

MARK

Chapter 5

The Healing of a Demon-possessed Man

They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. 2 And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. 3 He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, 4 for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. 5 Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. 6 And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. 7 And crying out with a loud voice, he said, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.” 8 For he was saying to him, **“Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!”** 9 And Jesus asked him, **“What is your name?”** He replied, “My name is Legion, for we are many.” 10 And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. 11 Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, 12 and they begged him, saying, “Send us to the pigs; let us enter them.” 13 So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea. 14 The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened. 15 And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. 16 And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. 17 And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region. 18 As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him. 19 And he did not permit him but said to him, **“Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.”** 20 And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.

5:1–20 These events do not take place within the city proper but in the outlying regions near the seashore. Mk records three episodes in which Jesus casts out unclean or demonic spirits (1:21–28; 5:1–20; 9:14–29). Each account exhibits a similar structure: opening conflict; exorcism; and finally, dismay and praise. (TLSB)

5:1 *other side of the lake.* The east side of the lake, a territory largely inhabited by Gentiles, as indicated by the presence of the large herd of pigs—animals Jews considered “unclean” and therefore unfit to eat. (CSB)

region of the Gerasenes. Gerasa, located about 35 miles southeast of the Sea of Galilee, may have had holdings on the eastern shore of the Sea, giving its name to a small village there now known as Khersa. About one mile south is a fairly steep slope within 40 yards of the shore, and about two miles from there are cavern tombs that appear to have been used as dwellings. (CSB)

The east side of the Lake/Sea of Galilee represents the first foray of Jesus beyond Israel. At this point in his ministry there is not full commitment to Gentile ministry (see 5:19), but it is *proleptic*, representing a foretaste of something fuller. It is in this area that Jesus will later feed the four thousand (8:1–10; cf. 7:31). (CC)

5:3 *lived among the tombs.* It was not unusual for the same cave to provide burial for the dead and shelter for the living. Very poor people often lived in such caves. (CSB)

In this region, archaeologists have unearthed “cavern tombs” (man-made caves carved out of rocky outcroppings). They are large enough to provide living space. (TLSB)

unclean spirit. Contact with tombs was likely regarded as ritually defiling (cf Lv 21:1. In folk piety, graveyards were believed to be the haunts of ghosts and disembodied spirits. (TLSB)

5:4 *he had often been bound with shackles.* Though the villagers no doubt chained him partly for their own protection, this harsh treatment added to his humiliation. (CSB)

Apparently, the townspeople feared the man’s violent strength and had tried to bind him. (TLSB)

5:5 *he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones.* Every word in the story emphasizes the man’s pathetic condition as well as the purpose of demonic possession—to torment and destroy the divine likeness with which man was created. (CSB)

Demons drove this man to inflict wounds on himself (cf 9:18, 20, 22). (TLSB)

5:6 προσεκύνησεν αὐτόν, “he ... knelt before him”: This action represents an acknowledgment of who the real “strong man” actually is, namely, Jesus. (CC)

5:7 *What you do with me ... ?* A way of saying, “What do we have in common?” Similar expressions are found in the OT (e.g., 2Sa 16:10; 19:22), where they mean, “Mind your own business!” The demon was speaking, using the voice of the possessed man. (CSB)

Son of the Most High God. τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὑψίστου, “of God the Most High”: The use of phraseology common to Gentile speakers helps to set the scene of this story in a Gentile context. (CC)

I adjure you by God – The demon sensed that he was to be punished and used the strongest basis for an oath that he knew, though his appeal to God was strangely ironic. (CSB)

5:9 Jesus forces these demons to reveal their name! (TLSB)

τί ὀνομά σοι; “what is your name?”: The attempt to determine the spirit’s name is typical of the conduct of exorcisms. It allows the exorcist to gain more control over the spirit to be expelled. (CC)

My name is Legion ... for we are many. A Roman legion was made up of 6,000 men. Here the term suggests that the man was possessed by numerous demons and perhaps also represents the many powers opposed to Jesus, who embodies the power of God. (CSB)

Roman military units containing 4,000–6,000 soldiers. Roman legions were legendary for their ferocity and ability to impose their will upon others. A whole host of demons possessed this man. (TLSB)

5:10 *not to send them out of the country* – The demons were fearful of being sent into eternal punishment, i.e., “into the Abyss” (Lk 8:31). (CSB)

In one moment, the demons tried to gain control over Jesus by invoking His name (v 7); in the next, they begged Jesus not to expel them too far away. (TLSB)

5:11 The presence of “pigs” confirms the Gentile nature of the area, since they are declared “unclean” in Lev 11:7; Deut 14:8. (CC)

5:12 The spirits may well wish to occupy physical bodies, whether human or animal. (CC)

5:13 *drowned*. The death of the pigs powerfully attests that the demons’ hold over this poor man was finally loosed. (TLSB)

Demons are also destructive. (PBC)

5:15 *sitting there ... in his right mind*. The sudden change in the man recalls the instant calm that Jesus brought to the storm in 4:39. (TLSB)

afraid. The typical reaction to a stunning show of divine power. (TLSB)

As with the pig-herders in 5:14, a new item is introduced here, late in the story: the man must have lived in the grave area naked, because now he is said to be “clothed.” He is also “of sound mind.” Yarbro Collins alerts us to an interesting parallel from Plutarch’s *Life of Marcellus* concerning one Nicias, who, pretending to be possessed and crazed in order to avoid arrest, tore off his outer clothing/cloak (ἱμάτιον), rent his tunic (χιτωνίσκον), and ran half naked to the exit of the theater. The inhabitants of the area would have seen the demoniac as normal after Jesus had dealt with him. (CC)

