

GD Lesson NT 7
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S. Kurt Neumiller
Potomac Crossing Ward, Ashburn Stake, VA

"[He] Took Our Infirmities, and Bare Our Sicknesses"

Review

By way of historical review, what has immediately preceded the event we are discussing in this chapter are Jesus baptism, the 40 days in the wilderness and the temptation by the adversary. We know from D&C 93:15-16 that at his baptism Jesus received the fullness of the set of keys of his Father's authority. Here, we see the beginning of Jesus' public ministry and him using the authority he has to perform miracles.

While many focus on the miracles, I would rather discuss the theological importance of what is happening with these events, because that is what the authors intend to convey to us.

Mark 1:14-15, 21-45

14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Jesus' intent is preaching the gospel. But, we see that is hampered by people's reactions to the miracles Jesus performs. People gossip the miracles abroad, as opposed to his gospel message, and it results in him frequently having to leave.

Theology: Jesus primary interest is preaching the gospel. But, as we follow the text, what does Jesus end up primarily doing?

21 And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. 22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

23 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, 24 Saying, Let [us] alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. 25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. 26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. 27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine [is] this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him. 28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region

round about Galilee.

Jesus isn't like anyone else. He teaches with authority and casts out evil spirits with authority. He has what others lack.

The evil spirits recognize Jesus and they confess who he is. What do they say? They say he has power to destroy them. Does he destroy them? No, he casts them out. They know what their ultimate fate is, but it is not time yet for them to be "destroyed."

Theology: Jesus has all the authority, all the power, but he isn't using it to destroy, even those who are worthy of destruction. His ministry is a ministry of life. He isn't abusing his power.

29 And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. 30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her. 31 And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them. 32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. 33 And all the city was gathered together at the door. 34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. 36 And Simon and they that were with him followed after him. 37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All [men] seek for thee. Luke 4:42 adds: "and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them". 38 And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth. 39 And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

Jesus heals Simon Peter's mother-in-law, and then gets swamped with people to heal all night. Very early in the morning, he bails out to get away from the people, he has to be exhausted, and they come and find him and try to get him to stay. He refuses and says, No, I need to preach the gospel.

Theology: While Jesus is willing to heal people physically, his primary mission is to heal them spiritually. When the healing impedes the preaching, he moves on to new audiences to maintain the purpose of his ministry.

40 And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. 41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put

forth [his] hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. 42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. 43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away; 44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. 45 But he went out, and began to publish [it] much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

Jesus heals a leper, the detail is included that Jesus touches him. That would render him unclean, according to the Law. He then sends the leper to the priests.

Theology: Jesus touches someone unclean, healing them, but also superceding the Law. However, even while superceding the Law, he insists it be observed to keep the Law. He is not flouting the Law of Moses, he respects it and intends to fulfil it.

I think he is also wanting the priests to get the message that Jesus is healing people.

Mark 2:1-12

1 AND again he entered into Capernaum after [some] days; and it was noised that he was in the house. 2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive [them], no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them. 3 And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. 4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken [it] up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. 6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, 7 why doth this [man] thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? 8 And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, why reason ye these things in your hearts? 9 whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, [Thy] sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? 10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) 11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. 12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

Jesus is preaching and someone with palsy is lowered down

through the roof. Jesus forgives his sins, causing anger on the part of the scribes, and then Jesus heals him.

Theology: Jesus can not only heal people physically, he can heal them spiritually, as he can forgive sins.

Note the order Jesus does the two things. If he were blaspheming, he would not have been able to heal afterwards.

Which is the more important of the two? Isn't that Jesus' intent here, to teach everyone present that it is more important to have your sins forgiven than to be healed physically?

Mark 4:35-41

35 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. 36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. 37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. 38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? 39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. 40 And he said unto them, why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? 41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, what manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

Theology: Jesus has power over creation. He has the power of the Creator.

Mark 5:1-20

1 AND they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. 2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, 3 who had [his] dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: 4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any [man] tame him. 5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, 7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, what have I to do with thee, Jesus, [thou] Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. 8 For he said unto him, Come out of the man, [thou] unclean spirit. 9 And he asked him, what [is] thy name? And he answered, saying, My name [is] Legion: for we are many. 10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country. 11 Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. 12 And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter

into them. 13 And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;) and were choked in the sea.

