
a *Grace Notes* course

Life of Christ 300

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Lesson 306

Life of Christ 306

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The Demons and the Swine

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Outline.

The Setting, “And they sailed down to the other side, into the country of the Gadarenes and Gerasenes, which is opposite of Galilee...”

The Attack of the Demon-possessed Men:

The timing of their attack, “And immediately after He disembarked from the boat and came out onto the land, two men from the city who were demon-possessed opposed Him while coming out of the tombs...”

The description of the primary attacker, “[he was] exceedingly violent and had not put on any clothing for a long time; he was not living in a house, but in the tombs. And on one was able to bind him any longer with a chain, because he had been bound many times with shackles and chains and kept under guard, and the chains and shackles had been torn apart him and torn in pieces, and driven by the demons into the desert; and no one was able to subdue him, so that some were not strong [enough] to pass through that road. Through the whole night and day he was in the tombs and in the mountains crying out and cutting himself with stones.”

The demons’ first entreaty of Christ, “Now seeing Jesus from afar he ran and bowed down before Him, and behold! Crying out in a loud voice [the demons], they said, ‘What is for me and for you (this is not your affair), Son of the Most High God? Do You come here before the appointed time to torment us? We implore You by God, do not torment us!’ For He was commanding the unclean spirits to come out from the man.”

Christ’s response to the first entreaty, “And Jesus interrogated him, saying, ‘What is your name?’ And he says to Him, ‘Legion, because we are many.’”

The second entreaty of the demons, “And they were exhorting Him not to order them to enter into the abyss. And there was on the mountain far

away a herd of many swine, feeding. And the demons exhorted Him, saying, ‘If You cast us out, send us into the herd of swine, so that we might enter into them.’”

Christ’s granting of the desire, and the result, “And he allowed them and said to them, ‘Go.’ And after the demons had left the man they entered into the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, about two thousand, and they were drowned in the sea.”

The response of the swineherds, “And the swineherds fled them and announced everything and especially the things about the demon-possessed men to the [people of the] city and to the countryside.”

The reaction of the city folk, “And the people of the city came out to see what was happening, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the legion of demons had been cast out sitting down at the feet of Jesus, clothed and mentally well, and they were afraid.”

The report of the eyewitnesses to the city folk, “And the ones who saw [it happen] reported to them how the demon-possessed man was saved, and about the swine.”

The judgment of the people, “And all the people of the surrounding countryside of the Gerasenes asked Him to leave from their mountain, because they were seized with great fear; and after embarking into the boat He returned.”

The entreaty of the formerly possessed man, “And while He embarked into the boat the man who had been demon-possessed exhorted Him so that He might be with him.”

Christ’s reply, “And He did not allow him, but He said to him, ‘Go into your house with your own [family] and announce to them what sort of things the Lord has done for you and what sort of mercy He has done for you.’”

The man’s obedience, “And he went away preaching in each city of the Decapolis what sort of things Jesus did for him, and everyone marveled.”

II. The Exposition.

The Setting, “And they sailed down to the other side, into the country of the Gadarenes and Gerasenes, which is opposite of Galilee...”

If you recall Christ and the disciples have just weathered a terrible storm at sea. As they walk off the boat, some of the disciples no doubt were tempted to kiss the dry land. But their period of ordeal is not over just yet.

There is a difference between the account of Matthew, and Mark and Luke’s accounts. Matthew names the country as that of the Gadarenes, while Mark and Luke name it as the Gerasenes.

Both of these regions lie in the Decapolis, the ‘ten cities’ region that was east of the Jordan River and populated mainly by gentiles.

All three identify the event as happening right next to the Sea of Galilee; the accounts are so similar in other key aspects that they can hardly be separated from one another. They are indeed the same event.

The reason for the difference is more difficult to ascertain, but there is an answer that allows us to guard the inerrancy of the text.

(1) These two regions were Greek city-states within the Decapolis. In fact, each of the ten cities were.

(2) Gadara is one of the city-states that bordered on the Sea of Galilee, Gerasa was a long way from there to the southeast; maybe thirty miles or so.

(3) Because these were small city-states, the borders were never very exact; furthermore, Gerasa was one of the more important of the ten, and is one of the best preserved archaeologically today.

(4) When Mark and Luke make their statements, they are referring to the Gerasene region as a synonym for the Decapolis; as the most vital city of the region, its name would inevitably become associated with the entire area, and therefore it would encompass the smaller region of Gadara, where the event actually took place.

So they get off the boat, no doubt exhausted from their ordeal at sea; wet, bedraggled, and glad to be ashore. They may be vulnerable...

The Attack of the Demon-possessed Men:

The timing of their attack, “And immediately after He disembarked from the boat and came out onto the land, two men from the city who were demon-possessed opposed Him while coming out of the tombs...”

Mark employs the adjective EUTHUS to tell us that this happened right after they left the boat.

Christ came out the boat and onto the land, and two men approached.

Now Matthew’s gospel records that there were two demon-possessed men, and the other two writers only one.

(1) Matthew remembered a second, silent man who was not significant to the narrative, but present nonetheless.

(2) The others may have remembered, but since he said nothing left him out.

(3) In any event the silent second man did not figure at all in the later narrative, and even Matthew does not mention him again.

These men were from the city. The nearest city of the Decapolis was Hippos, a city right on the Eastern shore of Galilee. It is most likely that they were from there, because the city must be right on the shore, and neither Gerasa nor Gadara fit the bill for that.

Again let me emphasize that the difference in the region names does not necessarily place the Bible in error. An analogy to this situation might come from our own United States.

(1) The Decapolis was the equivalent of our own nation. The main city of the Decapolis was Gerasa, and that would equal our own Washington D.C.

(2) Gerasa and the Decapolis became interchangeable terms for the nation.

(3) But there were also states within this nation. The Gerasene state, with Gerasa at the center, and the Gadarene state with Gadara as its central city.

(4) Down at the shore of the Sea of Galilee there was the small town of Hippos, one of the ten city-states of the Decapolis; just to the south of this little town was the border of Gadara.

(5) The event took place in the nation of Decapolis, also known as the greater region of Gerasa. But the actual place was in the state-region of Gadara, and on top of that, the nearest town was Hippo, even though the town itself was in another state-region.

The description of the primary attacker, “[he was] exceedingly violent and had not put on any clothing for a long time; he was not living in a house, but in the tombs. And no one was able to bind him any longer with a chain, because he had been bound many times with shackles and chains and kept under guard, and the chains and shackles had been torn apart him and torn in pieces, and driven by the demons into the desert; and no one was able to subdue him, so that some were not strong [enough] to pass through that road. Through the whole night and day he was in the tombs and in the mountains crying out and cutting himself with stones.”

First, this demon-possessed man was CHALEPOLIAN - exceedingly violent.

(1) The adjective CHALEPOLI describes a hard man - like a hardened criminal. Sometimes this simply referred to personality, and at other times it had the implication of violence.

(2) This word is further modified by an adjective which was reserved for extreme occasions. It is ‘exceedingly.’ This was an exceedingly hard and violent man. He was dangerous indeed.

(3) And by the way, this information could only have come after the fact; Christ and His disciples could not have known any of these details as this naked man approached them.

(4) So here is the situation, they climb off the boat, and there are two men approaching them, at least one of whom is naked. And of course Christ is thinking, ‘There’s something you don’t see every day.’

Second, Luke notes that he had not put on any clothing in a long time. The long time here is a little vague, as it could denote weeks, months, or years.

(1) The weather outside was cool, since it was likely winter. This only points out the superhuman strength of a demon-possessed man, something

which will become even more evident in a moment.

(2) But perhaps something more is here. The demons desired to convey the idea of a truly demented human being and intimidate anyone from coming around the area of operations.

Third, Mark and Luke identify that the man had his house among the tombs.

(1) This lends a spooky air to the scene. The man lives among the dead - how very ghoulish! Too bad this isn’t a Halloween sermon!

(2) But there is a reason for everything; the demons inside this man don’t live in the tombs because the dead are better at conversation!

(3) Again, I believe there is an intimidation factor here. The demons know that this will strike fear into the hearts of the superstitious unbelievers who inhabit this region.

