

MATTHEW'S MIGHTY MESSIAH: AN EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS
OF MATTHEW 9:18-26

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OUTLINE

THESIS: Through his severe editing of Mark's superfluous details and by his repetitive inclusion of the name and knowledge of Jesus, Matthew brings Jesus to the foreground as the purposeful, Messianic giver of life to not only the unclean, but even to those already dead.

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The account of the healing of the hemorrhaging woman and the raising of the dead girl is included in all of the synoptic gospels. Yet while Luke 8:40-56 keeps much of the character descriptions and situational asides of Mark 5:21-43, Matthew retains only the barest account, and even then thoroughly redacts his material in a manner that France dubs “one of Matthew’s most spectacular abbreviations.”¹ Yet Matthew’s economy does not detract from the majesty and centrality of Jesus; rather, it intentionally highlights these. Through his severe editing of Mark’s superfluous details and by his repetitive inclusion of the name and knowledge of Jesus, Matthew brings Jesus to the foreground as the purposeful, Messianic giver of life to not only the unclean, but even to those already dead.

Matthew 9:18-26 is located in the third set of miracles following the Sermon on the Mount at the end of chapter seven. The first two sets contain three miracles each, and though the last set actually contains four healings, the first (our text) has one healing placed within the account of another, so number of stories could also be counted as three. Each of these sets is separated by didactic conversations. The first set contains the healing of the leprous man (8:1-4), the centurion’s servant (8:5-13), and Peter’s mother-in-law (8:14-17, which includes a summary of other healings). This is separated from the second set by a teaching on the cost of discipleship (8:18-22). The second set begins with the calming of the storm (8:23-27), the exorcism of two demoniacs (8:28-34), and the healing of the paralytic (9:1-8). This is separated from the final set by the calling of Matthew (9:9-13) and a question concerning the disciple’s lack of fasting (9:14-17). The third set contains the healing of the hemorrhaging woman within the account of the raising of the dead girl (9:18-26), the healing of two blind men (9:27-31) and the exorcism of a mute man (9:32-34).

¹ R.T. France, *Matthew*, Tyndale New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985), 170.

Gundry believes the idea that threads through chapters eight and nine is that of Jesus' authority in both word and deed.² The Sermon on the Mount ends with the crowd's amazement at his teaching "because he taught as one who had authority" (7:28-29), and the following two chapters further demonstrate this authority. The centurion highlights the magnitude of Jesus' authority (8:9), the disciples marvel at Jesus' authority over nature (8:27), and Jesus himself notes his authority both to heal and forgive sins (9:6), which causes the crowd to praise God for giving "such authority to men" (9:8). Authority is, of course, also implied in the numerous exorcisms and healings.

Hagner believes that the repetition of healing and release exemplify the coming of the kingdom of heaven, mentioned in the Sermon on the Mount, through the ministrations of messiah Jesus: "These stories make clear the point of the preceding pericope that the present is a unique era of incomparable joy, the anticipation of the very blessings of the eschaton."³

Finally, other commentators point ahead to 11:2-6 as the purpose for Matthew's particular arrangement of these episodes. When asked by the disciples of John whether Jesus is really "the one who was to come" (11:3), Jesus responds with the evidence that "the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor" (11:5, NIV). Each of these proofs is demonstrated in the miracles of chapters eight and nine. At this point, the readers of Matthew are "encouraged to ponder what they have just read."⁴ Interestingly, Jesus' commission to the twelve immediately

² Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church Under Persecution*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 137. He notes, "Matthew regularly abbreviates the narrative in order to let Jesus' authoritative words stand out in bold relief."

³ Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, Word Biblical Commentary 33A (Dallas, TX: Word, 1993), 246.

⁴ Everett R. Kalin, "Matthew 9:18-26: An Exercise in Redaction Criticism" in *Currents in Theology and Mission 15* (2006): 46: "It is striking that prior to this point in the Gospel of Matthew the author has provided an example of every detail in Jesus' response to John's disciples. He has accomplished this by rearranging the sequence

following the third miracle set seems to provide support for all three of these suggestions, for Jesus gives his “authority” to the disciples (10:1) to preach the dawning of the “kingdom of heaven” (10:7) through healings, resurrection of the dead, cleansing from leprosy, and exorcism of demons (10:8)—a list similar to that given to John’s disciples in 11:5.

Our passage of 9:18-26 contains numerous features of interest, particularly in redaction. Its structure is unique, in that in each synoptic gospel the story of the hemorrhaging woman is inserted within the drama of the ruler’s daughter—a literary technique termed “intercalation.” In Matthew, the inserted story could be easily removed without affecting the surrounding account.⁵ Those who hold to Markan priority (the stance of all commentators consulted), believe that the intercalation is original to Mark, though the fact that both Matthew and Luke preserve it also points to an earlier, historical, intercalation.⁶

There are some striking agreements between Matthew and Luke against Mark in this pericope that could possibly point to some sort of interdependence between themselves or on a second source parallel to Mark.⁷ While these examples will be expounded later, the three most

of several stories in Mark. . . . As John’s disciples are told to tell John what they hear and see, the readers of Matthew’s Gospel are encouraged to ponder what *they have just read*. . . . these events are chosen because they are the events expected on God’s day of eschatological deliverance, as anticipated in certain Scriptures.” For these scriptures he references the passages of Isa 61:1 and 35:5-6.

⁵ Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 1993, 247: “Each story could stand independently as is; vv 20-22 could be removed and not otherwise be missed.”