5:16 *described*. In addition to the remarkable change in the demon-possessed man, the drowning of the pigs seemed to be a major concern, no doubt because it was so dramatic and brought considerable financial loss to the owners. (CSB)

5:17 *beg Jesus to depart from their region*. Fear of further loss may have motivated this response, but also the fact that a powerful force was at work in their midst that they could not comprehend. (CSB)

5:18 The further development of the story includes the departure of Jesus, and the request of the healed man shows that 5:1–20 is no mere “exorcism story.” It is not chiefly about Jesus’ power. It concerns the coming of the eschatological reign and rule of God in the person of Jesus and people’s reaction to him and it. In this verse, Jesus departs—in response to the inhabitants’ request or by his own design?—and certainly not to adulation. The healed man does, however, plead that Jesus would consent for him “to be with him” (μετ’ αὐτοῦ ἦ). (CC)

5:19–20 *tell them*. Though Jesus has commanded silence after healing others (e.g., 1:44; 5:43; 7:36; 8:26), He encourages this man to share the good news of his deliverance (see “Secrecy,” p 1653). The man does so enthusiastically, spreading the word in numerous communities (Decapolis means “10 cities”). (TLSB)

5:19 *tell them how much the Lord has done for you*. This is in marked contrast to Jesus’ exhortation to silence in the case of the man cleansed of leprosy, perhaps because the healing of the demoniac was in Gentile territory, where there was little danger that Messianic ideas about Jesus might be circulated. (CSB)

5:1–20 Despite Jesus’ magnificent work of deliverance, the reaction to Him is mixed. The man eagerly wishes to follow Jesus and then enthusiastically furthers His cause, while the townspeople ask Jesus to go away. The Lord still receives the same kind of mixed reaction today, even among those who follow Him, especially when doing so requires a change from established ways. But what remarkable kindness Jesus shows! He rescues people from the devil’s power and even the grave itself, and then allows them to be

witnesses to the wonders of His grace. • Lord, rescue us from the power of Satan, and draw us from the grave through Your resurrection. May we learn joyfully to tell our neighbors what good things the Lord has done. Amen. (TLSB)

A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman

21 And when Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered about him, and he was beside the sea. 22 Then came one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name, and seeing him, he fell at his feet 23 and implored him earnestly, saying, “My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well and live.” 24 And he went with him. And a great crowd followed him and thronged about him. 25 And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, 26 and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse. 27 She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. 28 For she said, “If I touch even his garments, I will be made well.” 29 And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. 30 And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, **“Who touched my garments?” 31 And his disciples said to him, “You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, ‘Who touched me?’” 32 And he looked around to see who had done it. 33 But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. 34 And he said to her, **“Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.”** 35 While he was still speaking, there came from the ruler's house some who said, “Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?” 36 But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, **“Do not fear, only believe.”** 37 And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter and James and John the brother of James. 38 They came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and Jesus saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. 39 And when he had entered, he said to them, **“Why are you making a commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but sleeping.”** 40 And they laughed at him. But he put them all outside and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was. 41 Taking her by the hand he said to her, **“Talitha cumi,”** which means, **“Little girl, I say to you, arise.”** 42 And immediately the girl got up and began walking (for she was twelve years of age), and they were immediately overcome with amazement. 43 And he strictly charged them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.**

5:21-43 Both stories here center on females,, and both mention a span of 12 years; the girls was 12 years old, and the woman had suffered from a hemorrhage for 12 years. (TLSB)

Mark gives the fullest account of Jairus' daughter and of the woman who touched Jesus' garment. Luke's account (8:40-56) is shorter than that of Mark. The account in Matthew (9:18-26) is quite brief. Even among scholars who accept the Gospels as the very Word of God at times there is difference of opinion concerning the order of events in the Gospels. For example, at this point Robertson was of the opinion that Mark gives us the order of events but Lenski thought that Matthew gives us the order of events. This difference of opinion does not affect the exegesis. (Buls)

Mark 5 describes three unique and impressive miracles of healing: the demoniac named Legion in the region of the Gerasenes (vv 1–20); the woman with the twelve-year “bleeding” (vv 24–34); and the raising of Jairus’ daughter (vv 21–23; 35–43). In all three Jesus has contact with those who are ceremonially unclean according to the Torah—the demoniac because of his proximity to the dead in the tombs, the woman because of her flow of blood, and Jairus’ daughter also because of death. The account of the healing of the bleeding woman is intercalated—inserted within the account of the raising of Jairus’ daughter. This is why our text skips from v 23 to v 35. Mark’s gospel occasionally narrates two incidents

in this fashion when one anticipates the other (William Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, NICNT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974] p. 189). According to the Torah, the life was in the blood. The loss of blood represented a loss of life, as well as a potentially fatal illness. Jesus heals the bleeding woman as a precursor to healing someone fully dead. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 3)

As our text begins, Jesus has just returned by boat from across the lake of Galilee, probably to the west side near Capernaum. A large crowd gathers, as often happened during his Galilean ministry. Jairus was a “ruler of the synagogue,” responsible for the administration of the synagogue and for supervising the worship. In the LXX, his name usually transliterates *yaorr*, “he [God] gives light,” but in 1 Chron 20:5 it transliterates *yaorr*, “he [God] arouses, awakens,” so his name may hint at the miracle Jesus performs for him. Jairus’ daughter is sick, near death. Jairus believes Jesus can heal her by laying his hands on her. Jesus starts to go, but is delayed by the bleeding woman. During this delay the daughter dies. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 3)

