

Jairus and the Woman Contrasted

Scripture Readings: Luke 8.40-56, Matthew 9.19-26, Mark 5.21-43

This is a story of contrasts. To miss this aspect is to miss the fundamental interweaving of the events. There are lessons to learn from each case but there are lessons to learn from their interaction. The healing of the woman with the flow of blood interrupted the healing of the daughter of Jairus.

As you read try to understand three levels of personal control- the desperation of the woman, the patient attitude of the ruler, the management of crisis and conflict by Jesus in ministry to others. There are lessons for each of us in our lives and work.

Jairus was a male, but the woman (obviously) was not.

Hebrew women usually held an inferior legal and social position to men (Ruth 4.10). They inherited, only if there was no son (Numbers 27.1-11). However she was considered with dignity within her role, especially as wife and mother (Leviticus 19.3), and occasionally as a national leader as Deborah, or as a woman of domestic industry and enterprise (Exodus 35.25&26, Proverbs 31.10-31). The issue here is that there was a recognised role for men and women in that society. This woman was outside her social parameters. She had been isolated by her disease and was left to pursue her own affairs according to Mark 5.26.

Jairus a synagogue leader, the woman a synagogue outcast.

A synagogue ruler was not a priest, but the chairman of a board of elders, known also as the minister Luke 4.20. See also Acts 13.15 & 18.8. He was responsible for the buildings, appointments,

functions, discipline and the like. He was a most respected person. The unidentified woman suffered a disease for which Leviticus 15.25-30 demanded isolation from the community for sanitary reasons, and this included the synagogue. She was thus stigmatised.

Jairus had had 12 years of joy, the woman 12 years of sorrow.

On her twelfth year the daughter became a young woman. Before that she was called 'a little maid'. Jairus called her 'My little daughter' Mark 5.23. She was his only child and had reached this important anniversary. The woman all this time had endured, isolation, disrespect, poverty, frustration, hopelessness.

The woman's condition was chronic, the daughter's was an emergency.

Jairus' daughter was at the point of death. Did he delay in seeking the help of Jesus because the scribes and pharisees were seeking to do away with him? Whether he had hesitated or not the case was an

emergency. For the woman, another day's delay would not have mattered much.

Jairus begged whereas the woman took unbidden.

Both were out of their normal role, their actions lower than their position in life; a reversal of what one might expect. Jairus was used to directing, dealing with requests and controlling as a man of authority in the community. He was now a beggar himself Luke 8.41.

The woman was reduced from the role of beggary to the role of thief, a step from self-effacement to moral declension. She had no right to be there by law or by community standards, so she took what she desperately wanted.

Jairus asked for another, the woman took for herself.

Jairus had a self interest also, for the years of loss and sorrow that lay ahead. For the woman this sorrow lay behind and also stretched unbroken to the grave. For her a reality, for Jairus a possibility.

We have the example of Jacob who connived and cheated to obtain his brother's birthright. Whilst his guile is to be condemned, God respected

Jacob's hunger for His blessing, and He became a 'prince with God' Genesis 32.24-29

Jairus risked all, the woman had nothing to lose.

As a leader in the synagogue Jairus would be well acquainted with the hostility of the pharisees and the scribes against Jesus. In seeking His aid he was taking a risk. Did this cause Him to delay his appeal to Jesus until he had risked the life of his daughter? Why is it that we turn to God only when we have no other choice? The woman had passed all that for she had already exhausted all in trying other options Mark 5.26.

The woman was healed instantaneously, Jairus was forced to wait.

It appears that Jesus did not do the same thing twice in all the recorded healing interviews. Each person was treated individually. There is a lesson in this for us. We each have our individual walk with the Lord.

Imagine the woman's relief, the anxiety of Jairus. Is it fair or just? It is what God deigned to do. He cared for both in His way, according to their need. Luke 8.47&48 and 50. So it is with us. Read Job 13.15.

Welcome Glen Park Gospel Church

Lower Road, Eltham North
Sundays 10.30 am

These notes may be reproduced in part or in full when distributed without cost, with the words 'Used by Permission, Glen Park Gospel Church.' included.

Visit us at glenparkgospel.org.au