⁶ Vernon K. Robbins, “The Woman Who Touched Jesus’ Garment: Socio-Rhetorical Analysis of the Synoptic Accounts” in *New Testament Studies* 33 (1987): 502: “those who espouse Markan priority usually consider ‘intercalation’ to be a special Markan technique of composition”; Hagner, 247: “It is particularly interesting that both Matthew and Luke preserve the two stories in this form, rather than separating them. This suggests that the conjoining of the two stories was a familiar part of the fixed Gospel tradition from an early time. It is difficult to find a special reason for this connection of the two stories, which are otherwise quite different. . . . It may be that the two stories were handed on as they are for no other reason than because the healing of the woman actually did happen on the way to the dead girl’s house.” But W.D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, The International Critical Commentary Vol 2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 123: “Whether the intercalation is due to Mark or to pre-Markan tradition is disputed.”

⁷ Robbins, 502; in reference to a second source, Hagner, 247, notes, “Some commentators (e.g., Lohmeyer, Schniewind, Grundmann), given the great difference between Matthew and Mark, argue for Matthew’s use of a

obvious are the designation of Jairus as an ἄρχων (“ruler”) instead of Mark’s ἀρχισυναγωγῶν (“synagogue leader”—Matt 9:18//Luke 8:41), his reference to his daughter as θυγάτηρ instead of Mark’s diminutive θυγάτριον (Matt 9:18b//Luke 8:42a), and the addition of κράσπεδον (tassels) to Jesus’ garment (Matt 9:20b//Luke 8:44a). These similarities can also be explained by coincidental redaction or reference to other parts of Mark.⁸ Though this pericope does not easily lend its support to a particular position on the synoptic problem, it is interesting to note that the three Gospels share twenty-nine Greek words.⁹

The most obvious difference is Matthew’s drastic slashing of Mark’s account, which leaves only the barest essentials of this story: only nine verses remain in contrast to the 23 of Mark. While characteristic of Matthew’s redaction, this passage is his most dramatic.¹⁰ In order to achieve this skeletal frame Matthew makes several significant changes to Mark’s plot, particularly in that the girl is pronounced dead from the start, which removes much of the connection and tension between the two plots.¹¹ His purposes for these changes have inspired much scholarly speculation, raising suggestions that Matthew wishes to highlight the person of Jesus, his authoritative words, the faith of the healed, the relation of faith to salvation, or the link

special source parallel to Mark but independent of it” but John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 394, disagrees: “Despite a few minor agreements, there is not a sufficient basis for confident appeal to a second source.”

⁸ Davies and Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1991, 129, in reference to the use of κράσπεδον: “Probably the best explanation of the agreement is independent use of Mark 6.56.”

⁹ Robbins, “The Woman Who Touched Jesus’ Garment,” 1987:502.

¹⁰ Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 1993, 246: “Matthew seems impatient of Mark’s asides and details and gives only the bare essentials of the story. Thus he reduces the length of the first part of the story of the ruler’s daughter by one-third and the next two parts (the hemorrhaging woman and the raising of the girl) by no less than two-thirds each.”

¹¹ Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, Hermeneia, trans. James E. Crouch (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2001), 40: Since Jesus is now no longer detained by the woman, it is no longer the case that he arrives too late to heal the sick girl; she is dead from the beginning (9:18).” 41: “Thus the encounter with the hemorrhaging woman does not delay an urgently needed healing, and, correspondingly, Matthew is not concerned to test and to deepen the ruler’s faith (thus Mark 5:35-36). Instead, the miracle is heightened.”

to 11:5. At any rate, “Matthew’s economy here suggests again that Matthew has a special agenda that will not permit him to luxuriate in the details of a story, however attractive.”¹²

¹⁸ Ταῦτα αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος αὐτοῖς, ἰδοὺ ἄρχων εἰς ἐλθὼν προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγων

The story of Matthew 9:18-26 begins “while he was speaking these things to them.” This genitive absolute followed by a dative is an unclassical construction,¹³ but points back presumably to the previous teaching on wineskins. Just how it is related is largely ignored by commentators, probably because of the ambiguity surrounding the teaching itself.¹⁴ Possibly the teachings he is referring to points further back to Jesus’ calling to the sick (9:12) or the rejoicing that accompanies the messianic bridegroom (9:15). Because this miracle story follows on the heels of his teaching, we can assume that the introduction takes place around the vicinity of Matthew’s house on the west side of Galilee.¹⁵ This setting differs from Mark’s portrayal of Jesus as just disembarking from a boat (Mark 5:21). As is typical for Matthew, the insertion of ἰδοὺ signifies a new, important story.

A new character is introduced, but the exact identity of this character poses some redactional and interpretive problems. Matthew presents this new person as an ἄρχων, in contrast to Mark’s ἀρχισυναγώγων, and leaves him unnamed, though Mark and Luke call him Ἰαῖρος (Jairus—Mark 5:22//8:41). An ἀρχισυναγώγος is typically translated as a leader or

¹² Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 1993, 246.

¹³ Davies and Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1991, 125, referencing BDAG 423.1.

¹⁴ Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 2005, 394: “The present unit is the first of the three miracle episodes which Matthew gathers under the rubric: ‘new wine into fresh wineskins.’ Jesus does not mourn the dead but raises them; he breaks the shackles of a perpetual menstrual uncleanness.” On page 392, Nolland understands the wineskins parable to mean that “the new does not need to be constrained by the old, and that only in this way can the new be welcomed and the abiding value of the old be preserved.” He does not elaborate on how the final miracle set exemplifies of the teaching of the wineskins.