14 And they that fed the swine fled, and told [it] in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done. 15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid. 16 And they that saw [it] told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and [also] concerning the swine. 17 And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.

18 And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. 19 Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. 20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all [men] did marvel.

In this passage, two types of uncleanness are contrasted: the townspeople who willingly eat the flesh of swine, and the extreme uncleanness of one possessed and living in tombs. The possessed man who is living in the tombs becomes a disciple of Jesus when his demons are exorcized, while the townspeople persist in their uncleanness. Contrast the details:

<u>Demoniac</u>	<u>Townspeople</u>
Unclean spirit inside by possession (externally imposed)	Unclean food inside by paganizing (internally imposed)
Living in tombs (unclean)	Living in town
Cannot be physically restrained	Cannot be spiritually restrained
Legion of unclean spirits	Herd of 2000 unclean swine
Demons exorcized, uncleanness removed	Swine stampeded, uncleanness removed
Seeks to follow Jesus	Asks Jesus to leave

The townspeople are willfully paganizing, so their uncleanness is one of deliberacy. The demoniac is possessed by Legion demons, he is out of control, out of his mind, outcast, running around naked, smashing himself on the rocks. He appears to be utterly hideous and unredeemable, he can't even be restrained with iron chains.

Superficially, the townspeople appear less unclean than the demoniac, they look civilized. But, when Jesus comes to them, the reactions are completely opposite. When the demoniac is

released from the external control of the Legion demons, he is completely transformed and sits at Jesus' feet. When the townspeople are deprived of their unclean food, they fear Jesus and ask him to leave. Which then is the more insidious uncleanness? In both cases Jesus delivers them from their uncleanness, but contrast their reactions.

Regarding "the country of the Gadarenes", determining the city or region is problematic. In the KJV Luke agrees with Mark and labels them "Gadarenes", Matthew calls them "Gergesenes". Why does it matter? If the town is Gadara then it is on the very border of Judah's lands and therefore may be inhabited by Gentiles as opposed to Jews, and then the herding of swine wouldn't be prohibited by the Law. But, Gerasa was well within the borders of Judah, so if the events took place there then they were definitely Jews. The point of interest in location is whether or not the people involved were Jews.

Aside from questionable geography, the content of the story strongly suggests it is Jews. Why else would it matter if the herd were swine? Also, Jesus' ministry is to Israel, not Gentiles, cf. Matt 15:24.

Theology: Jesus can clean that which is unclean. But, which type of uncleanness is more insidious? The demoniac is made whole, where the townspeople reject him.

Luke 7:11-17

11 And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. 12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. 13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. 14 And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare [him] stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. 15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people. 17 And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judaea, and throughout all the region round about.

Simply by happenstance, they are passing the gate of a city when a funeral procession is passing out of the gate.

Jesus responds with a spontaneous act of compassion, a widow is deprived of her only son. She has no means of support. She is not only grieving for the loss of her son, she is now left destitute. Jesus acts, there is no requirement of faith. He exercises the initiative to help someone purely out of charity.

Also, compare 1 Kings 17:23 which states:

And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and *delivered him unto his mother*: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.

Jesus is compared with Elijah. There are two looming characters in the OT: Moses and Elijah. Luke's intent is to evoke the image of Elijah.

Theology: Jesus acts out of mercy to help people. The heavenly economy is not so rigid that divine acts of mercy are not allowed. Luke evokes Elijah, as if you would accept Elijah's prophetic status, why wouldn't you do the same for Jesus?

Mark 5:21-43

21 And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea. 22 And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, 23 And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: [I pray thee], come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.

v21-24 After leaving the Gadarenes per their request, Jesus sails back to Capernaum and is caught up in a crowd again (v. 21). Out of the throng comes one of the leaders of the local synagogue, Jairus, who humiliates himself before Jesus begging him to heal his 12 year old daughter (v. 22-23). Jesus assents and many people follow (v. 24).

24 And [Jesus] went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him. 25 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, 26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, 27 when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. 28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. 29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in [her] body that she was healed of that plague.