(4) Remember that the people on this side of the Sea of Galilee are gentiles. They are unbelievers with no background in Bible truth at all. They would be especially vulnerable to this kind of behavior.

(5) The demons inside this man are quite clever, and they have an agenda to intimidate the people in the surrounding area. This is their idea of entertainment.

(6) With this pattern, it is clear to see that these demons are locked into a system of power lust. Demon-possessed people often represent this pattern. Adolf Hitler was almost certainly an example of this; Saddam Hussein may be another.

(7) Other demons follow other patterns of lust; this one wanted to dominate the people of his region through fear and intimidation. He wanted them to fear him utterly.

Fourth, the local populace had made efforts to restrain him, but the demons inside the man caused him to have superhuman strength.

(1) They bound him with chains and shackles and placed him under guard.

(2) Each time, the demons inside the man would strengthen him, and cause him to break the chains in pieces and tear off the shackles. He would then

defeat his guard, and the demons would impel him out into the surrounding arid wilderness.

(3) This piece of information is here so that we will understand that Christ succeeded in solving a problem that a city and even a region could not.

(4) The human efforts of these unbelievers cannot cope with a spiritual problem. This is true in a more general sense. An unbeliever who is lost in sin is completely helpless to remedy the problem of total depravity.

(5) Where the human efforts to solve the problem had completely failed, Christ would succeed and amaze the failures.

(6) It is curious to see that these locals did not kill this demon-possessed man. He was causing so much havoc and he had likely paralyzed trade in the region, because he shut down a road.

(7) There were three major north-south roads in the region. All ten of the cities of the Decapolis lay on these roads. If this man managed to shut down one of those road, then trade would have been curtailed quite significantly.

(8) There was really only one reason for these ten cities to exist, and that had to do with trade. These towns were the road-side stands of the desert region. The modern equivalent would be the southwestern gas station or curios shop. If the road no longer ran through there, the town would be in a desperate situation.

(9) Even at the threat of their own lifestyle, they would not kill this man to remove his threat. They tried binding him and guarding him, but that failed.

Fifth, he was in the tombs and mountains crying out and cutting himself with stones.

(1) Again, the self-mutilation is designed to intimidate. This behavior is so bizarre that people did not dare even approach the man.

(2) The present participles here denote actions that were constant; he was always doing these things. The self-mutilation had a purpose of intimidation; it certainly follows the pattern of everything else these demons were doing in this man.

(3) Because the mutilation was constant, he would have been a bloody mess at all times. How

intimidating indeed to see a naked, bloody, shouting man living in the graveyard and having broken shackles and chains on his body!

The demons' first entreaty of Christ, "Now seeing Jesus from afar he ran and bowed down before Him, and behold! Crying out in a loud voice [the demons], they said, 'What is for me and for you (this is not your affair), Son of the Most High God? Do You come here before the appointed time to torment us? We implore You by God, do not torment us!' For He was commanding the unclean spirits to come out from the man."

Mark's gospel records that they saw Jesus from afar. There was immediate recognition of Jesus.

(1) Now, they did not know that Christ was on His way in any supernatural fashion. They had to use the faculty of sight in order to do so.

(2) But they saw Him from afar, and knew immediately that the man getting out of the boat was the Messiah and the Son of the Most High God.

(3) Realizing that His presence endangered their scam, the demons are anxious to attempt to ward Him away.

(4) The demons impelled this man to run up from afar, and of course the approach of a bloody, chain-dragging, shouting, naked man would startle anyone.

(5) Would he attack? Was he in need of help? Had he been robbed and beaten? It was impossible to know.

(6) Christ held His ground, and at the last moment the man stopped and bowed down at His feet, and began to beg Christ.

(7) All the accounts agree that the man cried out with a loud voice. This entreaty has the force of a crying out loud man's voice.

(8) The first thing spoken is word for word in all three gospels: TI EMOI KAI SOI. It is literally, 'what is for me and for you.' But this is an idiom. It really means, 'this is none of your business,' or, 'what is my business is not your business.'

(a) The demons want to make it clear that they have staked out their own territory, and that they

have an operation going on that Christ should not interfere with.

(b) The demons are most anxious and begging because they have invested no little amount of time and effort into the domination of the region.

(c) But why should they say this to Christ? Why would they believe that anything is not His business?

(d) As the events turn out, Christ concludes that it is His business, and more than that, He intervenes. It seems the demons were wrong as to their conclusion.

(e) There is one important conclusion that we can derive from this statement: demons, though they are vastly intelligent beings, are susceptible to self-deception and blindness.

(f) Here these demons had gone to great pains to get their operation going with this man, and now they were beginning to exert power over this gentile region.

(g) They have deceived themselves to believe that this is not the domain of God, and that since it was Satan's world, they could operate freely.

(h) Furthermore, they naively attempt to bring Christ into their world of deception. He is not going to buy it.

(9) After the initial appeal, the demons address our Lord as 'Son of the Most High God.' Even they recognize this...

(a) But there is a fawning sort of attitude here; these demons hate Christ and all that He represents. There is no respect in this appellation at all.

(b) The demons recognize their impotence here, and so become sycophantic, kissing up to Christ.

(c) They also perceive Him as temptable and deceivable. This reveals that the demons are participating in this spiritual conflict as though there is true free will in the person of Christ.

(d) Furthermore, the demons have lived before human history; there would be soul memory related to angelic prehistory and the relationship with the Godhead at that time.

(e) These fallen angels know for a fact that free will is not a sham, and that Christ in His humanity is temptable. They always act like it, and they have an awful lot at stake in this spiritual conflict.

(f) What I am saying is that the demons were not wrong in the fact that Christ Himself had free will.

(10) After this lofty address, they demons provide support for their appeal. It is their very nature to act as lawyers... "Do You come here before the appointed time to torment us? We implore You by God, do not torment us!"

(a) The appointed time is the time of the judgment of the fallen angels at the judgment of Christ.

(b) Although the sentence is passed on the fallen angels in prehistory, it is not carried out until the great white throne at the end of human history.

· Matthew 25:41, "Then he will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels...'"

· Revelation 20:10, "And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."

(c) These demons understand that they have a certain amount of time before their sentence will be passed, and that they have a certain amount of leeway to operate before then.

(d) The reason for the freedom to operate has to do with the angelic conflict; the ostensible reason that demons participate in human history.

(e) The demons implore Christ by God. That is, they think they are in the right with regard to this matter; they believe they have the freedom to do what they are doing with this man.

· The verb HORKIZO has a legal connotation; it means to adjure or implore someone by invoking a legal precedent or a legal authority.

· They have a long history of interaction with Christ, probably billions of years. And here they are arguing again. They think they are right, and they are seeking justice from a man who has the power to ruin their lives.

(f) They ask Christ not to torment them.

- The verb for torment is BASANIZO, and it also has a legal connotation; it is the torture that one endures while being cross-examined.
- There is also a physical torture associated with this word, rather like the inquisition, where physical pain was associated with a confession of Christ.
- But what kind of torture would Christ bring down on these fallen angels? Aren't they already condemned to an eternity in the lake of fire?
- Part of the answer lies in the next statement, which explains that Jesus was casting them out as the man approached.
- Later in the narrative we will discover that there is a 'legion' of demons in this man, maybe up to two thousand in all.
- Picture in your mind's eye that as the man approaches, Christ is casting out the demons, one by one. Where these are to go after being cast out is the abyss, as we will discover.
- But as some of the demons are cast out, the remaining ones are getting nervous; they do not want to be cast out so that they will enter into torment.
- The casting out causes torment in one of two ways.
 - It simply causes the spirit to become disembodied, and so it is complete without sensual perception. The emptiness of a soul without a body is a terrible emptiness indeed.
 - There is also the more tangible torment of residence in the abyss.

Christ's response to the first entreaty, "And Jesus interrogated him, saying, 'What is your name?' And he says to Him, 'Legion, because we are many.'"

Jesus is interrogating the spokesman from all the demons. The direct object is singular.

The verb is EPEROTAO, which is an intensive form of the verb EROTAO, 'to ask.' To ask intensely is often to interrogate.

The content of the interrogation was brief and to the point: TI ONOMA SOI. It is quite like the TI EMOI KAI SOI that the demons threw at Christ just before. This is really quite a clever repartee' on the part of Christ.