¹⁵ Gundry, *Matthew*, 1994, 171; Davies and Allison, 124; Hagner, 248, believes this is a literary device and should not be taken as a particular time indicator.

president of a synagogue, “an official whose duty it was esp. to take care of the physical arrangements for the worship services” (BDAG 1161).¹⁶ An ἄρχων, rather, is simply a “ruler” or “leader” (BDAG 1161), a term that apart from the further light shed in Mark and Luke would leave this person ambiguous. Luke, interestingly, chooses a sort of compromise of both Matthew and Mark: ἄρχων τῆς συναγωγῆς, a ruler specifically “of the synagogue.” What does Matthew mean by this title and why would he have chosen to leave this figure unnamed and described only by an ambiguous title? Several options have been presented.

In this instance, ἄρχων could mean simply a “municipal officer” or an aristocratic, high official,¹⁷ or some sort of Jewish ruler,¹⁸ but Nolland cautions against the English connotation of significant political power.¹⁹ Davies and Allison even believe the two terms describe two different positions within the synagogue: “[ἀρχισυναγωγός] was the leader of meetings for worship (cf. Acts 13.15), and [ἄρχων] was responsible for the general direction of the synagogue. Sometimes one man held both offices.”²⁰ As to Matthew’s purpose for this title, Luz believes that the removal of any specific connection to the synagogue would enable the members of Matthew’s church to more easily identify with him “than with the president of the synagogue that is hostile to them.”²¹ Perhaps, but more likely (and more supported internally), is Nolland’s suggestion that the ambiguity promotes a comparison with the centurion of the first miracle set:

¹⁶ Also Thayer Greek Lexicon 780: “It was his duty to select the readers or teachers in the synagogue, to examine the discourses of the public speakers, and to see that all things were done with decency and in accordance with ancestral usage”

¹⁷ Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 2001, 40, fn. 2.

¹⁸ Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 1993, 248.

¹⁹ Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 2005, 394, fn. 195.

²⁰ Davies and Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1991, 125.

²¹ Luz, 40, fn. 2.

“both men had authority and recognize that of Jesus.”²² The similarities of the two accounts would also support this link.²³

Coming to Jesus, the ruler kneels (προσεκύνει) before him. Is it obeisance or worship that is indicated by this position? Gundry believes it is the latter:

‘One of the rulers of the synagogue’ becomes ‘a certain ruler’ because the man appears as a worshipper of Jesus. Matthew can hardly relate this worshipper of Jesus to the synagogue, which in his gospel has become ‘theirs,’ that of the Jews who opposed Jesus and now oppose those who worship him. . . . obviously, then, Matthew is still stressing Jesus’ deity.”

He also believes that the omission of Jairus’ name places additional emphasis upon his “approaching and worshipping Jesus.”²⁴ Hagner acknowledges this possibility, but believes this could be reading too much into the word, for it more often designates homage or supplication to a person of higher rank (BDAG 4505). “His estimate of Jesus is not clear, no title being used, but he clearly had heard of Jesus’ powerful deeds of healing and had at least a shred of hope that Jesus could do something in his dire circumstances.”²⁵ Hagner’s cautious interpretation is more appropriate for the present scenario.

ὅτι ἡ θυγάτηρ μου ἄρτι ἐτελεύτησεν· ἀλλὰ ἐλθὼν ἐπίθεε τὴν χεῖρά σου ἐπ’ αὐτήν, καὶ ζήσεται.

The most significant change to Mark’s account is made with the ruler’s supplication: he states that his daughter is already dead, rather than “dying” (Mark 5:23). This change enables Matthew to remove the later intrusion by messengers announcing her death (Mark 5:35-37), but

²² Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 1993, 394.

²³ Both leaders demonstrate great faith—the centurion by his request for long-distance healing, and Jairus for the resurrection of the dead (unique to Matthew)—and there is also the initiative for Jesus to follow the supplicant to his home (8:7 and 9:18), whereas the other miracles in 8-9 are to those brought to Jesus or whom he meets on his travels. Also, Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 2005, 394, fn. 196: “The centurion’s lad and the leader’s daughter are also well matched. Slightly more imaginatively we may see a parallel between the aside to the crowd in Mt. 8:10-12 and the story within a story of the present episode.”

²⁴ Gundry, *Matthew*, 1994, 172.

²⁵ Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 1993, 246, 248.

it also removes some dramatic tension and any connection between the two stories. But its greatest impact is upon the portrayal of the ruler. Because she is already dead, from the very start he is requesting the resurrection of the dead, and as such his faith is magnified greatly. Matthew's use of the confident future tense (ζήσεται) rather than Mark's more tentative subjunctive (ζήσῃ) also highlights his faith.²⁶ This creates a stronger parallel to the centurion's faith so recently praised (8:8-13).²⁷

Matthew also changes Mark's θυγάτριον ("little daughter") to θυγάτηρ ("daughter"), a move that Luke also makes, in order to parallel Jesus' address to the hemorrhaging woman in 9:22.²⁸ This parallel replaces Mark and Luke's parallel of the ἐτῶν δώδεκα ("12 years"—Mark 5:42//Luke 8:42) the girl lived and the woman suffered, as the girl's age is not included. A final alteration is the changing of Mark's τὰς χεῖρας from plural to singular. The singular would encourage the reader to identify Jesus' "hand" with the powerful "hand of God" in the LXX.²⁹

¹⁹ καὶ ἐγερθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἠκολούθησεν αὐτῷ καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ.

Verse 19 does not have many changes of significance, but a few things can be noted. Matthew removes Mark's mention of thronging crowds and replaces it with οἱ μαθηταί. He inserts Jesus' name at the front of the clause in order to push Jesus into the foreground.³⁰

²⁶ Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 1993, 246; Davies and Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1991, 127; Gundry, *Matthew*, 1994, 172: "This changing of a purposive clause to a confident prediction enhances both the ruler's faith and Jesus' authority. The omission of a reference to salvation leaves the verb of living to stand alone as a contrast to the verb of dying."

²⁷ France, *Matthew*, 1985, 170; Hagner, 246; Davies and Allison, 126.