30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, who touched my clothes? 31 And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, who touched me? 32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. 33 But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. 34 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

V25-34 While traveling to Jairus' house with a crowd, a woman

who has suffered greatly for twelve years because of menstrual problems (v. 25-26) touches the hem of Jesus' cloak in the hopes of being healed (v. 27-29). She is healed, and Jesus feels power go out of him to heal her. When he feels this, he stops and asks who it is who has touched him (v. 30). Peter, surprised at what seems to be a nonsensical question, asks him what he is talking about (v. 31). Jesus ignores him, and looks around (v. 32) to see the woman prostrate herself on the ground before him confessing (v. 33). At her confession, Jesus tells her that her faith is what healed her, making her whole (v. 34).

Verses 21-43 present two interspersed accounts of the healing of women. To understand the context of what is occurring a review of Mal. 4:2 is necessary. The KJV on Mal. 4:2 states:

But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of
righteousness arise with healing in his wings;

This passage makes reference to wings of healing. The "wings" are kanaph in Hebrew, for which Strong's has:

03671 kanaph {kaw-nawf'}

from 03670; TWOT - 1003a; n f

AV - wing 74, skirt 14, borders 2, corners 2, ends 2,
feathered 2, sort 2, winged 2, misc 8; 108

1) wing, extremity, edge, winged, border, corner, shirt
1a) wing
1b) extremity
1b1) skirt, corner (of garment)

This is the same term employed in Num. 15:37-41 where the people are told to wear fringes on their garments. Thus, rather than the KJV "wings" a better translation would be "with healing in the folds of its garments" (JPS). We then contrast this garment of healing with the garment of violence from Mal. 2:16 where the priests are harming the women of Israel by permissive divorce practices and permitting Israelite men to marry Gentile women. Where the priests are harming Israel, this "sun of righteousness" rises and casts light on Israel to heal her.

Mark simply identifies the garment where Matthew (cf. Matt. 9:20) identifies "the hem of his garment" and Luke (cf. Luke 8:44) identifies "the border of his garment". These more specific statements are clearly referring to the kanaph, or fringes, of Jesus' garment. Also cp. Matt. 14:36 where people are healed by touching the hem of Jesus' garments.

The Midrash Rabbah on Exodus 31:10 interprets Mal. 4:2 as Messianic and states the Messiah will come with healing in his

kanaph.

Thus, when the woman touches Jesus' cloak and is healed, we see, in part, a fulfilment of the Messiah arising with healing in his garments for the women of Israel.

v25 "issue of blood", a woman in such a condition was unclean, cf. Lev. 15:19-31.

35 while he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's [house certain] which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? 36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe. 37 And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. 38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly. 39 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. 40 And they laughed him to scorn.

But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. 41 And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. 42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was [of the age] of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment. 43 And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

v35-43 After the encounter with the woman (v. 24-34), they continue on to Jairus' house when they are intercepted by a runner who informs them his daughter is dead so they shouldn't bother Jesus about it anymore (v. 35). Jesus hears this and tells Jairus to have faith and fear not (v. 36). When they get to Jairus' house Jesus permits only Peter, James, and John to enter in (v. 37), excluding all others, presumably to keep the throng of sign seekers out. Around and inside the house people are greatly mourning (v. 38), but Jesus tells them not to mourn because she is not dead (v. 39). The people mock him for this, so he gets them out of the house (v. 40). Jesus then goes in with the three and her parents to the young woman and says "Little girl, arise!" (v. 41) and she does to the astonishment of all present (v. 42). Jesus charges them to keep the matter private (v. 43), but it ends up being spread abroad anyway (cf. Matt. 9:26).

v41 Luke's account has Jesus taking her by the hand, a classical OT act of condescension, cf. Isa. 41:13, Isa. 42:6. As she just died, she would also be unclean. Jesus is once again reaching out to help and heal the unclean.

Theology: The Messiah has arisen to heal the women of Israel, in sharp contrast to the treatment the women receive at the hands of the priests, Pharisees, and physicians.

A broader symbolic approach to this passage is that Jesus' healing of these two women represents the OT relationship between the Lord and His wife Israel. He has come to redeem and restore his wife Israel, cp. Isa. 49:18, 61:10, 62:5. The enmity has passed and He is here to redeem his bride.

Also note in both healings faith is the essential ingredient. In the first healing it is the faith of the woman, in the second healing it is the faith of Jairus, father of the deceased girl.

Overall Theological Message: Jesus has all power and authority to heal us both physically and spiritually. But, what was, and is still, his primary intent? Which is more important? Also, which are we mortals really more interested in?