The text follows on the heels of Jesus revealing his power to forgive sins (Mk 2:1–13), exercising his power over the demons and the realm of Satan (3:20–30; 5:1–20), and showing his power over the elements of nature by rebuking the wind and the waves (4:35–41). With these great enemies of man—sin, the devil, and even the elements—rendered subject to the Savior’s words, we are now brought to Jesus’ exercise of power over the last and final enemy of man, death. The inevitable conclusion is that Jesus is Lord over all creation. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 3)

5:21-23 “one of the synagogue rulers.” We have seen Jesus demonstrate heavenly authority. Now one who is accorded earthly authority over the place of worship seeks Jesus’ help. A synagogue ruler was one who looked after the synagogue building and supervised the worship there. This man’s authority is powerless to help his beloved daughter, who is dying, so he seeks out Jesus, a higher authority, to accomplish what he could not. Such is the nature of the Savior, who accomplishes for sinful man what he cannot do for himself. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 3)

5:21 *the other side of the lake.* Jesus returned to the west side of the lake, perhaps to Capernaum. (CSB)

After Jesus crosses the lake/sea (from east to west), he is in Israel again. This will become apparent as he once again commands silence after a miraculous deed (e.g., 5:43 [contrast 5:19 in Gentile territory]). (CC)

The sentence begins with a genitive absolute, with Jesus as subject. We know from the remainder of the account that the disciples were with Him. He crossed over from east to west. Note how often large crowds followed Jesus. (Buls)

Jesus returned to the western shore of the lake, perhaps to Capernaum, and a multitude gathered around Him while He was yet by the Sea. No indication is given whether the crowd came together as soon as He arrived or after an extended period of time; it is simply the first fact that Mark records, offering a contrast to Jesus’ experience on the eastern shore where the inhabitants urged Him to depart. (Lane)

Mark relates this story at greater length, with closer attention to detail than the other evangelists, Matt. 9, 18; Luke 8:41, except in the matter of symptoms of the sickness, in which Luke, the physician, is more exact. Upon leaving the country of the Gerasenes, Jesus sailed directly across the sea, back to the region which He had left only the day before. Most of the people had undoubtedly not yet thought of returning home, and they could therefore soon assemble once more and come to Him, as He was by the Sea. They gladly received Him, for they were all waiting for Him, Luke 8:41. (Kretzmann)

The healing of Jairus's daughter takes place after Jesus drove a Legion of demons out of a man (5:1–20). Just as the demonically possessed man fell down at Jesus' feet (5:6), so did Jairus and the woman (5:33), albeit after she was healed. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

5:22 rulers of the *synagogue*. A ruler of the synagogue was a layman whose responsibilities were administrative and included such things as looking after the building and supervising the worship. Though there were exceptions (see Ac 13:15), most synagogues had only one ruler. Sometimes the title was honorary, with no administrative responsibilities assigned. (CSB)

With the coming of Jairus, two things should be noticed: first, that not all Jewish authorities are hostile to Jesus, and second, that the so-called "minor characters" in Mark, such as this man and the woman with the issue of blood, are the "true disciples"⁵⁰ with insight and faith, both qualities exhibited in the face of difficulty and opposition. Jairus himself is one of three parents who plead effectively for their children (in addition to the Syro-Phoenician woman [7:24–30] and the man with the demon-possessed boy [9:17–27]). (CC)

Jairus' prostrating himself at Jesus' feet is an acknowledgment of his own inferiority, a major admission by a man of authority. (CC)

"Ruler, official, leader." In any case he must have been well-known. That an important man came to Jesus, shows the former's humility. Furthermore, it would seem that Jairus was already a Christian. The words here denote a close relationship and great respect. (Buls)

Note that, as in English, the name "Jairus" has three syllables. (Buls)

Bengel: It is a strong proof of the truth of the Gospel, that the very proper names are given in the Evangelist's narrative. (Buls)

Jairus was a synagogue ruler. He would have had some stature in the community and yet, without hesitation, he falls at Jesus' feet. What would have normally been an unusual scene was perfectly understandable considering his need. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

5:23 *implored him earnestly* – But before He had had an opportunity of performing the work of His ministry, as was His custom, one of the chief men, of the rulers of the local synagogue, whose name was Jairus, came, looking for Jesus. As soon as he saw the Lord, the distraught father fell down at His feet and begged and urged Him most earnestly, with many words. The words pour forth from his mouth in the anxiety of his pleading: My daughter is about breathing her last; she may even now be dead. Come at once and quickly; lay Thy hands upon her that she may be healed and live. (Kretzmann)

This verse and the parallels in Matthew and Luke indicate several things: (Buls)

- a. A critical condition in Jairus' home;
- b. his love for his daughter; and,
- c. his faith in Jesus.