²⁸ Davies and Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1991, 126, notes that neither Matthew nor Luke ever use θυγάτριον.

²⁹ Ibid., 126. Gundry, 172, notes: "The change to the singular 'hand' conforms to 8:3, 15; 9:25. The addition of 'your' focuses attention on Jesus more clearly."

³⁰ Gundry, 172.

Interestingly, this is the only place in Matthew where Jesus follows another, though it is implied he would have done so in 8:7.³¹

²⁰ Καὶ ἰδοὺ γυνὴ αἱμορροοῦσα δώδεκα ἔτη προσελθοῦσα ὀπισθεν ἤψατο τοῦ κρασπέδου τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ·

Ἴδου is again inserted to signify the beginning of this new story.³² Matthew uses a different word for the woman's malady than Mark. Αἱμορροοῦσα is a *hapax legomenon* found only here in the NT, though it also occurs in Lev 15:33 in the same context of menstrual flows.³³ Here Matthew removes Mark's entire description on the extent of her suffering, presumably to keep the focus on Jesus.³⁴ Yet the woman's social stigma would have been readily obvious to the original readers. She would probably not have married, or if she were she probably would have been divorced because of her impurity, leaving her without children or financial support.³⁵ Her presence in that crowd is a violation of purity laws and her touch would bestow the status of impurity upon all others (cf. Lev 15:25-27).³⁶ Hence, she comes up behind (προσελθοῦσα ὀπισθεν) Jesus to touch his garment. Matthew notes the tassels (τοῦ κρασπέδου) on Jesus'

³¹ Gundry, *Matthew*, 1994, 173. Ἀκολουθέω is typically used for language of discipleship, but obviously that is not meant here. He seems to indicate that the Aland text supports an imperfect tense in contrast to the UBS' aorist, and he agrees with Aland, because "everywhere else in this passage Matthew retains Mark's imperfect whenever he has a corresponding verb. He even changes Mark's historical present to the imperfect."

³² Ibid., 173: "The added 'behold' parallels 'behold' at the beginning of the story concerning the ruler (v 18). There it called attention to his approaching and worshipping Jesus. Here it calls attention to a woman's approaching and touching Jesus' clothing."

³³ Davies and Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1991, 128; Keener, 302-303, fn. 102; Nolland, 395.

³⁴ Gundry, 173.

³⁵ Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 303.

³⁶ Stuart L. Love, "Jesus Heals the Hemorrhaging Woman," in Wolfgang Stegemann, Bruce J. Malina and Gerd Theissen, ed, *The Social Setting of Jesus and the Gospels* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002), 97: "in a 'purity system' the physical body manifests concerns of the social body. . . . the Second Temple and its far-reaching, hierarchical religious system that replicates purity expectations. . . . Her continuous flow of blood is proof to all who know her that she has crossed a forbidden 'frontier.' Accordingly, she is 'unclean' and dangerous to the guardians of the purity system centered on the Jerusalem temple."

garment, which portray Jesus as a pious Jew in conformity with the Law.³⁷ Again, the focus is on Jesus. Luke also inserts τοῦ κρασπέδου, and though this could provide evidence for interdependence, it is more likely that Luke is referencing Mark 6:56.³⁸

²¹ ἔλεγεν γὰρ ἐν ἑαυτῇ· ἐὰν μόνον ἄψωμαι τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ σωθήσομαι.

Matthew removes the woman's sense of being healed immediately, Jesus' perception of power leaving him, his search for the one who touched him, the disciple's ridicule, and the woman's fearful confession. The function of this, again, is to remove unnecessary details and characters, and to avoid Jesus' lack of knowledge and control. Commentators also note Matthew's concern to remove any denotations of magic, which could come from Mark's description of Jesus' power as electric and uncontrolled by him.³⁹ Rather, as shall be discussed below, it appears that the time of healing was not at her touch, but at the willing word of Jesus. Like the ruler, her faith is heightened, this time by the insertion of μόνον ("only").⁴⁰

²² ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς στραφείς καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὴν εἶπεν· θάρσει, θύγατερ· ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε. καὶ ἐσώθη ἡ γυνὴ ἀπὸ τῆς ὥρας ἐκείνης.

For a second time, Jesus' name is inserted. And rather than the woman revealing herself, Jesus knows who has touched him and for what reason.⁴¹ In this, "Jesus' knowledge, then, is

³⁷ Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 2001, 42; Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, 1999, 303; Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 1993, 49. Cf. Num 15:38-39; Deut 22:12.

³⁸ Davies and Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1991, 129. They also suggest the possibility of scribal *homoioteleuton*.

³⁹ Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 1993, 249; France, 171; Luz, 42, fn. 18: "However, Matthew does not omit the 'most magical' feature, viz., touching the hem of Jesus' garment. Verse 22 regards v. 21 positively, not critically."

⁴⁰ Davies and Allison, 129, see this insertion as highlighting the extent of Jesus' power instead of the woman's faith, but I tend to disagree.

