



Resource Centre

From our Churches

Author: Siegfried Janzen

Church: Peticodiac Mennonite Church

This resource is part of a larger **From Our Churches** archives available as an inspirational resource to teachers, ministers and others of Mennonite Church Canada. Posted by permission of the author. Permission to reproduce and distribute is granted.

A Healed Daughter

Mark 5:21

It does not matter that you do not know me—
I have merely come to tell my story.
Listen, it's the story of a miracle.
I have told it many times—always it is fresh and new.

I was diseased:
both body and spirit were weakened,
sapped of vitality and life-force.
“Unclean” was my verdict;
“Shunning” my doom—my affliction;
“Sentenced for Life.”

But I was healed!
Oh, how I was healed!
Now I live!
Each day I live!

Forgive me—I'm running ahead of my story.
Because I prefer the rapture of healing.
Evil days of the past, I oft remind myself,
are best forgotten. Life is too short, too precious
for the soul to dwell on misery and distress.
And yet those days, cast in suffering as they were,
Molded and formed the life I live.
Without them there could not be the miracle.

At maidenhood my life seemed self-assured.
I learned the law, and household duties;
I loved my parents and our Rabbi.
I competed with siblings;
and laughed among peers;
and danced with the eyes of handsome ben Jacob;
and hoped the future would bring me a family.

Such was my life, my aspiration, my dream
when fate struck me down.

'Twas a disease of the blood:
a hemorrhage that would not be stopped.
I was baffled, embarrassed, and fearful;
and believed the doctor who promise me health.
Medications were costly.

I kept it a secret, hoping the nightmare would pass.
But at last my conscience and weakened body
took me to the home of the Rabbi.
A kindly man—he listened;
His eyes spoke sympathy,
But the verdict was Torah's law—merciless and cruel!
It strangled my panting spirit.
Shunning, with her iron heel, had just begun
Her sinister, relentless vigil;
And I whimpered in pain as I left.
I railed at God
and angrily denounced the unjust treatment.
“Why me,” I cried, “What have I done in sinning
to be so vile and so debased
to deserve a punishment as harsh as this?”
“Or am I the product of a gross parental sin
in which I had no part except in punishment?”

So I ranted,
And listened for answers, and waited—
Only silence answered me—mute and noncommittal.
Strangely, I thought of the lepers,
and tasted their hurts of rejection and loneliness.

At length,
After anger with God subsided within me,
I prayed.
Through hottest tears I prayed—long and hard,
Till with Job I learned to say:
“Though He slay me; yet will I trust in Him.” (Job 13:15)
It helped—
it soothed my tormented soul,
but did not cure the disease in my body.

One night,
Concealed in darkness and distance,
I looked on
As the man I loved married another.
For Jacob and Esther the moment was solemn and joyous:
Under the canopy they pledged love and fidelity.
Under another canopy that night—
beneath the canopy of stars
my well-spring of tears ran dry
as a cherished dream convulsed and died.

“The life of every creature is its blood”, the ancient prophet said. (Lev. 17:14)

A Godly truth that is, both mystical and absolute,
and perilous when disordered or deranged.
Doctors could not stem the loss of blood.
They tried—and promised much;
but in the end they only took my money.
And year by lonely year
my life was slowly ebbing.

Without family and friends and synagogue family
I dragged my dismal existence through one year,
and then through the next—and the next.
I counted twelve—lonely and long and wretched.
A life-time of dying with a loathsome disease.
At times I craved for the end.

Then, one day, or was it at night?
It does not really matter, they differed little then,
A light arose far down my dark horizon.
A star? --- Nay! --- A meteor? ---
It rose and illumined all the sky ---
“The sun of righteousness, with healing in its wings.” (Mal. 4:2)
A burst of hope!
Oh Son of David—have you really come?!

The ruler of a synagogue is a man of elevated station.
Esteemed and respected, he moves with dignity among his peers;
permits only certified Rabbis to teach in his school.
Charlatans, like impropriety, he does not brook nor tolerate.
The ruler Jairus was of that exalted class.
He also was a loving family man.

How strange the three of us should meet that day.
I mean: Jairus; Jesus, Son of David; and myself.

Jairus, laying pride and dignity aside,
Also stripped himself of prejudice
Before he fell at Jesus feet to implore
that humble, wand’ring Rabbi
to heal his dying daughter.
The crowd, surrounding Jesus, followed Jairus to his home.

For twelve long years I’d been judged “Unclean”,
and the odious disease ravaged my body;
it robbed me of all, but the will to live.
No vestiges of pride or vanity remained,
only shame, disgrace, and utter loneliness.

I watched the moving crowd, and saw Jairus.
Anxiety—fear—hope, crowding his face.
I knew those symptoms well.
And I saw Jesus—calm and free and in control.
His compassionate, fearless demeanor assured me:

the stories of healing I'd heard were true.

The will to be healed—to live, asserted itself once more,
and trust, written across the face of Jesus,
lent sudden strength to my sickly body.
I drew my shawl tightly around me,
and from behind entered the crowd.
I pushed and shoved and thrust and forced myself ahead
until in His nearness—
I knew not what to do.
I was not an illustrious Jairus—
I was a poor woman—unclean—shunned and afraid.
But I, too, had been created in God's image,
And I wanted to live.
Why bother the Rabbi, I reasoned—
just touch the lower hem of His garment—
And that's just what I did.

Instantly cured!
Strength surged through my body!
Wholesome blood in my veins!

I wanted to leave quickly, but stopped where I stood.
"Who touched my clothes?" I heard someone say,
and knew it was Jesus.
With the crowd pressing close, some scoffed at His words.
But I knew what He meant, and I trembled with fear.
So I fell at His feet and told Him my all.
He listened—
I saw and felt His compassion.
Then He called me "Daughter"—
"Daughter"!
I could hardly believe it, though I knew it was true.
Daughter—I hugged the word into my bosom.

He called me Daughter—
others called me "Unclean".
He called me Daughter and set me free.
My eyes looked deep into His
to say "Thank You", because words wouldn't come.
Then I looked into the eyes of Jairus
and saw that we stood on the same plateau.
In life or in death, we both had need of the Savior.
And the crowd moved onward.

I stood rooted to the ground where I stood.
Thoughts and emotions like impulses
raced through my brain.
Then I threw back my shawl and cried into heaven,
"Thank You for Jesus—the Messiah—the Savior."

I left then, rememb'ring

He had called me Daughter.
I spoke the word—loudly—again and again
to hear it in head and in heart.

That is my story—my miracle.
Now I live
like His daughter
Forever and ever!