His request that Jesus should come and lay hands in healing upon his daughter reflects a common practice of the day. What was unusual was his confidence that if Jesus would come, his daughter's life would be saved. (Lane)

Luke adds the detail that Jairus's little daughter was his only daughter (Lk 8:42). "Made well" in the Greek is the passive verb *sōthēi*, "be saved." (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

lay your hands on her – Jesus had healed with a touch before (1:31, 41) and would several additional times. That said, Jesus was perfectly capable of effecting cures simply by saying the word (7:29; Mt. 8:13). (TLSB)

ἵνα ... ἐπιθῇς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῇ, "(I ask) that you ... lay your hands on her": The request that Jesus "lay hands" upon the girl reveals that Jesus is seen as a "traditional healer," not as a trained doctor. (CC)

healed and live – "Healed and live" in the sense of bodily healing and continuance of physical life. That is the obvious meaning. Jairus must have prepared her for death though we cannot prove it. (Buls)

ἵνα σωθῇ, "in order that she might be saved/healed" (5:23): As suggested in the fifth textual note on 5:23, the use of σώζω here denotes more than being "healed. (CC)

5:24–34 Account of Jairus and his daughter is interrupted by a story about the healing of the woman with a discharge of blood (cf 3:21–35; 6:7–30; 11:12–25; 14:1–12). (TLSB)

5:24 *went with him* – Jesus' response is simple and immediate. He goes with him. What comfort these words bring to the sinner in need! The aorist indicates that Jesus went without a moment's hesitation. When man recognizes his need for a savior and pleads to the Lord for rescue, Jesus steps in and saves. Jesus always stands ready to rescue the sinner. Would that we would but ask! "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you," says the Lord (Ps 50:15). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 3)

Jesus is the Immanuel, God with us, for Jairus. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

Jesus complied with Jairus' request immediately, but the interruption by the woman with the flow of blood was no accident. (Buls)

Fahling: In consequence of this delay, the urgent need of Jairus was almost forgotten. But this was wholly in line with the plans of Jesus. (Buls)

Kretzmann: Jairus must first pass through a test of his patience. (Buls)

Commentators are agreed that the interval between verse 24 and 35 was very brief, perhaps only a few minutes, but the interruption must have tried Jairus' faith. (Buls)

crowd thronged about him. συνέθλιβον αὐτόν, "began to rub against him": This is the very thing that Jesus had been concerned about earlier (3:9). Note that he wanted a boat to be at hand to prevent this (3:9) and that he, in fact, has one here (5:21). Yet, for the sake of the people and for his ministry he does not stay separate from them. (CC)

5:25-26 A woman suffering from a discharge of blood for twelve years (the same age as Jairus's daughter) seeks Jesus in a crowd. She had no money, and no doctor could help her. Also, like Jairus, there was no earthly device or wisdom that could help her. She was completely dependent on Jesus. (Recall the Introit and Psalm 121.) (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

5:25 *discharge of blood.* The precise nature of the woman's problem is not known. Her existence was wretched because she was shunned by people generally, since anyone having contact with her was made ceremonially unclean (Lev 15:25–33). (CSB)

Likely a uterine hemorrhage. (TLSB)

The woman with the bloody discharge is considered ritually unclean and would be ostracized. See Lev 15:25–33, which deals with vaginal bleeding outside the menstrual period and the uncleanness that results. Note that Jesus has no problem with cleanliness (see also his touching the leper in 1:41–42). His statement regarding someone touching him (5:30) deals with power, not with cleanliness. The new aeon is here in Jesus, and it does not concern itself with cleanliness of an external nature. See 1:41–42; 7:1–23. (CC)

While Jesus was, at the urging of Jairus, hurrying towards his house, there was an interruption on the way. A woman, otherwise unknown, had had an issue of blood for twelve years, which rendered her Levitically unclean, Lev. 15, 25. It excluded her from public worship in Temple and synagogue, and isolated her even from the company of her relatives. (Kretzmann)

5:26 *She had suffered much under many physicians.* The Jewish Talmud preserves a record of medicines and treatments prescribed for illnesses of this sort. (CSB)

The woman had tried all kinds of remedies. The Talmud listed 11 cures for such ailments, all of which we would consider superstitious; she likely tried such remedies. (TLSB)

The woman has consulted doctors and spent her wealth seeking their help. Only the elite had recourse to doctors at the time, which suggests that the woman is such a person. Also, the fact that she has spent all her money in this enterprise may well indicate that she is a widow with such wealth to spend. (CC)

5:27 ἀκούσασα περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, “upon hearing about Jesus”: This phrase may indicate that she has been ostracized and has not been able to join the crowds who seek Jesus. (CC)

ἤψατο τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ, “touched his outer garment” (5:27): This is considered highly improper in a Middle Eastern context. (CC)

The desire to touch Jesus' clothing probably reflects the popular belief that the dignity and power of a person are transferred to what he wears. On this understanding, her touch combined faith with quasi-magical notions which were widespread in that day. (Lane)

“The flow of blood is most likely a menstrual problem that would render the woman unclean (cf. Lev 15:19–27; Ezek 36:17). As a result, she should not even be in the crowd” (Arthur A. Just Jr., *Luke 1:1–9:50*, Concordia Commentary [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1996], 369). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

5:28-29 The woman came to Jesus in faith, and her faith was justified. In the same way, Jairus's faith will be justified. Note the many connections between the interwoven stories. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

5:28 *If I touch even his garments.* Although it needed to be bolstered by physical contact, her faith was rewarded (v. 34; cf. Ac 19:12). (CSB)

The woman's plan does, in fact, correspond to reported reality. The touching of the clothing (of Jesus in Mk 6:56; of Paul in Acts 19:12) does provide concrete benefits. For "I will be saved/healed" (σωθήσομαι). (CC)

5:29 *immediately* – In contrast to Jairus' anxious waiting, healing came instantaneously to this woman, who had waited so many years. (TLSB)

εὐθὺς ἐξηράνθη ἡ πηγὴ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτῆς, "immediately her flow of blood dried up": This indicates that something miraculous has occurred, not a mere psychological change. (CC)

5:30-31 There were a lot of people who touched Jesus, and nothing happened. Jesus had both the power and the will to help this woman who sought him in faith. (See comments on faith below.) (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