TI ONOMA SOI is literally, 'What is a name for you?'

(1) So Christ fixes His clear gaze upon the demon and asks for his name. The personal pronoun SOI is singular, so that Christ is asking only the spokesman for his name.

(2) This demands personal responsibility for this rampage, and Christ consider the spokesman responsible.

(3) And Christ knew already that there were more than one demon in the man, because He had been casting demons out from him.

Therefore notice the evasive nature of the reply, when the spokesman says LEGION ONOMA MOI HOTI POLLOI ESMEN - 'Legion is a name for me, because we are many.'

(1) The spokesman demon avoids the personal responsibility by stating that he is Legion...

(2) He does not feel at all compelled to give a straight answer to Christ's severe inquiry. On the contrary, he is evasive and even arrogant with this.

The second entreaty of the demons, "And they were exhorting Him not to order them to enter into the abyss. And there was on the mountain far away a herd of many swine, feeding. And the demons exhorted Him, saying, 'If You cast us out, send us into the herd of swine, so that we might enter into them.'"

The demons then send forth an exhortation, which is PARAKALEO in the Greek. Mark puts the verb in the imperfect tense, showing that they kept on doing this over and over. Many demons may have been using the vocal cords of the man at this time.

Luke dug up one detail that is missing from the other two synoptic accounts; that the demons begged Christ not to order them to enter into the abyss. This is an important detail indeed.

(1) Suddenly the demons realize that what they have done may cause them to be cast into the jail

that is reserved for especially offensive demonic behavior.

(2) That is the nature of the abyss. It was the place where the angels from the Nephilim conspiracy of the antediluvian civilization were incarcerated. In that conspiracy, demons seduced human women and produced half-angelic offspring, causing much violence and chaos on the earth. This is recorded in Genesis chapter six.

(3) The angels who are jailed in the abyss reside there in chains of thick darkness until the tribulation, when they are released. 2 Peter 2:4-5 testifies to this

(4) The only break that these abyss dwellers have had in all that time was when Christ made His victorious proclamation after His death on the cross, 1 Peter 3:18-19.

(5) The abyss will again be filled during the millennium, because at the second advent of Jesus Christ, all of the fallen angels will be cast there and reside there for the duration. Revelation 20:1-3 makes this clear.

(6) Being cast into the abyss is a bad thing for a fallen angel. They are cast there as disembodied spirits, and live without sensory perception for all that time. There is a mental dimension to this kind of torment that must be terrible indeed.

So these angels exhort Christ not to order them there.

(1) They realize that He has the authority to do this terrible thing to them, and they realize that they may have crossed the line with their activities inside this Decapolite.

(2) There is some guilt that these demons have, where in their souls they have related their own violent rampage to antediluvian times.

(3) The pre-flood period was a time of domination for the fallen angels and it was filled with wanton violence. This demon possession really does have some similarities, and the demons who have perpetrated it are now worried.

They have an alternate idea; they desire to be sent into the herd of swine that was feeding a far mountainside.

(1) Apparently, anything is better than the abyss. These demons would rather be in pigs than there.

(2) So they suggest this in a hopeful manner to Jesus Christ, knowing that He has the authority by God the Holy Spirit to cast them out, and to incarcerate them into the abyss with the other violators of the rules of engagement of the angelic conflict.

(3) Part of God's guidance of Christ to this spot obviously had to do with these demons, but they were in violation and were not sent to the abyss. More, the guidance had to do with evangelism, and using Christ's control of these events to further the gospel.

Christ's granting of the desire, and the result, "And he allowed them and said to them, 'Go.' And after the demons had left the man they entered into the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, about two thousand, and they were drowned in the sea."

Suprisingly, Christ grants the desire. But there is of course a hitch here.

This happens in three parts, and it happens so fast that you hardly catch what has occurred.

(1) First, Christ grants the desire, and tells them to go. He uses the present imperative HUPAGETE, so that this is definitely a command. Because this verb is plural, it is clear from the original that He said this to all of them.

(2) Then the demons leave the man and enter the swine;

(3) Then all hell breaks loose, for whatever reason, the swine rush down a steep bank and into the sea, where they are drowned.

There is a great irony here that has to do with the demons' demise; they had begged Christ not to cast them into the abyss, and yet they all end up in a watery grave.

(1) You see, the abyss was always associated with the deepest part of the ocean in the Old Testament. Many passages testify to the existence of a great body of water under the surface of the earth:

(a) Exodus 20:4, "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above

or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth (fallen angels incarcerated in the Abyss).”

(b) Psalm 24:1-2, “(1) The earth is the Lord’s, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it. (2) For He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.”

(c) Psalm 136:6, “To Him who spread out the earth above the waters...”

(2) And right in the middle of the Ten Commandments there is a reference to the angels who are in the abyss... the watery abyss.

(3) So the prison of the abyss is a watery prison, and that is part of the unpleasantness there.

(4) So it is more than a little ironic that all these demon-possessed pigs rush down into the water, where they are drowned.

(5) And this was not the choice of the demons. Was it so horrible for them that they experienced what it was like to be a pig and chose immediately to drown themselves, or what there a different power at work?

(6) It seems unlikely that there was a demon-inspired mass pig suicide here; the demons wanted so very much to be inside those pigs.

(7) It is rather more likely that God the Holy Spirit had a plan to teach the demons a lesson...

(a) It is important to note that since the demons were not cast into the abyss, they did not deserve the abyss.

(b) But what they were doing through this man was questionable indeed, and pushing the limits on God’s patience with them.

(c) Therefore, God planned to issue a warning to them; He wanted them to taste what it was like to enter into the abyss, and He used the swine to achieve this.

(d) With such a graphic lesson, it would be a long time before these demons would flirt with crossing the line of the rules of engagement again.

The response of the swineherds, “And the swineherds fled them and announced everything and especially the things about the demon-possessed men to the [people of the] city and to the countryside.”

So here are these swineherds: they are peacefully tending their herd on the side of a mountain, when...

Far away they see the famous demon-possessed man of the region accosting the leader of a small group of men. And they think to themselves: ‘Here we go again...’

But instead of the expected violent outcome, the leader of the group of men speaks and gestures and before you know, their swine go crazy, and plunge down into the sea.

It is obvious that the demons have been cast out, causing the insane behavior of the swine.

So the swineherds flee; they have seen enough and off they go into the city; likely Gergesa or Hippo on the eastern shore of Galilee.

They go into the city and the countryside, and announce what happened.

The verb is APAGGELO. This verb denotes the function of a messenger or even of a town crier.

They have the great scoop about the end of the reign of terror, and so they go and announce it to the city, and to the people in the region that was dominated by this demon-possessed man.

Their announcement especially concentrates on the demon-possessed man. In reality, they have missed the significance of this.

Remember that this is a Gentile region. Indeed the presence of swineherds betrays this in a rather spectacular fashion. There was never a need for swine in Israel with their strict dietary laws, because the swine was an unclean animal.

So these Gentiles do not know of the Messiah of the Jews, or if they have heard of Him, they do not associate this incident with Him.

Since God the Holy Spirit has the authority with regard to these demon-exorcisms, we can consider His timing significant. It is His intention to expand Christ’s ministry to include the Gentiles.

Christ is the King of kings and Lord of lords. He is authorized by the two crowns of His bloodline to rule over Jew and Gentile alike.

There is a great symbolism in this demon exorcism. Christ has set the region free from the domination of demons; He will also set them free from the domination of sin. Now in this part of His ministry, Christ makes the bold proclamation that He is for all the peoples of the world.

But of course the local peoples miss these distinctions. The focus of the swineherds is on the demon-possessed man; he has been rendered powerless. And the peoples' interpretation of this pronouncement is going to be interesting indeed.

The reaction of the city folk, "And the people of the city came out to see what was happening, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the legion of demons had been cast out sitting down at the feet of Jesus, clothed and mentally well, and they were afraid."

So the city folk hear from the swineherds what had happened. They want to go directly to the scene of the event, and so there they go out to see what was happening.

Notice that they really didn't go out to see Jesus; they didn't go with the intent of thanking Him for restoring peace and prosperity to their city.

