

The Woman Who Grasped Healing

Scripture Readings: Luke 8.40-56, Matthew 9.18-26, Mark 5.21-43

Key Verse 'When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment.' Mark 5.27.

This key verse comes from Mark, not Luke, for he deals with deeper detail the little that we know about this amazing woman. She is amazing not for her station in life but for making the most of what she had. She had nothing. She had lost all seeking answers from learned men. All she had left was an opportunity that came her way unexpectedly. When Jesus comes by your way, maybe even through this study, will you also have the presence of mind to grasp the opportunity to draw upon His forgiving grace and His healing?

THE PROBLEM THAT SHE HAD

She heard and grasped the meaning.

The word 'heard' in Mark 5.27 means to hear something, to find out and to learn by it. It does not need much to imagine this woman over twelve years following up one fruitless lead after another in her quest for healing. Her ears were tuned to even the air-waves of gossip. She was more astute than the disciples when they failed to understand the meaning of one of his miracles, '*Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember?*' Mark 7.18. What sharpens the edge of perception is need, desperate need.

She came and grasped the moment.

She was not going to let the day pass her by. She had nothing to offer, Mark 5.26, so she had

nothing to lose except the opportunity. Dr. Luke in 8.43 tells us the case was hopeless. No doctor could cure her.

She touched and grasped the healing.

First she grasped the garment of Jesus. That is the meaning of the word translated 'touch' in these verses (to fasten one's self to, adhere to, cling to). It was no tip of the fingers brush. It was the grasp of desperate faith. The woman used the word herself, indicating her determination.

The 'border of the garment she touched was the *kraspedon* not a hem but in a Jewish context was a tassel bound with blue which Numbers 15.37-39 required devout Jews to wear on their outer garments to remind them of the commandments of the Lord. Jesus was traditionally dressed as one loyal to God.

THE HEALING SHE RECEIVED.

It was instantaneous. God does not always heal like this, each case is different.

The blood flow stopped. Luke used the word *histemi* meaning 'to stand still' with the application of setting in place or balance.

She felt the healing take place. Mark in 5.29 says that she *felt in her body that she was healed of that plague*. She knew what had happened. She had twelve years to grow accustomed to the symptoms of her illness, its weakness and pain. She had no doubt that the healing was complete. She felt well.

THE CONFESSION SHE MADE

The awareness of Jesus

Luke 8.46 *And Jesus said, Somebody has touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me*. This is a significant verse for anyone wanting to understand something of the nature of the man Jesus. Whilst Jesus was and is and always will be the Son of God (John 1.1), we must remember that He was also fully man, perfect man, born of Mary through the work of the Holy Spirit. This man had the

limitations of created manhood, but not the failings of sinful man. One of those limitations is signalled here. He only knew of her presence in an act of faith because He detected the power drain from Him. Peter's reaction was natural, v45 he spoke for them all. The word 'press' or 'throng' is the same word used of an animal crush designed to hold them still for treatment; so tight was the crowd pushing on him. Peter was amazed at such a question.

The response of the woman.

That touch, by Rabbinical law, defiled Jesus. Not only an act of faith, it was a sinful act, not because Jesus would not receive sinners accepting their defilement (Luke 15.2) but because she took it without His leave. In mercy He drew her out, she had to confess. Confession of Jesus by sinful men and women is part of the process of forgiveness and restoration (see Romans 10.9&10). Thus it is that Jesus give her a two-fold blessing, v 48 '*Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith has made thee whole; go in peace.*' Peace for the sinner, wholeness for the ill.

There is a postscript to this story. Look up Mark 6.56. The woman encouraged others by her example. When we are blessed by the Lord others are always encouraged to trust Him too.

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