

Jesus Showed His Power over Disease and Death

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to reach out and show acceptance to those who are often rejected by society, just as Jesus reached out in acceptance to the tax collectors and sinners. In this topic, we will see that Jesus showed His power over both disease and death.

Jesus had enjoyed a feast at the home of Matthew. Then, Jesus gave two parables to explain the new life that He came to offer. Matthew 9:16-17 says, “No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse. Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.” The first parable was about trying to use a new piece of unshrunk material to patch up an old piece of clothing.

Unshrunk material will always shrink the first time that it is washed. As a result, Jesus explained that no one would take a new piece of material and try to patch an old piece of clothing because the patch would pull away from the old clothing and would make the tear even worse than it had been. The Pharisees and disciples of John the Baptist had just spoken to Jesus in the previous verses. The Pharisees were trying to add their traditions to the law as they tried to get into the kingdom of God through their own efforts. John the Baptist said that He came to introduce the Christ that was promised in the Old Testament. As a result, both had been under the covenant that was known as the Law.

In the Old Testament, the Jews offered various sacrifices and observed various ceremonies. Hebrews 10:1 says, “For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.” The Law could never make anyone perfect. That is why it was only a shadow of the real thing. If you go into a dark room and hold a bright light behind your hand, you will see a shadow of your hand on the wall. However, the shadow is not the real hand. Jesus said that He did not come to patch up the shadow. Jesus did not come to patch up the Old Covenant because the Old Covenant could never make anyone perfect. Instead, He came to bring a New Covenant that would offer true life. He was going to fulfill the Law, not patch it up.

The second parable was about wineskins. Old wineskins become stiff over time. If the juice of fresh squeezed grapes was put in these old wineskins, the wineskins would break as the juice turned to wine. That would cause the wine to be spilled and it would also ruin the wineskins. (They could still be used for things like carrying water). Instead, new wine would be put in new wineskins so that both the wineskins and the wine would be preserved. Hebrews 10:11-12 says, “And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God.” The Old Testament sacrifices could never take away sin. Christ, by His death, paid for sin once for all. That is why the New Covenant is like new wine in new wineskins.

While Jesus was teaching, Matthew 9:18-22 says, “While He spoke these things to them, behold, a ruler came and worshiped Him, saying, ‘My daughter has just died, but come and lay Your hand on her and she will live.’ So Jesus arose and followed him, and so *did* His disciples. And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. For she said to herself, ‘If only I may

touch His garment, I shall be made well.’ But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, ‘Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well.’ And the woman was made well from that hour.” In these verses, we see that a ruler of the synagogue showed his faith by coming to Jesus and asking Him to come and lay His hand on the daughter of the ruler who had just died. He believed that the touch of Jesus could raise his daughter from the dead and heal her. Jesus immediately stopped teaching and He and His disciples followed the ruler of the synagogue toward his home.

However, they were interrupted on the way to the home of the ruler. A woman also had faith that Jesus could heal her. She had a flow of blood that had lasted for twelve years. This had a great impact both on her physical health and also on her spiritual development. The continual loss of blood for twelve years would cause her to be physically weak. In addition, it also had an impact on her spiritual development. Leviticus 15:25-27 says, ““If a woman has a discharge of blood for many days, other than at the time of her *customary* impurity, or if it runs beyond her *usual time of* impurity, all the days of her unclean discharge shall be as the days of her *customary* impurity. She *shall be* unclean. Every bed on which she lies all the days of her discharge shall be to her as the bed of her impurity; and whatever she sits on shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her impurity. Whoever touches those things shall be unclean; he shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.”” This meant that she could not go into either the local synagogue or the temple in Jerusalem.

This woman had faith that Jesus could heal her but she did not feel that she could ask Him to touch her since that would make Jesus unclean. Luke 8:43-44 says, “Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.” She showed her faith by touching the edge of the robe of Jesus and was immediately healed. However, Jesus wanted to recognize her faith and so, Luke 8:46-48 says, “But Jesus said, ‘Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me.’ Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. And He said to her, ‘Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace.’” These verses show us the way that Jesus chose to honor her faith so that everyone saw an example of faith. The woman also received spiritual life so that she was able to go in peace.

Once this woman was healed, Jesus started walking again with the ruler toward his house to lay His hand on the ruler’s daughter so that she could be restored back to life. Matthew 9:23-26 says, “When Jesus came into the ruler’s house, and saw the flute players and the noisy crowd wailing, He said to them, ‘Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping.’ And they ridiculed Him. But when the crowd was put outside, He went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. And the report of this went out into all that land.” When they reached the house of the ruler, we see that a crowd of people was already there mourning the death of the daughter of the ruler.

In that day, it was common for flute players and mourners to immediately come to the home of a person that had died to play the flutes and cry loudly. These people were paid to mourn for the person that had died and so these people were not there because of concern for the girl and her family. Instead, they were there to make some extra money. Jesus spoke to this crowd of mourners who were wailing loudly and said, “Make room, for the girl is not dead, but sleeping.” Suddenly, the loud wailing turned to loud mocking. Luke 8:53 says, “And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead.” The word translated “ridiculed” means *to laugh or to scorn*. By their actions, these paid mourners showed that they had no concern for the girl or her family. They also showed unbelief.

This unbelief led Jesus to put these people outside, so they did not have the opportunity to see Jesus raise the girl from the dead. Mark 5:40 says, “And they ridiculed Him. But when He had put them all outside, He took the father and the mother of the child, and those *who were* with Him, and entered where the child was lying.” The only people Jesus allowed to be in the house while He raised the girl from the dead were her parents along with Peter, James and John. Mark 5:41-42 says, “Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, ‘Talitha, cumi,’ which is translated, ‘Little girl, I say to you, arise.’ Immediately the girl arose and walked, for she was twelve years *of age*. And they were overcome with great amazement.” We see that the word “Talitha” means *little girl or lamb*. The word “cumi” is a command and means *arise*.

Mark tells us that the girl got up and started walking. This showed that the girl had been fully restored to health because she was even able to walk immediately. Luke 8:55 describes exactly what happened when that verse says, “Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given *something* to eat.” Here, we see that Luke said that her spirit returned. Ecclesiastes 12:7 says, “Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.” We see that God is the One who gives life to the human spirit.

We also see how the news about this girl being raised back to physical life quickly spread throughout the region. We read, “And the report of this went out into all that land.” The unbelieving mourners did not have the opportunity to see how Jesus raised the girl from the dead. However, they had known that she was dead and that now she was alive. The word of this particular miracle quickly spread throughout the region of Galilee and beyond because this happened immediately after Jesus was at the feast at the home of Matthew and there were Pharisees there who complained. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn how to explain that God is the source of both physical and spiritual life so that they can explain from the Word of God to others how to receive forgiveness of sins and spiritual life. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things to others.