Because the demon-possessed man had shut down the road to their city, commerce had been restricted, and the city was more or less held hostage to this rampage. There would have been a fair amount of people just sitting around inside the safe confines of the city gates.

They behold a significant sight; the verb THEOREO always denotes the witnessing of a sight of importance, of something that will not be forgotten. This is significant to them.

And here is what they see. The demon-possessed man is sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and mentally well.

SOPHRONOUNTA describes the man's mental state. This is a sound and well-functioning mind. It is someone who is able to exercise wisdom.

And lo and behold, the man has clothes on. The rampage of the first stalker in history has come to an end.

And they were afraid.

But why? Shouldn't they be overjoyed that the rampage has come to a peaceful end, and they can now go about their everyday lives in peace?

They think irrationally here, but this is what they think: that the man who had the power to bring this about is a more powerful man than the last. That much is a good conclusion.

But they also conclude that they have something to fear from this powerful man. They are afraid because they see the corruptive potential of all power.

This is not at all like the Jew's reason for the rejection of Jesus Christ.

(1) We might observe that the Pharisees rejected Christ because they feared being supplanted by Him - they feared the loss of power.

(2) And the people of Israel rejected Christ because they did not see Him as the means to get what they wanted, which was political autonomy from Rome.

(3) When Christ told those people that the change had to come spiritually before it ever would politically, they closed their ears and their eyes to His plan.

(4) Now these people have their reason for rejecting Christ too, it is just not the same reason.

(5) These Gentiles are afraid because they mistakenly categorize Him as sharing the same nature as the demon-possessed man.

The report of the eyewitnesses to the city folk, "And the ones who saw [it happen] reported to them how the demon-possessed man was saved, and about the swine."

As the city folk arrive at the scene, they are greeted by the eyewitnesses to the event. These people report to the city folk how the demon-possessed man was saved, and the nature of the event with the swine.

And now they have all the facts at hand. They can be forgiven; they received the initial report from the hysterical and panicked swineherds, but now comes a more calm and objective treatment of the subject. Surely now they will respond in a proper manner. But they do not.

The judgment of the people, “And all the people of the surrounding countryside of the Gerasenes asked Him to leave from their mountain, because they were seized with great fear; and after embarking into the boat He returned.”

We now the situation gets even worse with the information. The information only confirms their fears, and they are seized with a great fear.

They ask Him to leave from their mountain, and of course the boat is still there at hand.

For all appearances it seems as though the expedition to the Gentile region of Decapolis is finished and a failure. But it is not.

The entreaty of the formerly possessed man, “And while He embarked into the boat the man who had been demon-possessed exhorted Him so that He might be with him.”

Just as Jesus is getting into the boat, the formerly demon-possessed man exhorts Jesus to come along.

Here is a second exhortation from the same man; the first, as you recall, came from the demon possessing him. And now the exhortation is to follow Christ.

Perhaps he is fearful lest more demons come his way; perhaps he is grateful and he wants to learn more about the plan of God. But no. There is a plan.

Christ’s reply, “And He did not allow him, but He said to him, ‘Go into your house with your own [family] and announce to them what sort of things the Lord has done for you and what sort of mercy He has done for you.’”

Well now, Christ commanded His disciples to follow Him; why not this man? Didn’t Christ trust him?

Actually this man is going to be the very first missionary. Christ recognizes that the man is going to be a powerful witness on His behalf among his own people.

Christ realizes something in a humble way: that what He could not do personally, this man could do to great effect.

Christ, even Christ with His great wisdom and vast storehouse of Old Testament doctrine is not going to have an effect here.

The people of the region have asked our Lord to leave; He wanted to stay, but He will not go against their wishes.

And this man, with no formal training, is going to go out and change his world; in the not-too-distant future, Christ is going to return to the Decapolis in Mark 7:37-8:9. The only reason that He will have a new opportunity there is because of what this man is doing while He is absent.

Christ informs the man to go back to his own family, and tell his family what has occurred.

There is more here than meets the eye; in order to reach the point where the man would so easily allow about 2,000 demons to enter in to himself, this man must have been a terrible degenerate.

So when he goes back to his own house and his own family, there is more than just a gladness about the removal of the demons; there is a gladness about the recovery from degeneracy as well. This is double measure of God’s grace.

The man’s obedience, “And he went away preaching in each city of the Decapolis what sort of things Jesus did for him, and everyone marveled.”

Now the formerly demon-possessed man goes forth and preaches in each city of the Decapolis about Jesus Christ.

The man really was preaching, and telling everyone of the quality of spiritual care that he received from the Messiah of the Jews.

And everyone in all of those ten cities marveled. The man was after all well known - he was quite infamous during his days of rampage.

This was all that Christ needed. His re-entry into the region was much better received the next time around.

And this says something about the way in which missionary activity is to take place.

The Healing of Jairus’ Daughter

Matthew 9:18-26

Mark 5:21-43

Luke 8:40-56

Exposition.

The Setting:

The circumstances. "And after Jesus crossed over in the boat again to the other side, a great crowd was gathered upon it, and He was by the sea."

Now this is a little intriguing: the crowd waited for Him - but how could they have known? Did He say, 'I'll be back'? We have no record of such a promise...

Remember, they stayed a day on the shore, while Jesus preached the parables. That night they crossed the Sea of Galilee, where the event with the demon-possessed man played out in a very short time.

Now they cross right back over. The Sea itself is only about six or seven miles across at its widest. The masts and sails of a small vessel would be easily visible on a clear day.

So they spotted the vessel which carried Christ coming back that very morning - and in a little while it came closer and arrived.

The crowd had simply spent the night on the beach, and as they wakened they saw the same boat coming from the direction which it left. They had really had no time at all to disperse.

There are a number of cities nearby which this may take place: Tiberias to the southwest; Magadan to the west; Capernaum and Bethsaida to the northwest; or perhaps Bethsaida Julias to the northeast. But even by land reckoning, these cities are separated by not more than a hard day's journey. Wherever this spot was on the seashore it would have been accessible by all of these towns.

The attitude of the crowd. "And the crowd welcomed Him for all were waiting eagerly for Him."

Since the boat was returning the crowd began to anticipate His return. They had spent the night thinking about His parables, and perhaps wondering if He would do another miracle or healing.

Luke 8:40 describes the eagerness of the crowd with PROSDOKEO, to 'think toward' something. This was the Greek equivalent of 'looking forward' to something, like we say in the English.

Whatever the motive, they were still there, and anxious to see and hear Him.

The Plight of Jairus.

The arrival of Jairus. "And one of the rulers of the synagogue came, named Jairus, who was always at the disposal of the [other] rulers of the synagogue."

They have returned to the Galilean side of the sea, and so one of the towns near the sea shore has a synagogue. It doesn't really matter which town, but there is an important side note to make here. Christ has a history with this region - and that history translates into fame. Think about it:

- (1) Christ healed the child of the royal official from Capernaum. That time it was a male child who was at the point of death, and the child never did die. John 4:46-54.
- (2) Peter's mother in law was healed at Capernaum. Mark 1:29-34.
- (3) Somewhere in Galilee Christ cleansed the leper, which caused much publicity, Mark 1:40-45.
- (4) At Capernaum again, Christ forgave and healed a paralytic, Mark 2:1-12. The scribes took great offense, because they said that only God can forgive sins.
- (5) Christ went to Jerusalem where the Pharisees tried to kill Him for alleged blasphemy, John 5.
- (6) Christ had to flee back to Galilee, where immediately there was a controversy because His disciples picked grain on the Sabbath, Mark 2:23-28.
- (7) Later, He healed a man's withered hand in a synagogue in Galilee, Mark 3:1-6. This is particularly pertinent, because even if it wasn't Jairus's synagogue, he would have learned of this healing from the synagogue rulers in the other towns. There is still a reasonable chance that this happened right before Jairus' eyes.

(8) In Mark 3:7-12, great multitudes from Galilee were following Him.

(9) The Sermon on the Mount occurred on a mountain somewhere near the Sea of Galilee.

(10) Christ healed the centurion's servant in Luke 7:1-10. This took place in Capernaum.

(11) At Nain, just a few miles from Galilee, Christ raised the widow's son, Luke 7:11-17.