The action of making the woman reveal herself is taken by Jesus for the sake of the woman herself and for the sake of all the people thronging around him. The woman, like each person, is loved and important to Jesus. He desires her to have eternal salvation in addition to her physical healing. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

Does not mean Jesus performed this miracle unawares or involuntarily. (TLSB)

These are two of the most engaging verses in the entire Gospel of Mark. Jesus is seen as fully human, asking who touched his clothing. The disciples interact with him as if he is truly (and only) a man, one like them: "You see the situation, don't you? And you ask what?" Compare the picture drawn here with Matthew's account (Mt 9:21–22) to see the difference. In Mark's Gospel, Jesus could not be portrayed in a more human way. (CC)

Indeed, the image of Jesus "recognizing in himself that power had gone out from him" (5:30) adds to the humanness—and strangeness—of the picture. The Lord of creation (4:35–41) saying, "Hey, what the ...?" and arguing with his disciples (5:30–31) provides the starkest ambiguity for all who look on, whether they are physically on the scene, hear about it in the first century AD, or read about it in the twenty-first century today. (CC)

5:30 *power had gone out from him*. The woman was healed because God graciously determined to heal her through the power then active in Jesus. (CSB)

This does not mean Jesus performed this miracle unawares or involuntarily. (TLSB)

who touched me – Not an accusatory question but an invitation for the woman to confess her faith. (TLSB)

5:31 Their impatience with the Lord reflects an awareness that their immediate mission was to assist a girl who was dying, and delay could be fatal. It also betrays that they had no understanding of what had taken place. (Lane)

5:32-34 The woman did not need to fear; Jesus addressed her as "daughter," demonstrating his love; he connects her healing to the raising of Jairus's daughter (Arthur A. Just Jr., Luke 1:1–9:50, Concordia Commentary [St. Louis: Concordia 1996], 370). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

“Your faith has made you well” does not mean that her faith was the cause of the healing. The power and will to heal came from Jesus. Faith received the gift of healing from Jesus. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

5:32 *kept looking around to see who had done it.* Jesus would not allow the woman to recede into the crowd without publicly commending her faith and assuring her that she was permanently healed. (CSB)

The very human/ambiguous picture continues with Jesus “keeping it up” by looking around to see who had touched his clothing. As argued in the second textual note on 5:32, there is no reason not to believe that he is aware of more than 5:30 would suggest, namely, that he knows a female has touched him, what her problem has been, what has transpired, etc. Indeed, this is congruent with the ambiguous picture being crafted by Mark: Jesus seems to know (2:8) and not to know (5:30). He seems to have all power under his control (4:41), and his power seems to be slightly outside his control (5:30). (CC)

Involved in the situation was not a unilateral event in which touch released power, but a mutual event in which the personal relationship between Jesus and the woman released power. Jesus, therefore, could not allow the woman to recede into the crowd still entertaining ideas tinged with superstition and magic. He stopped and looked intently upon the people surrounding Him in order to see who had touched Him with an expectation of salvation. (Lane)

5:33 *fear and trembling* – The woman’s illness involved impurity and thus left her open to the charge that she had defiled Jesus by touching Him. (TLSB)

ἡ δὲ γυνὴ φοβηθεῖσα καὶ τρέμουσα, “and the woman, becoming afraid and trembling”: Once again we encounter fearfulness in the presence of the saving activity of God. See the discussion in the commentary on 4:41. In the woman’s case, given her faith (5:34) and her willingness to put that faith into action (5:27–28), it is likely that her fear and trembling are also the result of her knowing that the reign and rule of God has actually been implemented in her life, and that the one bringing her the benefits of that reign and rule is none other than Israel’s Lord. (CC)

Her action in making herself known indicates both courage and gratitude, and it is here that the accent should fall rather than upon her fear. Mark places all the emphasis upon the fact that she knew she had experienced the healing of her person. With awe, and only partial understanding of what had taken place, she declared the truth to Jesus. (Lane)

5:34 *daughter.* θυγάτηρ, “daughter”: Here Jesus addresses her as a family member, bringing her into the family of faith—his true family (see 3:31–35). By this address, she is no longer ostracized, certainly not in the eyes of her Lord. (CC)

faith – To be clear, this woman’s faith was not the main cause of her healing. Rather, her faith was the means whereby healing was received from the outpouring of Jesus’ power and grace. (TLSB)

ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε, “your faith has saved/healed you (and you are now saved/healed)” (5:34): As discussed in the fifth textual note on 5:23, σώζω may convey the meaning “heal,” but normally it does so with passive voice forms. In that note we mooted that something more is afoot. Now we may say that Jesus’ use of the *active* voice perfect indicative form σέσωκεν here and his continuation with the command that the woman go “into” peace (see the fourth textual note on 5:34) will not allow a weak understanding of this verb, i.e., for it to mean merely “heal.” Rather, it surely denotes giving salvation in a wider sense—or better, with more external entailments, including rescue from sin, death, the forces of evil, and all that is opposed to the gracious reign and rule of God. In this pericope, to be saved, both for Jairus’ daughter and for the hemorrhaging woman, means to come under the eschatological reign and rule

of God as announced by Jesus (1:14–15) and implemented repeatedly in his ministry (e.g., 1:26–27; 2:5; 3:10–15). (CC)

healed. The Greek for “healed” actually means “saved.” Here both physical healing (“be freed from your suffering”) and spiritual salvation (“go in peace”) are meant. The two are often seen together in Mark’s Gospel (see 2:1–12; 3:1–6). (CSB)

