

# SEED & BREAD

Otis Q. Sellers, Founder

There is a huge difference in these accounts, and the facts should not be brushed aside or neglected.

There are obviously some similarities between these stories. Jesus was, of course, successful in healing both daughters. In both cases, the houses had the funeral processions present (since they buried the dead very quickly). Both crowds laughed at Jesus when He pronounced the girls as **'not dead, but asleep'** (Mat. 9:24, Mark 5:39, Luke 8:52). Jesus only allowed a select few to see Him perform the miracles (He kicked out the crowds). However, none of these similarities would force the conclusion that these stories are the same. In fact, they possess critical discrepancies that establish they are separate events. Also important is that the events happening before and after the Matthew 9 healing are different than those of Mark and Luke. Due to the plethora of miracles that were performed by Jesus, why would it be hard to imagine Jesus healed two daughters who were either dead or at the point of death?

I have four children and with each one I have had to rush to the emergency room. If the miracle-working Jesus were in the vicinity and a father knew Jesus could heal and raise the dead, many fathers would look to the Lord for help. Every single father with a dying daughter would want to come to Jesus for healing. We are given two accounts and there probably were many more. This is true of many ailments that Jesus healed. It may be unusual from our experience to imagine these miracles on repeat, but during the time that the Messiah walked the earth, true and complete healing was happening frequently! As Mark 6:56 summarizes, **Wherever He went—into villages, towns, or countryside—they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged Him to let them touch even the edge of His cloak, and all who touched Him were healed.**

For the student who allows God's Word to be the Teacher, consideration and comparison of Scripture with Scripture opens up greater appreciation for the work God has performed at various times and in various ways. The events of the gospels are an opportunity for rich and rewarding consideration. As this study demonstrates, the context and details within the Bible are clues to finding which accounts are the same or different and lead us to greater understanding of the gift of Scripture. Though Jesus is not walking among us in this same way today, we can learn a great deal from studying His miracles: how capable and compassionate He is! How desirable His Kingdom will be! The Risen One remains the answer to desperate people in desperate situations and is still the One to turn to with all our needs.

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## Touching the Fringes of Jesus' Cloak

By Andrew Brown

There can be no doubt that Jesus was the most dynamic person who ever lived. The Bible acknowledges that it does not come close to recording the many miracles that were performed by this Man. **And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written** (John 21:25 NASB throughout). The casual reader can brush aside the number of miracles because mass healings are found in summary sentences. If instead students give careful attention to the Biblical record, they could better grasp the power Jesus exerted as He walked through Israel during His earthly ministry. Analyzing the Biblical record is a rewarding pursuit that magnifies the character and ability of the Lord.

Israel was filled with chaos, for there was a true Healer who could heal anyone and everyone. People put Jesus to the test, bringing Him all the sick of the surrounding regions. Truly, all one needed to do to be healed was **touch the fringe of His cloak**. This is what some were doing. **When the men of that place recognized Him, they sent word into all that surrounding district and brought to Him all who were sick; and they implored Him that they might just touch the fringe of His cloak; and as many as touched it were cured** (Mat. 14:35-36). They were trying at all costs just to touch His clothing to receive healing. Mark 6:56 affirms the testimony that **all who touched him were healed**. Both accounts from Matthew and Mark appear AFTER a specific record of Jesus healing a woman who touched the fringe of His cloak. The healing received from touching Jesus' cloak apparently happened many times.

The story of one particular woman in Mark 5:25 is almost identical to the story in Luke 8:43. A woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years was trying to touch Jesus' cloak so that she might be healed. Luke tells this remarkably sad story about a woman who **could not be healed by anyone** (Luke 8:43). Luke, a doctor by profession, leaves out the detail that this woman **had endured much at the hands of many physicians, and had spent all that she had...but rather had grown worse** (Mark 5:26). The doctors did not help her. This woman was desperate, sick, and now poverty had come

upon her. As **there were crowds pressing against Him** (Luke 8:42) the woman **came up behind and touched the fringe of His cloak, and immediately the hemorrhage stopped** (Luke 8:44). Mark and Luke give complementary details about Jesus asking, **'Who is the one who touched Me?' And while they were all denying it, Peter said, 'Master, the people are crowding and pressing in on You'** (Luke 8:45). Jesus was fully aware that power had gone out of Him and healed someone (Luke 8:46) and He looked **around for the woman who had done this** (Mark 5:32). **When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been healed immediately** (Luke 8:47). The Lord sought out this timid woman and gave her the opportunity for further faith by coming before Him. He then sent her away whole and in peace.