(12) Chorazin and Bethsaida failed to repent in Matthew 11:20-30. This after He had done most of His miracles there.

(13) Somewhere in Galilee, Christ met with the Pharisees, where the formerly sinful woman anointed and kissed His feet, Luke 7:36-50. These Pharisees would have been acquainted with the synagogue rulers of the region, and some may have been present at this table as guests of honor. Jairus would have heard about this.

(14) Christ had an itinerant ministry in Galilee, and the women's auxiliary was formed, Luke 8:1-3. Christ's respectful treatment of women was by this time quite well known, and Jairus would have been aware of this with respect to his own daughter.

(15) Then there was the controversy over the exorcism in which the Pharisees claimed that Christ was casting out by the authority of the prince of demons, Mark 3:20-30. This like everything else added to Christ's fame.

(16) All of this adds up to one thought about Jairus: he knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that Christ could help his daughter, regardless of her state.

There is a twofold description of Jairus:

(1) Matthew says, 'one of the rulers.'

(2) Mark says, 'one of the rulers of the synagogue.'

(3) Luke says something a little different: 'He was always at the disposal of the synagogue-rulers.' This description puts him not quite as one of the rulers, but as a kind of under-officer of the rulers.

(4) Either way, his life is filled with religious matters. From the ISBE, volume four:

(a) A rabbi could come from any segment of the community. Leadership rotated among influential and educated members in each community rather than being imposed by some overarching institution or system. The rabbi was the spiritual and practical head of the community.

(b) There were three categories of rulers in every synagogue:

- The head of the synagogue, who supervised services, maintained order, and was only a short step below the Scribes of Jerusalem.

- The minister, who was in charge of the structure and contents of the synagogue. He also signaled the beginning and end of services, and ran the services.

- The elders, who were the mainstays, the wise old men of the synagogue. It was from these that the synagogue minister and ruler were chosen. It is most likely that Jairus was one of the lesser elders of the local synagogue, at the disposal of the men with great authority and experience.

(c) Worship in the ancient Jewish synagogue consisted of prayer and teaching.

- The leaders of worship would read prayers from the Psalms and any Scripture that suited the current theme.

- But there was also a sermon employed to educate the people regarding religious matters.

- The sermon could be given by anyone in the synagogue, but only by one who had already devoted some study and thought to the text or through a rabbi. There was no ordination requirement.

- The passage would be interpreted verse by verse in the language of the people.

The plea of Jairus. "And seeing Him, he fell at His feet and exhorted Him to come into his house with strong words, 'My daughter has come to the last, I came in order that after coming You might lay hands upon her that she might be saved and might live.'"

So this man Jairus falls at the feet of Jesus. This represented a more than significant sacrifice of pride on his part.

The party of the Pharisees were diametrically opposed to Christ; the Scribes and Pharisees had even wanted Jesus dead for quite some time.

But this man does not fool around; he does not go to begging Christ only after all other kinds of pleas have failed. He goes straight to it.

Make no mistake that this is more than a sacrifice of pride - this act of humility represent a clean break from his old life, for he will be ostracized for going to Jesus.

If the Pharisees would be evil enough to plot against Christ's life, then it would be nothing for them to censure a man who was associated in a small way with Him. Jairus knows full well what the consequences of this action will be.

Jairus exhorts Christ with strong words - PARAKALEI POLLA.

(1) The verb means to call alongside an expert in your realm of need. Usually this has to do with legal help, but here it is another category - spiritual medical help.

(2) The adverb POLLA describes how the exhortation was accomplished: 'greatly,' or 'with much force.' When you combine this with the man's body language, you can see how he was in that begging tone of voice.

Jairus says, "My daughter has come to the last."

(1) Matthew indicates that Jairus told the Jesus that she was dead. Mark has him saying that she was at the very brink of death. Matthew communicates the man's feelings while Mark his actual expression.

(2) You can say that your daughter is about to die with a fallen tone of voice, and your listeners will understand that the situation is hopeless. That is what Matthew understood, and he converted that into his text.

And then he wants Jesus to lay hands on her, so that she might be saved and live.

(1) It is not necessary at all for Jesus to touch the girl; He has healed more often than not by word. A quick random sampling will reveal this:

(a) The royal official's son at Capernaum was healed from miles away;

(b) Peter's mother-in-law by touch;

(c) The man with the withered hand simply by obeying in stretching out his hand;

(d) The widow's son was raised by a word.

(2) So does Jairus have a misconception about this? Perhaps not, because the laying on of hands is also an idiom for 'doing' something.

(a) Indeed the doctrine of laying on of hands with regard to deacons in the church is about giving them guidance and leadership early in their service.

(b) But the power is not necessarily in touch, so much as it is in the sovereignty of God the Holy Spirit. And in any assumption on how the healing is to be done there is a misconception.

(c) But this does not necessarily interfere with the faith of the man; and that is what our Lord chooses to emphasize.

The plight of Jairus. "Because the only born daughter to him, about twelve years old, indeed she was dying."

Luke is the one who explains that Jairus daughter is an only-born daughter. This is kind of a twist that comes from this Greek word MONOGENES.

If you recall, the widow's son at Nain was an only-born son to her, and Jesus had compassion because He recognized His own mother in that situation.

There is significance and symbolism here in this only-born daughter.

(1) Significance because she is a she. This becomes a bold statement that gender does not at all matter with regard to the plan of God.

(2) Symbolism because the only-born daughter of Jairus is analogous to Christ as the only-born Son of God.

But there is even more symbolism in the age of the girl - she is twelve years old.

(1) Because Luke mentions her age, he thinks it is important. The number twelve is significant to the Jews, because of the twelve tribes of Israel, but Luke is not writing to Jews.

(2) Mark mentions the girl's age in relation to her ability to walk around, but there is no other relevance to the girl's age indicated by him.

(3) But Luke does, and there are two possible points of relevance.

(a) First, it was at the age of twelve that Christ first went to Jerusalem; it was His coming of age year. There may be something to this, because Luke's gospel is the only one that records the incident at the temple - Luke 2:41-51.

(b) Second, it related to the length of time that the woman with the hemorrhage had suffered. This seems even more likely from the content.

(4) But if these two women do relate their age and length of ailment is this nothing more than a coincidence? Luke is not like that - he doesn't record a coincident for its own sake; and remember that God the Holy Spirit has inspired Luke.

Let's begin with Hebrews 11:17-19, "(17) By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son; (18) it was he to whom it was said, 'In Isaac your descendants shall be called.' (19) He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type."

(1) Jairus' daughter is a type of Isaac; Isaac is a type of Christ. The significance of Jairus' daughter is that she is only born, and about to die.

(2) Luke is relating her age to the age of Isaac at the time that his father was about to sacrifice him.

(3) Both Isaac and this girl were only-born; both were twelve; both about to die.

(4) Under the guidance of the Spirit, Christ wants this to be a symbol to Israel of his relationship to the sacrifice of Isaac.

(5) Every year the priests of Israel sacrificed hundreds of rams to commemorate God's provision of a ram as the substitute for Isaac.

(6) Whereas Abraham did have to give his only-born son, God did. Abraham learned what a terrible thing it was to have to sacrifice what is most precious to him. He had an appreciation for what God had to do in Christ.

(7) Abraham trusted completely in the promise of God regarding his only-born son. He knew that God would be faithful.

(8) And Abraham received Isaac back from the dead in a figurative sense - and so would God in a literal sense.

Jesus' decision. "And Jesus after rising followed him, and the disciples likewise."

Christ had the power in the Spirit to stop the girl from dying as He had done with the royal official's daughter earlier.

But he decides to follow Jairus back to his house, and deal with the situation there. He thought it important to stay within the man's perception of what He was and how He healed.

And more than that, Christ was under the guidance of the Spirit to do this in representation of His own coming ordeal.

The Incident on the Way.

The crowded conditions on the way. "And a great crowd followed and was pressing in on Him."

So of course now that everyone knows that Christ is going to do a healing, and so everyone wants to be in on it.

The entire crowd from the seashore is now moving to the city nearby, following and pressing in on Jesus. Perhaps they are asking Him questions, perhaps cheering; they have been a great nuisance to Christ, and He generally does not like them.