⁴¹ Hagner, 249: "In Matthew, accordingly, the woman seems almost to be caught in the act. There is no need for a confession on her part (cf. Mark 5:33). Without a word from her, Jesus knows both her plight and her faith, and he responds without hesitation"

like the knowledge of God ‘who knows his children’s requests before they express them’ (Matthew 6.8), and the dynamics of the woman’s approach to Jesus are like those which accompany a person’s approach to God.”⁴² Jesus’ response is identical in all three gospels. Its positive nature, and the endearing term *θύγατερ*, shows that he is not ashamed to be identified with her uncleanness.⁴³ Love observes that this public association is ultimately a political threat:

The relationship between Jesus and the center of Judean political, economic, and religious power—the Jerusalem temple—would deteriorate. The core value of God’s holiness once more would have been violated, the temple-based network of control weakened, scriptural authority sullied, strong purity concerns ignored. Jesus would have crossed forbidden boundaries, and his standing with the Second Temple’s power structure would be ‘dirt,’ out of place.⁴⁴

“Faith” (*ἡ πίστις*) and “salvation” (*σέσωκέν*) were both implied in the previous verse and are now mentioned explicitly. It is her faith, and not a magical touch, that heals her. *Σώζω* was commonly used for “heal” in the Greek texts of that time, but elsewhere in Matthew this verb also carries the meaning of salvation.⁴⁵ It is used three times in this pericope, so he is certainly wanting to emphasize something. Robbins and Gundry see it as a “‘rule’ for the early church,” a symbol of Jesus’ saving his people from their sins.⁴⁶ Hagner probably is more correct to view it primarily as referencing healing, but “whether his readers were to hear an echo of [salvation] even in the present passage is uncertain but not unreasonable.”⁴⁷

⁴² Robbins, “The Woman Who Touched Jesus’ Garment,” 1987: 504.

⁴³ Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, 1999, 304: “This fits Matthew’s portrait of Jesus (cf. 8:17), who embraced humanity’s ultimate humiliation and shame on the cross (3:15)”; he also believes Jesus’ use of *θύγατερ* welcomed her as a dependent. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 1993, 249, sees a parallel between *θύγατερ* here and *τέκνον* in 9:2.

⁴⁴ Love, “Jesus Heals the Hemorrhaging Woman,” 2002, 99. See also his quote in footnote 32 above.

⁴⁵ Robbins, 504, Hagner, 249.

⁴⁶ Robbins, 504, Gundry, *Matthew*, 1994, 174.

⁴⁷ Hagner, 249.

Commentators differ on when the point of healing took place. In Mark it appears (and Luke is quite definite) that it occurred at the woman's touch ("immediately," 5:29). Gundry believes Matthew meant it at her touch because of the perfect tense of σέσωκέν.⁴⁸ But many others believe it occurred at Jesus' proclamation because of the lack of εὐθύς (Mark 5:29) and because it is after Jesus' words that the woman was declared ἐσώθη ἀπὸ τῆς ὥρας ἐκείνης in a phrase unique to Matthew.⁴⁹ This is likely, because as we have shown it is characteristic for Matthew to place Jesus in ultimate control, and to emphasize his spoken word.

²³ Καὶ ἐλθὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ ἄρχοντος καὶ ἰδὼν τοὺς αὐλητὰς καὶ τὸν ὄχλον θορυβούμενον

Jesus' name is inserted for a third time, and no mention is made of others going into the house. "Matthew will not allow the presence of others to detract from the majesty of Jesus the Coming One."⁵⁰ Jesus has changed each of Mark's historical present verbs to either imperfects or aorists, and here ἐλθὼν is an aorist.⁵¹ Matthew adds the "flute players" (τοὺς αὐλητὰς). This word occurs only here and in Rev 18:22, and is a "peculiarly Jewish touch," for they were a feature of Jewish funeral customs.⁵² As two to three mourners were expected of even the poorest funerals, this ruler would no doubt have had many more.⁵³

⁴⁸ Gundry, *Matthew*, 1994, 174.

⁴⁹ Robbins, "The Woman Who Touched Jesus' Garment," 1987: 507; Kalin, 44; Davies and Allison, 130. In his article, Robbins argues for a logical progression (rhetorical syllogism) that only culminates in Jesus' words here, pointing to her healing at that time.

⁵⁰ Gundry, 174.

⁵¹ Davies and Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1991, 130; Gundry, 172: imperfects are in vv 18, 19, 21, and 24.

⁵² France, *Matthew*, 1985, 171; Davies and Allison, 131.

⁵³ Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, 1999, 304-305: "His wealth and status contrast him starkly with the ailing woman earlier in the story, but his grief has reduced him to the same position of dependence on Jesus."

²⁴ ἔλεγεν· ἀναχωρεῖτε, οὐ γὰρ ἀπέθανεν τὸ κοράσιον ἀλλὰ καθεύδει. καὶ κατεγέλων αὐτοῦ.

Again, a question is removed from Jesus, and here it is replaced with a firm command. And it is also here that his words are common to all three gospels, particularly with Luke. The use of καθεύδει is interesting, for it is seldom used as a metaphor for death; κοιμάομαι is the more common term.⁵⁴ But καθεύδω is the term used in the LXX for Daniel’s death (12:2), and the early church began to also use it as a metaphor, perhaps because of Jesus’ use here.⁵⁵ But it is still unusual, and it has prompted some scholars to believe the girl was only in a coma. But Luz questions how Jesus would have known her real state before seeing her, and Keener points out that professional mourners would have recognized whether a person was actually dead—hence their laughter.⁵⁶ As to Jesus’ purpose for his words, Luz states, “The statement intends to shock. Jesus speaks only of *this* dead girl, and he wants to call attention to his own power. For *him* this death is not a final death, because he is going to show that he has power over it.”⁵⁷

²⁵ ὅτε δὲ ἐξεβλήθη ὁ ὄχλος εἰσελθὼν ἐκράτησεν τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῆς, καὶ ἠγέρθη τὸ κοράσιον.

Matthew edits out all unnecessary details, emphasizing only Jesus’ presence and action. His words in Aramaic are removed, again because of their possible magical denotation.⁵⁸ He simply does exactly what the ruler had requested, and the girl is raised. “In this extremely economical statement Matthew records one of the most impressive miracles of Jesus in the whole

⁵⁴ Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 2001, 43, fn. 26; France, 171.