The stories of Mark 5 and Luke 8 appear in the same chronological context. With no contradictory details, the student of truth can understand them to be the same event. Outlining the events of the gospels we find that there is a similar story of another hemorrhaging woman given in Matthew 9. The details of Matthew 9 happened earlier and are different from those of the Mark and Luke accounts, so it is easy to deduce that two separate events of healing are described. Why is it assumed that Jesus only healed one hemorrhaging woman? There are numerous reasons that women suffer from similar bleeding. The numbers of bleeding women would have been huge; every woman would want to come to Jesus for healing. This clarifies the problems, perplexities, and seeming contradictions that arise if we attempt to force these accounts to be the same.

The woman of Matthew 9 does have some similarities to the other woman (of Luke 8/Mark 5). Both are described as a **woman who had been suffering from a hemorrhage for twelve years** (Mat. 9:20). Both women came up behind Jesus and touched the fringe of His cloak. Jesus' words to both women were also similar, **'Daughter, take courage; your faith has made you well.'** **At once the woman was made well** (Mat. 9:22). However, there are also considerable differences. In Matthew 9 there is no mention of any crowds pressing in on Him. Therefore, when Jesus turns around, He sees the woman who touched Him immediately. There is no word of Jesus searching for the woman as in Mark and Luke. Therefore, no discussion with His disciples (and Peter) about the power that went out from Him to heal. According to Matthew, there was no enormous crowd that was pressing in on Him. Matthew also does not say she received healing until Jesus spoke to her, **'Daughter, take courage; your faith has made you well.'** **At once the woman was made well** (Mat. 9:22). In contrast, Mark and Luke declare that the woman received healing the instant she touched Jesus: **immediately her hemorrhage stopped**

(Luke 8:44). In this case healing occurred before He spoke to her, and so an already-healed woman appeared before Jesus in the accounts of Mark and Luke. An additional note is that there is no mention of the woman of Matthew having made many attempts to become well as the woman of Mark and Luke did.

We are given insight into the woman's thoughts in Matthew 9:21, where she said to herself, **'If I only touch His garment, I will get well.'** This thought and action were successful, for she received the healing she sought. One cannot say for certain whether this woman was the first one to receive healing by touching the fringe of Jesus' cloak, but as Matthew 14:35-36 records, she was not the last by far. Many came and were successful imitating this practice of touching Jesus. It would be almost foolish not to follow this woman's example. What would you have to lose? For this reason, Scripture reveals the model that so many people used by touching the fringe of Jesus' cloak. It should not surprise us that we are told of two different women who had been suffering for twelve years (a number denoting governmental perfection) and were healed when Jesus walked among men proclaiming and demonstrating the Kingdom of God.

In all three gospels, each account of the healing of the hemorrhaging woman is engulfed within the context of Jesus healing an official's daughter. As one applies the same principles in examining the details, they find the incredibly similar accounts of Jairus' daughter in Mark 5 and Luke 8. Yet there are significant differences that cannot be resolved by concluding the accounts are the same as Matthew 9. The official (Gk. *-archon*) is unnamed in Matthew 9 ("synagogue" is not in the Greek text and is added in newer versions). This official approached Jesus thinking his daughter was dead and was seeking Jesus for a resurrection. **'My daughter has just died; but come and lay Your hand on her, and she will live'** (Mat. 9:18). Mark and Luke record Jairus, a synagogue official (Gk. *-archisunagogos*), seeking Jesus to heal his daughter so she would not die. **'My little daughter is at the point of death; please come and lay Your hands on her, so that she will get well and live'** (Mark 5:23). The daughter in the Matthew account was a young girl (Gk. *-korasion*); whereas the daughter of Jairus in Mark 5:22 and Luke 8:41 is described with the Greek word *paidion*. Both accounts, however, reveal she was about twelve years old. If these different stories were erroneously labeled as the same, there would be a large discrepancy around the messengers sent to Jairus. After Jesus healed the hemorrhaging woman, some messengers came to Jairus from his house and told him, **'Your daughter has died; why trouble the Teacher anymore?'** (Mark 5:35, also see Luke 8:49). This conversation and the following one with Jesus and Jairus are obviously lacking in Matthew, since that was not Jairus. In the case of the unnamed official in Matthew, the man came to Jesus already believing his daughter was dead, as opposed to nearly dead.