-old girl who had died only probably moments or hours earlier. He later raised another man, Lazarus from the dead, and a



young boy or a young man who was the only son of a widow in a town of Nain.

These three times we read of Jesus raising people from the dead. He may have done so far more. The Gospels don't record everything he did.

But Jesus showed that he had power to raise the dead. And on one occasion, in Luke 11, he explained it this way. He said, I am the resurrection and the life.

He that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Jesus is the one who gives life to the dead.

And the Bible teaches that every person, until they have come and received this life from Christ, are dead spiritually. We are born dead in trespasses and sins. Only Jesus is able to resurrect us spiritually to the life of God and to take us out of this state of death and sin.

If you have not surrendered your life to Christ, if you are not one of his followers, the teaching of Scripture is that though you are physically and mentally alive, spiritually you are dead. Spiritually, you are not really in touch with God. You are in darkness.

You may think yourself very enlightened, but the Bible says you are not. If you turn to Christ, if you put your faith in him who died for you and rose again, he will give you life. Commit yourself to him and follow him all the days of your life.

We'll talk more about this next time.