⁵⁵ France, 171; Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 1993, 250. Other uses are 1 Thess 5:10; Eph 5:14.

⁵⁶ Luz, 43; Keener 305.

⁵⁷ Luz, 43. Hagner, 250, speculates that the reason for the metaphor is the messianic secret so prominent in Mark and Luke but absent from Matthew.

⁵⁸ Davies and Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1991, 132-133; Hagner, 247.

of his narrative.”⁵⁹ It is also the only report of Jesus’ raising of the dead in Matthew, in spite of the plurality of its mention in 11:5.⁶⁰ If the touch of the hemorrhaging woman would have passed on uncleanness to Jesus, touching a corpse would have been an even more severe violation of purity laws; “Jesus thus showed his exceptional kindness and commitment to help by taking the girl’s hand when he raised her up.”⁶¹

²⁶ καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἡ φήμη αὕτη εἰς ὅλην τὴν γῆν ἐκεῖνην.

This sentence is unique to Matthew, but Luz speculates he could have used either Mark 1:28 or a deuteron-Markan recension of 5:21-34.⁶² Whereas in both Mark and Luke Jesus strictly warns against telling of his miracle, Matthew speaks of the spread of the news all around that region. He has no use for the messianic secret motif of Mark.⁶³ Φήμη is another *hapax legomenon*, found only here and in Luke 4:14.⁶⁴ And one of the few minor textual variants is found here on who or what is the subject of the report. Some manuscripts say ἡ φήμη αὐτης—the report about the girl. Others have say ἡ φήμη αὐτοῦ—the report about Jesus. Most Greek scholars prefer ἡ φήμη αὕτη—the report itself, which is the more awkward reading and which would have spurred the variant readings to clarify it.⁶⁵ The UBS does not even list a variant here, demonstrating their certainty on this issue.

⁵⁹ Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 1993, 250.

⁶⁰ Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 2005, 395.

⁶¹ Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, 1999, 305.

⁶² Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 2001, 40-41. He sees this as solid proof of the existence of a deuto-Markan recension, but I see this as unlikely because this sort of phrase is frequently found in Matthew (cf. 9:31; 2:3; 4:24).

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁶⁴ Hagner, 250.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 246; Nolland, 393, fn. c.

Matthew removes all unnecessary characters, dialogue, editorial notes, and action in order to place the spotlight upon Jesus. This is a messiah who is at all times knowledgeable and in control, whose words and touch are the means by which the power of YHWH is released to restore two unclean women to both life and family. No form of illness, possession, disability or even death is beyond his ability to heal, nor is he unwilling to do so when confronted by words and actions of faith. For he is the living example of the Father in heaven who knows needs and gives to those who ask him. For Matthew, Jesus is the prophesied messiah and the harbinger of the glorious kingdom of heaven that is coming in power.

APPENDICE #1: GREEK SYNOPSIS

“THE RULER’S DAUGHTER AND THE WOMAN WITH A HEMORRHAGE”

Matthew 9:18-26	Mark 5:21-43	Luke 8:40-56
<p>18 Ταῦτα αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος αὐτοῖς, <u>ἰδοὺ ἄρχων εἰς ἐλθῶν</u> προσεκύνει αὐτῷ</p> <p>λέγων</p> <p>ὅτι ἡ <u>θυγάτηρ</u> μου ἄρτι ἐτελεύτησεν· ἀλλὰ <u>ἐλθῶν ἐπίθες τὴν χεῖρά σου ἐπ’ αὐτήν, καὶ ζήσεται.</u></p> <p>19 καὶ ἐγερθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἠκολούθησεν αὐτῷ καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ.</p> <p>20 Καὶ <u>ἰδοὺ γυνὴ αἰμορροοῦσα</u> δώδεκα ἔτη</p> <p>προσελθοῦσα ὀπισθεν ἤψατο τοῦ <u>κρασπέδου</u> τοῦ ἱματίου αὐτοῦ·</p> <p>21 ἔλεγεν γὰρ ἐν ἑαυτῇ· ἐὰν</p>	<p>21 Καὶ διαπεράσαντος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ [ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ] πάλιν εἰς τὸ πέραν συνήχθη <u>ὄχλος</u> πολὺς ἐπ’ αὐτόν, καὶ ἦν παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν.</p> <p>22 Καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς τῶν ἀρχισυναγῶγων, ὀνόματι <u>Ἰαῖρος</u>, καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν πίπτει πρὸς <u>τοὺς πόδας</u> αὐτοῦ</p> <p>23 καὶ <u>παρακαλεῖ αὐτόν</u> πολλὰ λέγων</p> <p>ὅτι τὸ <u>θυγάτριόν μου</u> ἐσχάτως ἔχει, ἵνα <u>ἐλθῶν ἐπιθῆς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῇ</u> ἵνα σωθῇ καὶ ζήσῃ.</p> <p>24 καὶ ἀπῆλθεν μετ’ αὐτοῦ. καὶ ἠκολούθει αὐτῷ <u>ὄχλος</u> πολὺς καὶ συνέθλιβον αὐτόν.</p> <p>25 Καὶ γυνὴ <u>οὔσα ἐν ῥύσει αἵματος</u> δώδεκα ἔτη</p> <p>26 καὶ πολλὰ παθοῦσα ὑπὸ πολλῶν <u>ἰατρῶν</u> καὶ δαπανήσασα τὰ παρ’ αὐτῆς πάντα καὶ μηδὲν ὠφεληθεῖσα ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον εἰς τὸ χεῖρον ἐλθοῦσα,</p> <p>27 ἀκούσασα περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἐλθοῦσα ἐν τῷ <u>ὄχλῳ</u> ὀπισθεν ἤψατο τοῦ ἱματίου <u>αὐτοῦ</u>.</p> <p>28 ἔλεγεν γὰρ ὅτι ἐὰν ἄψωμαι</p>	<p>40 Ἐν δὲ τῷ ὑποστρέφειν <u>τὸν Ἰησοῦν</u> ἀπεδέξατο αὐτὸν ὁ <u>ὄχλος</u>· ἦσαν γὰρ πάντες προσδοκῶντες αὐτόν.</p> <p>41 καὶ <u>ἰδοὺ</u> ἦλθεν ἀνὴρ ᾧ ὄνομα <u>Ἰαῖρος</u> καὶ οὗτος <u>ἄρχων</u> τῆς συναγωγῆς ὑπῆρχεν, καὶ πεσὼν παρὰ <u>τοὺς πόδας</u> [τοῦ] Ἰησοῦ <u>παρακάλεῖ αὐτόν</u> εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ,</p> <p>42 ὅτι <u>θυγάτηρ</u> μονογενῆς ἦν αὐτῷ ὡς ἑτῶν δώδεκα καὶ <u>αὐτῇ</u> ἀπέθνησκειν.</p> <p>Ἐν δὲ τῷ ὑπάγειν <u>αὐτόν</u> οἱ <u>ὄχλοι</u> συνέπνιγον <u>αὐτόν</u>.</p> <p>43 Καὶ γυνὴ <u>οὔσα ἐν ῥύσει αἵματος</u> ἀπὸ ἑτῶν δώδεκα, ἣτις [<u>ἰατροῖς</u> προσαναλώσασα ὅλον τὸν βίον] οὐκ ἴσχυσεν ἀπ’ οὐδενὸς θεραπευθῆναι,</p> <p>44 <u>προσελθοῦσα</u> ὀπισθεν ἤψατο τοῦ <u>κρασπέδου</u> τοῦ ἱματίου <u>αὐτοῦ</u></p>