But on this day He is going to have compassion on a man of faith, and at the same time He is going to make a healing into a nearly unmistakable symbol of salvation and healing from sin.

The description of the afflicted woman.

Her condition. "And a woman who was continuously with a flow of blood for twelve years."

(1) She had a flow of blood, or a hemorrhage; although the accounts do not specify, it most likely continuous vaginal discharge of blood. This had been ongoing for twelve years.

(2) Now this flow of blood was not life-threatening. Think about it; this was ongoing for

twelve years, but even after twelve years she is able to walk and go with the crowd.

(3) The devastating part of this affliction is the impact on the woman's life, because of the regulations from the Mosaic Law.

(a) The period of menstruation rendered an Israelite woman ceremonially unclean for seven days and therefore excluded her from worship in the sanctuary and from fellowship with other Israelites.

(b) Leviticus 15:19-24, "(19) When a woman has a discharge, if her discharge in her body is blood, she shall continue in her menstrual impurity for seven days; and whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening. (20) Everything also on which she lies during her menstrual impurity shall be unclean, and everything on which she sits shall be unclean. (21) Anyone who touches her bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water and be unclean until evening. (22) Whoever touches any thing on which she sits shall wash his clothes and bathe in water and be unclean until evening. (23) Whether it be on the bed or on the thing on which she is sitting, when he touches it, he shall be unclean until evening. (24) If a man actually lies with her so that her menstrual impurity is on him, he shall be unclean seven days, and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean."

(c) The only social intercourse that this woman could legally have was with other women who were menstruating; she could not legally have sexual relations with a man; in a society where having children was of the utmost importance she could have none at all.

(d) This woman is not identified as an old woman. She is a woman of childbearing age, but she is not allowed to be a woman in any way.

(4) All three accounts protect the woman's privacy; she may be somebody whose name we know, and she may not. But there is no connection between this woman and any other woman of the New Testament.

(5) The woman is connected in an interesting way with Jairus' daughter - she has had the flow of blood since the year of the birth of that girl.

Her fruitless quest for relief. "and after suffering much under many physicians and after spending all of her money and after achieving nothing but after more coming into the hand,"

(1) She has desperately tried to remedy this situation; her personal wealth meant nothing, and she spent it all.

(2) There was no little amount of shame associated with these efforts, and the crude and unusual treatments of the day most likely added a great deal to her revulsion toward her own body.

(3) She must have been hopeful and hopeless in turns.

(4) And after all the investment the only return that she obtained was more blood.

Her conclusion about Jesus. "after hearing about Jesus, after coming with the crowd behind, she touched His garment; for she said, 'If I touch even His garments I will be saved.'"

(1) But this woman in her hopelessness finds faith. She does not believe that she can be helped by the doctors; there is really nowhere left at all to turn.

(2) And then she knows beyond a shadow of a doubt that Christ is the answer. She has heard that this man has the power to heal, and look at the crowd! They know that He can heal Jairus' daughter, and there is a corporate momentum.

(3) The faith of the crowd is an interesting phenomenon; they all believe in Christ's healing power, but they have the wrong motives attached to being eyewitnesses. To them it is a circus show. But this same faith is contagious to this woman, who genuinely needs what power Christ has through God the Holy Spirit.

(4) Notice that she has a desire to keep this matter private - that she does not want anyone to know of her affliction, because it is so private.

(5) Observe this woman's interpretation of Christ's power; again she concentrates on His touch. Even though it is not necessary at all, she concentrates on touching Christ.

The result of her action. "And immediately the flow of her blood was stanchd and she knew in her body that she was healed from the affliction."

(1) Here is something very important that we must interpret. Christ healed this woman without a conscious decision.

(2) Was there something in Him that would heal anyone who touched Him? No. But actually this little incident points out something important: that the sovereignty of God the Holy Spirit was intimately involved in the healing ministry of Jesus Christ.

(3) And do not forget at all that Christ never employs His power as God to heal or to do a miracle of any kind. He was given that power in His humanity thanks to God the Holy Spirit.

Jesus' response to her action.

His perception of the healing. "And immediately Jesus, after fully knowing in Himself the power had gone out from Him,"

(1) Now this confirms that this had nothing at all to do with Christ. God the Holy Spirit made the decision to heal this woman on the basis of her faith.

(2) The verb EPIGINOSKO describes the full knowledge of Christ - He realized completely what had happened because He was familiar with the sensation. There was a definite sensation involved with being a medium for the Spirit's healing power.

(3) It certainly was not her power - it was her faith, but not her power. And it is not right that the healing power was automatic in Christ according to touch. Christ was in crowds all the time.

(4) So we can describe this by saying that Christ was aware that the Spirit had healed someone through Him, and that the only way this could happen is by the avenue of touch.

His statement to the crowd. "after turning on the crowd, He said 'Who touched my garments?'"

(1) Christ has even more specific information about the incident. He knows that the touch was to His garments, and not to His body.

(2) Now again let's eliminate the silliness here. This was not a magical robe that caused healing to anyone who touched it.

(3) But the Holy Spirit healed through the robe.

(4) It was not necessary that the woman touch the robe; this is the false doctrine of healing. But for some (good) reason God the Holy Spirit honors this woman's faith and decides to overlook her misconception about the doctrine.

(5) The motivation of the woman's action has to do with privacy. God the Holy Spirit is going to intervene in the woman's life in a good way, but not the way that she wanted.

(6) So Christ wants to know who touched His garments. There was a principle behind the healings of Jesus Christ - they explained something about His future atonement. It was therefore necessary to make them public.

(7) Christ is aware that the Spirit has acted, and in humility to the guidance of the Spirit, He asks the question of the crowd. Christ knows that if the Spirit has done a healing, then He wants it to be known!

The replies of Peter and the disciples. "And while all were denying it Peter said, 'Master, the crowds are crowding You and pressing.' And His disciples said to Him, 'You see the crowd pressing on You and you say, 'Who touched Me?'"

(1) Everyone around Christ denies that they had touched Him, which is almost comical, because there must have been many who did. Remember, the crowd was pressing in on our Lord.

(2) And while all are denying it, Peter pipes in with His statement.

(3) He uses the word EPISTATA, 'Master,' to address Christ, which is a strong term of humility toward authority. At the same time, Peter's tone is puzzled.

(4) So Peter gives Christ a gentle reminder that the whole crowd is pressing in on Him, and that four or five or more were touching Him at any given time.

(5) The other disciples chime in, and if possible they are stronger in their questioning of Christ. Their tone reaches into a sinful realm, because they question Christ in a sarcastic manner. Somehow, they decide not to trust Him, and it is an unfortunate misunderstanding on their part.

Jesus' explanation and continued search. "But Jesus said, 'Someone touched Me, for I knew after power had gone out from Me.' And He was looking around to see the one who had done this."

(1) So Jesus has to patiently explain to His disciples that a healing has occurred, and why He knows that this is so.

(2) He identifies to them what we know from the narrative He had experienced.

(3) He now begins to look around to see the one who had touched His garment. He is hoping that there will be some evidence of guilt on a face in the crowd. Christ is an expert on human behavior, and He knows He has a shot to identify this person by looking around.

The woman's self-disclosure.

Her realization of being caught. "And the woman after she saw that she was not hidden,"

(1) The woman realizes that she was not hidden. You can see Christ gaze into the crowd, and stop when His gaze reaches her. She had done this thing, and there was no hiding it.

(2) From her perspective - why did she stay? This is a woman with a conscience, and a woman of great faith. She easily could have filtered through the crowd and remained completely hidden, but she remained.

Her fear and knowledge the healing. "after fearing and trembling, after knowing what had happened to her,"

(1) In Mark 5:33 we have this description - she is at first filled with fear and trembling. She is so afraid that she has done something wrong.

(2) She came to the conclusion that her healing would come with a touch by her own initiative, but this was not necessarily true because Jesus could heal by the word of His mouth.

(3) It hardly seemed real that this had actually happened. Just like that it happened, and then this man is demanding to know who touched Him, and she feels like she is in trouble. She has no idea why Jesus would want to know who had touched Him. Is His power to heal in some way a limited reserve? What will happen?

(4) She is trembling, Mark says, because she knew what had happened to her. The discharge of power into her, and the immediate knowledge that she had been healed caused fear.