The healing of the woman and the resurrection of the young daughter constitute both a preview and a foretaste of that eschatological reign and rule, which will be fully implemented at the consummation. This is why Jesus can use the *perfect* indicative σέσωκεν, “has saved (and you are now saved)” when he speaks: the woman’s faith has brought her under that gracious reign and rule that is already present now, proleptically, in his person and in his ministry. And she will remain under that reign and rule, because what she has now with Jesus is “of a piece” with—is one with—the complete, fully implemented reign and rule that will be present and fully visible to all on the Last Day. As Jesus further says in 5:34, she will now go “into” peace, into the peace of that reign and rule, which is hers now as a foretaste and will be hers without remainder at the end of days. Jesus can use the verb σώζω, “save/heal,” with this more comprehensive meaning—with more complete external entailments—because the woman seems to operate with this understanding herself: she has heard about him (5:27); she has sought a connection to him (5:28), and, indeed, in her own thoughts, she employs that same verb, σώζω (“if I touch even his clothing I will be saved/healed,” 5:28), not ἰάομαι, “heal,” which is not only the normal verb for physical healing, but also the one used in 5:29 to describe what has happened to her physically upon touching Jesus’ clothing. (CC)

Finally, one should observe that symmetry exists between the story of the woman with the issue of blood here in Mark’s Gospel and the story of the sinful woman in Lk 7:36–50. Consider these features:

- A woman hears about Jesus (Mk 5:27; Lk 7:37).
- She comes to him from behind and touches him (Mk 5:27; Lk 7:38–39).
- She is saved/healed/forgiven without an overt act on the part of Jesus (Mk 5:29–30; Lk 7:47).
- She places herself at his feet (Mk 5:33; Lk 7:38).
- Jesus dismisses her with the words “Your faith has saved [σέσωκεν] you. Go into peace” (Mk 5:34; Lk 7:50). (CC)

This parallel supports an interpretation that sees the woman’s understanding of Jesus’ person and mission as theologically rich and, indeed, “saving.” (CC)

go in peace – These words are a traditional valediction, but here are informed by her entire experience. The peace with which she departed signified more than release from agitation over a wretched existence or from fear of recrimination for having touched Jesus. It was the profound experience of well-being which is related to salvation from God. (Lane)

5:35-36 The daughter was dead. Some men from the house of Jairus inform him not to “bother the teacher any more.” There is nothing left that he can do for you, they no doubt think. Jesus responds, “Don’t be afraid; just believe.” Faith needs only to grasp the person of Christ Jesus. No matter how small a hold, miracles are wrought by the power of his words. The man’s faith was precarious to say the least, but Jesus was his only remaining hope. Jesus would use the moment to perfect Jairus’s faith. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 3)

While many commentaries and preachers (including this one) surmise that Jairus is impatiently waiting, there is nothing in the text to indicate this. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

parakousas, “overhearing.” The word can also be translated “ignoring” (as is done, for example, by the NIV and RSV). However the word is rendered, Jesus does indeed ignore what seems to us to be so final, so unavoidable: the pronouncement of death. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

Jesus turns to Jairus when he is met with the news of the child’s death and responds with imperatives: “Fear not!” and “Believe!” One can picture Jairus giving up, but Jesus will not allow this. Jesus will take Jairus to his daughter. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

5:35 The delay (with negative consequences) on the part of Jesus parallels that in the story of the resurrection of Lazarus in John 11 (see especially Jn 11:6, 21). (CC)

Here is another interruption. This time from Jairus' house. The people came and interrupted what Jesus was saying. (Buls)

It is remarkable that Jesus had just called the woman "daughter" in verse 34, but is interrupted by messengers who speak of Jairus' daughter. Jesus uses the word metaphorically. (Buls)

Bengel: There were, therefore, disciples of Jesus in the family of Jairus, and Jesus was the Teacher of the ruler of the synagogue. (Buls)

Jesus spent many hours teaching. He was far more than an instructor, however, as His miracles forcefully underscored. (TLSB)

5:36 Jairus had exercised faith when he came to Jesus in the confidence that He could save his daughter. He had witnessed the healing of the woman which demonstrated the relationship between faith and divine help. But he was now asked to believe that his child would live even as he stood in the presence of death. Such faith is a radical trust in the ability of Jesus to confront a crisis situation with the power of God. (Lane)

"Ignoring" might be translated "overhearing." (Buls)

Note that Jesus addresses only Jairus, not the messengers. (Buls)

Ylvisaker: Jesus will not break the bruised reed. On account of the weakness of his faith, He does not say to Jairus, as He had spoken to the nobleman: 'Go thy way, thy daughter liveth' but He went with him. (Buls)

Kretzmann: There was danger that Jairus' confidence would be lost. So Jesus gave him a word which was to hold his wavering confidence. (Buls)

"Cease fearing, just keep on believing." Jesus stops fears and encourages continued faith. (Buls)

Hendriksen: Throughout the history of redemption it has ever been thus. When it seemed that all was lost, believers placed their trust in God and were delivered. This was true with respect to Abraham (Genesis 22:20, Moses (Exodus 14:10f), David (1 Samuel 17:44-47), and Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20:1,2,12). (Buls)

5:37-40 Peter, James, and John were chosen to follow Jesus, just as they were chosen at the transfiguration (Mk 9:2) and in Gethsemane (Mk 14:33). With their presence, the two to three witnesses that are necessary to establish fact was achieved. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

Jesus refers to death as sleep. This is found numerous places in the New Testament, including Mt 27:5; Jn 11:11; and Acts 7:60. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