<p>μόνον <u>ἀψώμαι</u> τοῦ <u>ἱματίου</u> αὐτοῦ σωθήσομαι.</p> <p>22 ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς στραφεὶς καὶ <u>ιδῶν</u> αὐτὴν εἶπεν· θάρσει, θύγατερ· ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε. καὶ ἐσώθη ἡ <u>γυνὴ</u> ἀπὸ τῆς ὥρας ἐκείνης.</p> <p>23 Καὶ ἐλθὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ ἄρχοντος καὶ <u>ιδῶν</u> τοὺς αὐλητὰς καὶ τὸν ὄχλον θορυβούμενον 24 ἔλεγεν· ἀναχωρεῖτε,</p>	<p>καὶ τῶν <u>ἱματίων</u> αὐτοῦ σωθήσομαι. 29 καὶ εὐθὺς ἐξηράνθη ἡ <u>πηγὴ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτῆς</u> καὶ ἔγνω τῷ σώματι ὅτι ἴσται ἀπὸ τῆς μᾶστιγος.</p> <p>30 καὶ εὐθὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐπιγνοὺς ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὴν ἐξ αὐτοῦ δύναμιν ἐξεληθοῦσαν ἐπιστραφεὶς ἐν τῷ ὄχλῳ ἔλεγεν· τίς μου ἤψατο τῶν <u>ἱματίων</u>; 31 καὶ ἔλεγον αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ· βλέπεις τὸν ὄχλον συνθλίβοντά σε καὶ λέγεις· <u>τίς μου ἤψατο</u>; 32 καὶ περιεβλέπετο ἰδεῖν τὴν τοῦτο ποιήσασαν. 33 <u>ἡ δὲ γυνὴ</u> φοβηθεῖσα καὶ <u>τρέμουσα</u>, εἰδυῖα ὃ γέγονεν αὐτῇ, <u>ἦλθεν καὶ προσέπεσεν αὐτῷ</u> καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ πᾶσαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν.</p> <p>34 ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῇ· θυγάτηρ, ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε· ὕπαγε εἰς <u>εἰρήνην</u> καὶ ἴσθι ὑγιῆς ἀπὸ τῆς μᾶστιγός σου. 35 <u>Ἔτι αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος ἔρχονται</u> ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀρχισυναγώγου λέγοντες ὅτι ἡ θυγάτηρ σου ἀπέθανεν· τί ἔτι <u>σκύλλεις τὸν διδάσκαλον</u>; 36 ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς παρακούσας τὸν λόγον λαλούμενον λέγει τῷ ἀρχισυναγώγῳ· <u>μὴ φοβοῦ, μόνον πίστευε</u>. 37 καὶ οὐκ ἀφήκεν οὐδένα μετ' αὐτοῦ συνακολουθῆσαι εἰ μὴ τὸν <u>Πέτρον καὶ Ἰάκωβον καὶ Ἰωάννην</u> τὸν ἀδελφὸν Ἰακώβου. 38 καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ ἀρχισυναγώγου, καὶ θεωρεῖ θόρυβον καὶ κλαίοντας καὶ ἀλαλάζοντας πολλά, 39 καὶ εἰσελθὼν λέγει αὐτοῖς· τί θορυβεῖσθε καὶ <u>κλαίετε</u>· τὸ</p>	<p>καὶ παραχρῆμα ἔστη ἡ <u>ρύσις τοῦ αἵματος αὐτῆς</u>.</p> <p>45 καὶ εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς· τίς ὁ ἀψάμενός μου; ἀριουμένων δὲ πάντων εἶπεν ὁ Πέτρος· ἐπιστάτα, οἱ <u>ὄχλοι</u> συνέχουσίν σε καὶ ἀποθλίβουσιν.</p> <p>46 ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· <u>ἦψατό μου τις</u>, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔγνω δύναμιν ἐξεληλυθυῖαν ἀπ' ἐμοῦ. 47 <u>ἰδοῦσα δὲ ἡ γυνὴ</u> ὅτι οὐκ ἔλαθεν, <u>τρέμουσα ἦλθεν καὶ προσπεσοῦσα αὐτῷ</u> δι' ἣν αἰτίαν ἤψατο αὐτοῦ ἀπήγγειλεν ἐνώπιον παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ ὡς <u>ιάθη παραχρῆμα</u>.</p> <p>48 ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῇ· θυγάτηρ, ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε· <u>πορεύου εἰς εἰρήνην</u>.</p> <p>49 <u>Ἔτι αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος ἔρχεται</u> τις παρὰ τοῦ ἀρχισυναγώγου λέγων ὅτι τέθηκεν ἡ <u>θυγάτηρ σου</u>· μηκέτι <u>σκύλλε τὸν διδάσκαλον</u>. 50 ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀκούσας ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ· <u>μὴ φοβοῦ, μόνον πίστευσον</u>, καὶ σωθήσεται. 51 ἐλθὼν δὲ εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν οὐκ ἀφήκεν εἰσελθεῖν τινα σὺν αὐτῷ εἰ μὴ <u>Πέτρον καὶ Ἰωάννην καὶ Ἰάκωβον</u> καὶ τὸν πατέρα τῆς παιδὸς καὶ τὴν μητέρα. 52 ἔκλαιον δὲ πάντες καὶ ἐκόπτοντο αὐτὴν. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· <u>μὴ κλαίετε</u>,</p>