(5) And this is not a good respect, but a real fear. The woman has faith but she is by no means mature, because then her perfect love for God would cast out all her fear. She does not have perfect love; just a faith that Jesus Christ can heal her. Spiritual maturity was certainly not the issue for her healing, but it became one almost immediately.

(6) And God the Holy Spirit chose her because He knew that once she reconciled herself to the publicity and embarrassment she would be a fantastic witness for Christ.

Her response and declaration of the truth to Christ and to all. "went and fell down before Him, and said to Him the whole truth, and declared before all the people the reason she touched Him and that she had been immediately healed."

(1) So Christ looks at her and she is filled with fear and trembling, and she decides to come clean completely.

(2) She goes through the crowd to Christ, and falls down before Him, imitating the humility of Jairus.

(3) And it is worth mentioning that she does imitate Jairus; only minutes before, that man had fallen before Jesus Christ, making his humility public even at the hazard of the loss of esteem and even more so his position in the local synagogue.

(4) Now she sacrifices another kind of pride, because she described a problem with her reproductive health. And this was in a time when that was considered very, very private.

(5) And there is more - when she touched Christ, she had the potential to make Him ceremonially unclean - this may have been the reason that she was so scared - the potential to make the Messiah unclean. Perhaps that is the reason she understood Him to be asking - because she mistakenly identified that He knew within Himself to be unclean.

(6) So she tells the whole truth - she confesses her perpetually unclean condition, and what she had done in her desperation.

(7) She must have had a courage born of desperation, because she had made many people unclean by her presence in that crowd, and she had therefore risked their ire. Furthermore, she had risked the ire of the Messiah Himself!

(8) But she knows that there is one fact on her side, and one reason that she can come forward with the whole truth: she had been healed. She knew within herself that the flow of blood had stopped.

(9) She would have seen revulsion on the faces of many in the crowd, had she dared to look. But she did not see anything like that on the face of the Messiah. She saw approval and appreciation for that courage.

(10) And the approval of the Messiah trumps the disapproval of thousands. This is certainly true as a general principle.

(11) Spiritual self-esteem is confidence in your own spiritual standing; it is looking at yourself through God's eyes. This is why she must have been able to overcome the disdain of many. She knew by looking at Christ that she had done the right thing.

(12) Hebrews 12:1-2, "(1) Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, (2) fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

(13) It is an objective of your spiritual life to make the opinion of your savior more important to you than anyone else's, so that His opinion has a governing effect on your life.

Christ's final words to her. "But He said to her, 'Have courage; daughter, your faith has saved you; go into peace and be well from your affliction.' And the woman was saved from that very hour."

Matthew's gospel has the phrase, 'Have courage, daughter.' The Greek phrase is THARSEI, THUGATER. THARSEI is a present imperative verb, so it expresses Christ's desire for the woman to begin and especially to continue in courage.

Remember how afraid she was about her affliction, how she trembled with fear!

But this verb also has the connotation of confidence and self-esteem, and our Lord here supports her as she talks about her problem.

He knows once He hears of her affliction just what the crowd's reaction will be, so He encourages her on the one hand, and keeps the crowd off her back on the other.

Then Christ lauds her again by telling her that her faith has saved her and to go into peace. He said this precise phrase to the sinful woman at the house of the Pharisee.

(1) The woman's faith is responsible for her saving. Now here there is more of a physical connotation than with the sinful woman, but remember physical healing and spiritual healing are closely connected in the ministry of our Lord.

(a) Isaiah 53:4 was quoted by Matthew when he described Christ's healing of Peter's mother in law: "(4) Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. (5) But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. (6) All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him." This connects physical healing and healing from total depravity.

(b) This woman placed her total trust in Christ with regard to her affliction. She knew He had the power to heal her. But Christ indicates with this phrase that there is more to her faith in Him than just a desire for physical healing.

(c) Ephesians 2:8-9 puts a proper light on this moment: "(8) For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that [salvation] not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; (9) not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."

(d) This woman had lived her life in fear and self-disgust and utter frustration. She had tried every human viewpoint solution that there was, and none had borne fruit. In this act of trusting God there is a reconciliation.

(e) She did not make a deal with God; she did not attempt to trade her fealty for her healing. She simply believed without conditions and this resulted in her miracle.

(2) The final command is for the woman to go in peace, POREUOU EIS EIRENEN.

(a) There may be a little adjustment we need to make on this, on account of the preposition EIS.

(b) This preposition shows more of an entrance into a state than a status quo.

(c) The verb is a command that shows the earnest desire of Christ - it is a present imperative.

(d) The present imperative concentrates on a command that is to begin right away and continue indefinitely.

(e) So this woman is to go and keep on going in peace. Therefore the command to 'go' is closer to 'live.'

(f) 'Live always in peace' would be a fair rendition of this command.

(g) The peace here is most likely a reference to the reconciliation unto God that this woman has most recently experienced. This would be a command to perpetuate the reconciliation by staying in fellowship with God.

(h) This is accomplished naturally through the resistance to temptation, and the confession of sin when failure is encountered.

(i) This is remarkably similar to Romans 5:1: "Therefore having been justified from faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ..."

(j) There is a pretty good chance that Paul had heard of this woman, and had this incident in mind when he wrote those important words.

(3) So now two women have received these exact same comments from Christ. One because she was a sinner, and another because she was ill and a sinner. And this woman's faith saved her from that

very hour. Both the physical and the spiritual were joined in this woman.

(4) And one more symbol. If Christ can heal this woman who has such a repulsive ailment, then there is no sin which causes Him to flinch or shy away.

The Occurrence at Jairus' House.

The arrival of the messenger, the terrible news, and the conclusion of the messengers. "While He was still speaking they arrived from the synagogue-ruler saying 'Your daughter died; why do you still trouble the teacher?'"

As Christ is telling this woman to 'go into peace,' messengers arrive from the house of the synagogue-ruler with terrible news.

The daughter who was about to die has just died. But there is more here, because an attitude is reflected in what else they have to say: 'Why do you still trouble the teacher?'

Do these synagogue people really have a concern for Jesus? Because that is what the words say...

The teacher has too many important things to do; don't trouble Him. Don't distract Him from His important work. Right?

But if these synagogue people had been familiar with Jesus' ministry, then surely they would have understood that death was no boundary for the healing powers of the Messiah. He had raised the son of the widow at Nain, after all.

But they are not excused because of their ignorance. They call Christ DIDASKALON, 'teacher.' He is not considered by them to be the Messiah, or even to be a prophet. He is downgraded to simple 'teacher.' No better than any other guy who teaches in the synagogue, and that could be almost anyone in a synagogue congregation.

Furthermore, if Christ is only a DIDASKALON, then He is a lesser man than Jairus, because Jairus as a ruler of the synagogue, even as a simple elder, would have had a higher station than a teacher.

They have no legitimate concern for Christ and His all-important time; their motivation is to get Jairus away from Him. They perceive Christ as a

danger to their synagogue ruler, and so they make an attempt at separation here.

This terrible news is good news for Jairus' people, because it gives them a chance to redeem their synagogue-ruler!

Jesus' encouraging reply. "But Jesus, after overhearing the word being spoken says to the synagogue ruler, 'Do not fear, only believe, and she will be saved.'"

Of course, Christ is on to all of their petty machinations, and He knows exactly what to do. Remember, our Lord is an expert on human nature, and even on the less savory expressions of it.

The verb PARAKOUO describes Christ's overhearing. But this also means to pay no attention to something, and this double meaning is effective here. Christ overhears what is said, and then ignores it. He overrules with His own words.

And He does not even reply them; they are not important, but Jairus is. Christ tells Jairus: "Do not fear, only believe, and she will be saved."

Once again we have the zone of exclusion between faith and fear. Perfect faith, perfect love casts out all fear. This was the theme only the night before this, when the storm occurred at sea.

And you should recall that there has been a very frustrating delay on the way to help the girl. Christ knows of the urgency of the situation here, but He sees that He must minister to the woman with the hemorrhage first, and the God the Holy Spirit has chosen that assignment for Him.