The people laughed in unbelief, just as Sarah and Abraham did at God's promise that they would have a son (Gen 17:17; 18:12). Just like the crowd, they did not believe. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

5:37 Peter, James, and John are also those alone who see Jesus' transfiguration (9:2) and his agony in the garden (14:33). (CC)

allowed no one – The double negative makes the negative emphatic: "Absolutely no one." (Buls)

There was no reason for limiting this to five people. Peter, James and John were Jesus' close associates on at least two other occasions: the Transfiguration and in the Garden of Gethsemane. (Buls)

Bengel: Mark wrote his Gospel not long after the Ascension, at the time when the memory of James, who had been beheaded, was still fresh in the disciples' minds, so that he was better known than even John himself. (Buls)

Peter, James and John. These three disciples had an especially close relationship to Jesus. (CSB)

Peter, James, and John, the inner circle of the disciples, are chosen to follow Jesus to the home. They will be the three to witness the transfiguration and to go with him into the inner reaches of the Garden of Gethsemane, and they are the three chosen this day to witness the power of the resurrection in Jesus. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 3)

5:38-40 The grieving process had already begun. While Jairus had been out seeking Jesus' help, his young daughter had died. The mourners had been hired to play their dirges on their flutes and to weep and wail for the young girl. Such was the Eastern custom surrounding death. How ironic was the loud throng in contrast to the silence of death. Upon Jesus' arrival, he, as the Lord and author of life, immediately takes charge. Weeping and wailing present themselves in the midst of hopelessness, but surrounded by the author of life, they have no place. Jesus: "The child is not dead but asleep." Sleep is an apt description of death when in the presence of the Lord of Life. She was asleep in the presence of him who, as the author of life, had the authority and power to wake her up. The crowd only laughed and mocked him; therefore, Jesus had them all put out of the house. Jesus then takes father, mother, and disciples with him into the chamber of death, "where the child was." (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 3)

5:38 *people weeping and wailing.* It was customary for professional mourners to be brought in at the time of death. In this case, however, it is not certain that enough time had elapsed for professional mourners to have been secured. (CSB)

In this culture, a public show of mourning honored the family of the dead. (CC)

"They" are five people: Jesus, Jairus, Peter, James, John. (Buls)

"Commotion" is a confused noise. The people were weeping and wailing much. It was customary to hire wailers to perform at a funeral. (Buls)

Fahling: . . . the customary company of wailing women and flute-players -- a veritable mockery of true sorrow and in weird contrast with the awful silence of death. (Buls)

Hendricksen says that what the mourners were doing was out of place for two reasons: 1) It was not sincere; 2) There was no cause for lamentation but for jubilation. (Buls)

The wailing consisted of choral or antiphonal sing accompanied by hand clapping. (Lane)

5:39 *not dead but sleeping* The girl has, in fact, died, but Jesus was about to awaken her as easily as from natural sleep. Because of the Lord's mastery over death and the resurrection promise, the NT repeatedly speaks of death in terms of "sleeping" (Mt. 27:52; Jn. 11:11, 13; Acts 7:60; 13:36; 1 Cor. 11:30; 15:6, 18, 20, 51; 1 Thess. 4:13-15). (TLSB)

At this point Jesus makes His way through the crowd of mourners and enters the house. Jesus' question shows that He was displeased with the noise and wailing. And then He makes the tremendous statement: "The child is not dead but is sleeping." (Buls)

The Greeks called death a sleep but they used the word as a euphemism. The early Christians called death a sleep because they believed that the dead person would awaken sometime again. (Buls)

Ylvisaker: As on the occasion of the death of Lazarus, Jesus employs the symbolism of sleep, because the power of death is broken through Him. (Buls)

Hendriksen: Death will not have the final say. (Buls)

5:40 καὶ κατεγέλων αὐτοῦ, "and they began to laugh him to scorn": The mocking of Jesus reminds us once again of both the ambiguous picture presented by the person of Jesus, and the fact that the Good News of God's reign and rule in him meets resistance at every turn, even when it brings life. (CC)

Stoeckhardt: The hope of believers is the object of ridicule for the unbelievers. (Buls)

The laughter is caused by unbelief. (Buls)

Bengel: They began to laugh Him down with sorrowful laughter, free from insolence. (Buls)

Kretzmann: The derisive laughter of the official mourners did not deter the Lord for a minute. (Buls)

Hendriksen: It seems that these mourners were endowed with the dubious gift of shifting in one sudden moment from dismal moaning to uproarious mirth.

True. Both the mourning and the laughter are prompted by unbelief. And that's the way it is with the world to this day. People weep and wail for a few days over the death of a loved one, but soon after are laughing at matters sacred. (Buls)

Only the parents and the three disciples are allowed to enter the room where the child lay. (Buls)

The fact that wailing and tears could be exchanged so quickly for laughter indicates how conventional and artificial the mourning customs had become. (Lane)

5:41-42 Jesus demonstrates that he is the Lord of life. Jairus's faith, the woman's faith, and our faith are well placed in him. Jesus ordered the little girl to be given food to eat, perhaps to verify the miracle that

she was living, just as he took fish and ate in the presence of his disciples after he was risen from the grave (Lk 24:42–43). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 3)

τὸ κοράσιον, σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε. καὶ εὐθὺς ἀνέστη τὸ κοράσιον καὶ περιεπάτει, “Maiden, to you I say, ‘Arise!’ And immediately the maiden arose and began to walk around”: It is impossible to miss connections to Jesus’ resurrection and to the final resurrection with the use of both Greek “resurrection” verbs in this address and description. Jesus’ direct command to the girl, her arising, and her walking around bring to mind Lazarus (Jn 11:43–44). (CC)