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<p>οὐ γὰρ ἀπέθανεν τὸ κοράσιον ἀλλὰ καθεύδει. καὶ κατεγέλων αὐτοῦ. ²⁵ ὅτε δὲ ἐξεβλήθη ὁ ὄχλος εἰσελθὼν</p> <p>ἐκράτησεν τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῆς,</p> <p>καὶ ἠγέρθη τὸ κοράσιον.</p> <p>²⁶ καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἡ φήμη αὕτη εἰς ὅλην τὴν γῆν ἐκείνην.</p>	<p>θορυβεῖσθε καὶ <u>κλαίετε</u>; τὸ παιδίον οὐκ ἀπέθανεν ἀλλὰ καθεύδει. ⁴⁰ καὶ κατεγέλων αὐτοῦ. αὐτὸς δὲ ἐκβαλὼν πάντας παραλαμβάνει τὸν <u>πατέρα</u> τοῦ <u>παιδίου</u> καὶ τὴν <u>μητέρα</u> καὶ τοὺς μετ' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰσπορεύεται ὅπου ἦν τὸ παιδίον. ⁴¹ καὶ <u>κρατήσας</u> τῆς χειρὸς τοῦ παιδίου <u>λέγει</u> αὐτῇ· ταλιθα κουμ, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνευόμενον· τὸ κοράσιον, σοὶ λέγω, <u>ἔγειρε</u>.</p> <p>⁴² καὶ εὐθὺς <u>ἀνέστη</u> τὸ κοράσιον καὶ περιεπάτει· ἦν γὰρ ἑτῶν δώδεκα. καὶ <u>ἐξέστησαν</u> [εὐθὺς] ἐκστάσει μεγάλη. ⁴³ καὶ διεστείλατο <u>αὐτοῖς</u> πολλὰ ἵνα <u>μηδεῖς</u> γνοῖ τούτο, καὶ <u>εἶπεν</u> <u>δοθῆναι</u> αὐτῇ <u>φαγεῖν</u>.</p>	<p>οὐ γὰρ ἀπέθανεν ἀλλὰ καθεύδει. ⁵³ καὶ κατεγέλων αὐτοῦ εἰδότες ὅτι ἀπέθανεν. (⁵¹ τὸν <u>πατέρα</u> τῆς <u>παιδὸς</u> καὶ τὴν <u>μητέρα</u>.)</p> <p>⁵⁴ αὐτὸς δὲ <u>κρατήσας</u> τῆς <u>χειρὸς</u> αὐτῆς ἐφώνησεν <u>λέγων</u>·</p> <p>ἡ παῖς, <u>ἔγειρε</u>. ⁵⁵ καὶ ἐπέστρεψεν τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτῆς καὶ <u>ἀνέστη</u> παραχρῆμα καὶ διέταξεν αὐτῇ δοθῆναι φαγεῖν. ⁵⁶ καὶ <u>ἐξέστησαν</u> οἱ γονεῖς αὐτῆς· ὁ δὲ παρήγγειλεν <u>αὐτοῖς</u> <u>μηδενὶ</u> <u>εἰπεῖν</u> τὸ γεγονός. (⁵⁵ αὐτῇ <u>δοθῆναι</u> φαγεῖν.)</p>
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APPENDICE #2: EXTENDED PARAPHRASE

(18) While he was saying these things to them, a certain ruler came and knelt before him saying, “My daughter has just died. But come, lay your hand upon her, and I believe she will live again!”

(19) Getting up, Jesus followed him, and his disciples came along as well. (20) Then a woman hemorrhaging for twelve years came behind and touched the tassels of his garment, (21) for she said to herself, “If I touch even his garment, I will be made well.” (22) But Jesus, turning and seeing her do so, said, “Take courage, daughter! Your faith has made you well!” And the woman was healed from that very hour. (23) As he came into the ruler’s house, Jesus saw the flute players and a crowd making a great commotion as they mourned. (24) He commanded them, “Get out of here! For the girl was not dead, but is only sleeping.” And they ridiculed him. (25) But after the crowd was finally cast out, he entered and grasped her hand—and the girl arose. (26) And this news went out into all of that land.

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