The tumultuous situation at the house. "Now after coming into the house, He did not allow anyone to follow after Him to enter except Peter and James and John the brother of James and the father of the child and the mother. And they came into the house of the synagogue-ruler, and they beheld a commotion."

Christ allows only the inner circle of His disciples to follow into the inner room where the girl lay. These three, Peter, James, and John, were privileged to see many things that the others did not. Among other things they alone witnessed the

transfiguration and were asked by Christ to pray with Him in the Garden of Gethsemane.

The mother and the father of the child were also allowed to enter. This was not to be the business of the crowd after all. They had missed the healing of the woman on the way, because it was private between her and the Spirit. And now Christ will not allow this dog and pony show to enter the house of mourning.

Christ has a sense of dignity and respect and certainly He is thoughtful of these parents even if He knows there is to be a joyous outcome.

He knows that the child will be raised, but He does not want His noisy crowd to interfere with the one that He has notice inside the house.

Today's Handbook of Bible Times and Customs says this about the funeral bier and procession on pages 245-246: "Funeral processions were common among the Jews. The body was carried on a wooden bier often consisting of little more than flat boards... ...A bier carried a symbol to indicate the deceased's occupation or social status... ...A funeral march was hardly quiet, for the typical Jew believed in venting his emotions by loud wailing, beating on his chest and even tearing his clothes. Friends, mourners, and even professional mourners joined in expressing a bitter farewell. Even the poorest family was expected to hire at least one mourner. Singer and musical instruments, especially flutes, were also a part of this procession."

Christ's response to the noisy mourners. "And seeing the flute players and the crying and great wailing, He says to them, 'Go back out! Why are you troubled and crying? The child is not dead but is sleeping.'"

Christ now looks inside the house, and sees that the mourners have already gathered. Apparently the girl's death was expected, because they were organized well enough to have the mourning take place in a very short time after the girl's death. Perhaps less than an hour has passed since the girl passed away; perhaps much less than an hour.

Our Lord also understand that this is a false kind of grief. Professional mourners were a sham and really an insult to death. He treats them with

disdain and tells them to get out. This certainly would have been a temptation regardless of what Christ knew!

And He does something that is almost comical - He tells professional mourners who are charlatans at best to stop being troubled and to stop crying.

But there is another issue: up to this point the narrative has made it clear that the child has indeed died. Well at least that is the truth according to the report of those who came from Jairus' house - the messengers from the synagogue ruler. And of course all these people here sincerely believe the child has died. Who is right?

We can depend on this: that Christ has no motive to lie, and even if He did he would not. The girl is in that nether world just before death; her soul has not left her body even though her body has ceased virtually all function. Her heartbeat is indiscernible, as is her breath. She is pale and completely unresponsive to all attempts at resuscitation.

Now sleep is used to describe the believer in death in anticipation of resurrection:

(1) 1 Thessalonians 4:1318, "(13) But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. (14) For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. (15) For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. (16) For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. (17) Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. (18) Therefore comfort one another with these words."

(2) 1 Corinthians 15:5153, "(51) Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, (52) in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we

will be change. (52) For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality."

(3) However, Christ makes a distinction between death and sleep with His very words!

But one more insight: Christ was speaking words of comfort here. There were those who were mourning with legitimacy, and His words are intended for them. And the comfort comes in the form of the truth, the truth that the girl has not yet died.

The mourners' ridicule of Christ and their removal from the scene. "And laughing at Him knowing that she died - but casting them all out,"

The mourners ridicule Jesus Christ, even though they are wrong. Their mourning was inappropriate because it was false and the girl was not dead after all.

There are participles here which describe the ongoing laughter - present participles in the nominative case which form the subject of the sentence. This all depicts something that starts and then continues.

The laughter starts - ridicule of Christ's conclusion - after all, this guy just walks in and says something that is so obviously untrue. This is mean laughter.

And then the sentence stops. Modern conventions of punctuation have tried to fix this problem, but the intent in both Mark and Luke is to interrupt one sentence with another so that we know Christ has interrupted the laughter. The sentence describing their laughter stops to grammatically portray the cessation of laughter and more.

The new sentence says - 'but casting them all out, He took alongside the father of the child and the mother and those with Him and entered where the child was.'

(1) Christ cast out all those who were laughing. They were rude, and full of disbelief. He casts them out of the house.

(2) This same verb, EKBALLO, is employed time and again with reference to demon possession. The word picture cannot be missed here that Christ exorcises these bad and hypocritical people

from the house. They are certainly under demon influence!

(3) PARALAMBANO describes what Christ does with Jairus and his wife. He ‘takes them alongside.’ It does not describe Him as saying anything at all, but rather acting. By gesture and by eye contact, Christ takes these people alongside, so that they follow Him into the inner room.

(4) Christ leads; He indicates to them all that there is work to be done, and so into the girl’s room they go. Those with Him do not need to be told twice.

The raising of the child. “after seizing the hand of the child He sounds off to her, ‘Talitha, koum’ which being translated is ‘Little girl, I say to you, rise!’ And her breath returned and immediately the girl stood and began walking around; for she was twelve years old. He ordered her to give to her to eat.”

Christ seizes the hand of the twelve year old. The aorist participle KRATESAS describes this action. This is an almost violent action. It is a swift and business-like snatching of the hand.

And not only that, He sounds off to her. EPHONESAN is the verb and it means to speak very loudly, or even to yell.

These two demonstrative actions are striking. They are so full of energy and decisiveness. Christ wants them to see His faith in His sweeping action and to hear His faith in the loud and confident tone of voice.

The actual words from the Aramaic are preserved by Mark: TALITHA KOUM. They are spoken directly to this girl! They are spoken as though the girl herself can hear these things with her own ears. She could only do this if she were alive.

Christ speaks directly to her, and even though she is unconscious and at the very door of death, He commands her to rise.

Luke adds the detail that at this very moment the breath of the girl returned. This sounds like the soul of the young woman - and if so, this comes back to indicate that she has died according to a technical definition.

(1) But there can be no contradiction whatsoever; either she died or she did not.

(2) Luke’s gospel has Christ saying that she did not die, but also that her breath returned. But perhaps the return of her spirit does not mean that she has actually died.

(3) More likely is this: that PNEUMA means breath here. It is well within the realm of meaning that this is so. Even though the girl has stopped breathing, her soul is still present, and she is only unconscious.

And the moment that her breath returns, she stands and begins walking around. This is certainly evidence that she is now alive and well! All the illness and all the weakness are gone in a moment’s time, and she is restored to full health.

And then Jesus commands that she be given food to eat. She has apparently been ill for a long time, and there has been a period of time when she has not been eating. She is completely well at this point so that she can take and hold solid food.

The response of the parents and Jesus’ final admonition. “And immediately her parents were astounded with great ecstasy, but He announced to them to say nothing about the event.”

EXESTESAN EUTHUS EKSTASEI MEGALE forms the response of the parents. “They were immediately astounded with great ecstasy.”

EXESTESAN and EKSTASEI are related; the former is the verb and the latter is the noun in the same word group. The verb means to ‘stand outside oneself.’ And the noun describes that state.

What they saw after they gave up hope was their daughter returned from certain death, returned after everyone had assumed her dead and begun even to mourn her.

And now this girl is alive and breathing and walking around; and simply because Jesus Christ said ‘Talitha Koum.’

But something strange: Christ announced to them to say nothing of the event, and that no one should about it.

Obviously, this would be difficult since the mourners for the girl were right outside, and they

would either have to bury the child or let her live out her life. Folks would be able to put two and two together from the incident, and know that Christ was the only one who could have accomplished this thing.

But Christ does not want the publicity. After all, it is bad enough with the crowds as it is. We have already seen what an impediment they are to His ministry, and they have begun to affect His travel plans.

It does not help at all that the crowd is motivated to follow Jesus for the wrong reasons, and that they are not interested in the necessity of His atonement or any other proper thing like that. To them, Christ is a circus act; He is entertaining, but not a life changer.

Christ could just stay in one place and have everyone come to Him, but He has places to go and people to announce the kingdom to, and He does not want the crowd to be in the way so much.

With Jairus as a synagogue official in this town, there is a greater danger for the kind of publicity that Christ does not want. Because Jairus was a celebrity in his own right, there is the potential for an even greater crowd to follow our Lord. He does not want this.