5:41 *Talitha kum!* † Mark is the only Gospel writer who here preserves the original Aramaic—one of the languages of Palestine in the first century A.D. and probably the language Jesus and his disciples ordinarily spoke (they probably spoke also Hebrew and Greek). (CSB)

Aram, “young one” (feminine), “arise.” The power of these simple words from Jesus’ lips was such that those witnessing their effect never forgot them. Ambrose: “How quickly at the word of the Lord does the spirit return, the reviving body rise up, and food is taken, that the evidence of life may be believed.!” (TLSB)

ταλιθα κουμ, “talitha kum”: Why does Mark give us Jesus’ original Aramaic words? As typically understood, this reflects the common belief that power resides in the original vocables. It may well be, however, that Mark’s storytelling genius is on full display here, creating the atmosphere of a Palestinian home and of an intimate setting. Moreover, the verb cited, קוּם (κουμ, kum), “arise,” may have “resurrection” implications in the OT. (CC)

By the way, in verse 23 we read that Jesus was asked to come and put His hands on the girl. He does more. He take her hand in His. However, be careful of attributing magic to this action. Jesus raised Lazarus but did not touch him. (Buls)

Lenski: Jesus freely used his hand in touching those whom he healed, but he healed many without touching them. (Buls)

"Talitha cumi" literally means "Little girl, get up!" How do we account for the words "I say to you?" The commentaries point out that this is part of the interpretation indicated in verse 41. To which we might add that "talitha cumi" are the very words which cause the little girl to rise and the words "I say to you" indicate the unique authority of the speaker. (Buls)

Stoeckhardt: With His human voice He awoke this girl from her sleep of death, the human nature of Christ, also in His state of humiliation, being full of the power of life. So far as we know, Jesus raised only three people from the dead: this girl, the boy at Nain and Lazarus. He cleansed ten lepers at once and healed many others. He cast out many devils. Why this difference? Death is the last and great enemy. Jesus raised just enough dead people to prove that He was the promised Messiah. He did not want to be known as a miracle-monger. (Buls)

5:42-43 The irresistible command of Jesus is obeyed immediately; his word has power over life and death. The girl’s spirit returned to her. She was reawakened from the sleep of death to the arms of the Lord of Life. Immediately she gets up and walks around, to the amazement of her parents, who had clung to the tiniest morsel of faith. Even the smallest faith clinging to the person of Jesus Christ has great power in its effect. Its reward is the life of their little girl and eternal life for all who believe. Jesus then tells them to keep the remarkable events experienced this day secret and to give their daughter something to

eat. No doubt the exhortation to silence was due to the need for further ministry in the area, which knowledge of this event may have hindered. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 3)

5:42 *immediately* – "Immediately" appears eleven times in Mark, five times in chapter five. (Buls)

Bengel: She returned to the state consonant with her age. (Buls)

The girl could get up from her couch, she could walk about, she could partake of food; in short, she was returned to life, she was fully recovered. And she could now sustain life by the usual means. No wonder that those present, parents and disciples, were astonished and wrought up almost to ecstasy, since this miracle was the first one to show the power of Christ over the most dreaded enemy of mankind. (Kretzmann)

The unpreparedness of the parents and the disciples for what they had witnessed is expressed with emphatic language. There was, apparently, no doubt in their minds that they stood in the presence of death. God had intervened so dramatically they were left speechless with utter amazement. (Lane)

5:43 *gave strict orders* – "To command sternly." Jesus spoke especially to the parents. (Buls)

"That no one should learn of this." Why did Jesus give this command? Weren't people bound to find out anyway? (Buls)

Ylvisaker: Jesus would have none of that fanatical and extravagant enthusiasm which frequently is a disturbing element in the progress of faith. Jesus often forbade the people to spread rumors of His miracles, but never of His doctrine. (Buls)

Kretzmann: He wants no false Messianic hopes to be aroused . . . Especially should the expectation of the repetition of such acts not be awakened in the people, lest His ministry be seriously interfered with. (Buls)

not to let anyone know. In the vicinity of Galilee Jesus often cautioned people whom he healed not to spread the story of the miracle. His great popularity with the people, coupled with the growing opposition from the religious leaders, could have precipitated a crisis before Jesus' ministry was completed (see 1:44; 5:19; 7:36; 8:26). (CSB)

A command to secrecy once again. Jesus is back in Israel, with the thronging crowds and hostile authorities, so his reasons for concealment remain. The command that she be given something to eat indicates reincorporation of the girl into her family. Note the connection to 5:34, where the woman is addressed as "daughter," as she is reincorporated into the family of Jesus. (CC)

give her something to eat – Why did Jesus tell them to give the girl something to eat? (Buls)

- a. 1) It proves that she was truly alive,
- b. 2) It proves also that the illness, whatever it was, had ended,
- c. 3) Perhaps the parents would forget about this in their great joy,
- d. 4) Jesus does for us what we cannot do for ourselves, but then reminds us to do what it is our duty to do.

5:21–43 Jesus heals Jairus's daughter and a woman with a chronic ailment. Like Jairus, we often worry that the Lord's delay in answering our prayers may end up in catastrophe. But the Eternal One, who

overcame death by rising from the dead, never runs out of time. In fact, His gracious promise is that we shall share eternal life with Him. • Lord, grant us to believe without doubting that You can heal every illness. Give us patience, as well, that we might be unmoved while waiting for You to act in Your own good time and in accord with Your gracious will. Amen. (TLSB)