

Nektarios: Righteous Living *Jairus' Daughter*

November 9, 2014
26th Sunday after Pentecost
Revision E

Epistle: Ephesians 5:8-19

Gospel: Luke 8:41-56

Today's Epistle lesson is used often in the West, either for the 4th Sunday in Lent or the 20th Sunday after Trinity.

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Background to Ephesians

Paul wrote his Epistle to the Ephesians from house-arrest in Rome in about 62 AD. He had first met with and reasoned with Jews in the synagogue there in about 52 AD on his Second Missionary Journey (Acts 18:19). Although Paul did not stay there long in 52 AD (Acts 18:20), he left Aquila (of the Seventy) and his wife Priscilla there and promised to return (Acts 18:18-21). About 53 AD, Paul returned on his Third Missionary Journey and spent two years in Ephesus (Acts 19:8-10). At this time, the church took a separate direction distinct from the synagogue. On his return to Jerusalem at the end of his Third Missionary Journey in 57 AD, Paul had a very emotional farewell meeting (Acts 20:37-38) with the elders of the Church (Acts 20:17), knowing he may never return.

Ephesus had had a number of distinguished visitors over the years. The Apostle John and the Virgin Mary had gone there to escape the bloodbath of Herod (Agrippa) trying to please the Jews – which resulted in the martyrdom of James the son of Zebedee and the imprisonment of Peter (Acts 12:1-4). That bloodbath began in 44 AD and ended with the death of Herod soon thereafter (Acts 12:20-23). Apollos (of the Seventy) also was in Ephesus in 53 AD and vigorously refuted the Jews showing from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah (Acts 18:24-28).

After the death of the Virgin Mary in the mid 50's AD, the Apostle John returned to Ephesus and worked with a number of Churches in that area: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea (Revelation 2, 3). John may have been in the area when Paul wrote his Epistle.

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We might note that Paul, in his humility, had been preparing the saints of Asia Minor for the Apostle John between 46 AD and c. 55 AD. When the Apostles in Jerusalem divided up the world after Pentecost and drew lots to see who should go where, John had drawn the lot for Asia Minor. But John was also constrained from going there by the Lord until the death of the Virgin Mary (John 19:25-27).

The Saints as Light to the World (Ephesians 5:6-14)

Paul had just finished encouraging the saints to be imitators of God, offering themselves as an offering for a sweet-smelling aroma (Ephesians 5:1-2). Paul had similarly encouraged the Roman Church to do so (Romans 12:1). On the other hand, the world around them was involved in other uses for their bodies: fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, etc. (Ephesians 5:3-4). Paul reminded them not to be partakers with them (Ephesians 5:7) since

- No one who does these things has any inheritance in the Kingdom of God (Ephesians 5:5).
- Don't let empty words deceive you about this (Ephesians 5:6).
- Because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience (v.6).

The context implies that some of the believers in the Ephesus area were involved with the things mentioned (Ephesians 5:3-5). Paul thus encouraged the saints to walk as children of light since **they now are light in the Lord** (Ephesians 5:8). Christ, the Head of the Body, had come as Light overcoming darkness (John 1:4-9). If the saints are to imitate Him, they need to be light also. In being light, all they need do is exhibit the fruit of the Spirit: good works, righteousness and truth (Ephesians 5:9); this is well pleasing to the Lord (Ephesians 5:10). Part of this is remembering our baptism (Romans 6) and that we were bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:20, 7:23).

One aspect of the fruit of the Spirit, namely truth, involves the responsibility not to ignore the unfruitful works of darkness (Ephesians 5:11), but reprove them. Paul said not to have any fellowship with them, but don't just ignore them either. Speaking the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15) was a major factor in the maturity of the Church. Speaking the truth with one's neighbor (Ephesians 4:25, Zechariah 8:16) was supposed to be part of the Old Covenant and is of major importance now that we are members of one another (Ephesians 4:25) in the Body of Christ.

Besides exposing the unfruitful works of darkness, Paul said that, "it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret" (Ephesians 5:12). This admonition extends even to gossip about someone's sin; the gossip-minded person shares in the sin of the unfruitful works of darkness. Even this is shameful, and is not what Paul is encouraging the Ephesians to do.

John Chrysostom points out¹ here that Paul said to reprove, not to judge. So long as the wound is concealed in darkness, it is secure; once it is brought to the light, the darkness is cleared away.

“The Lord had said, ‘Judge not, that you be not judged’ (Matthew 7:1) and He spoke this with reference to very small errors. Indeed, He added, ‘why do you

¹ John Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians, XVIII, vv. 11-13.

look at the speck in your brother's eye but do not consider the plank in your own eye' (Matthew 7:3). But Paul did not say to judge; he said to reprove. What Paul is saying is that sin is sometimes like a wound; so long as it is imbedded and concealed outwardly, and runs beneath the surface, it receives no attention. So long as it is concealed, being as it were in darkness, it is daringly committed in full security. But as soon as 'it is made clear' (Ephesians 5:13), it becomes light – not indeed the sin itself but the sinner. For when he has been brought out into the light and admonished, and then he has repented, have you not cleared away all darkness? Have you not then healed his world?"

Chrysostom adds² that some people fear that they will be hated for convicting a brother of sin. Doing so can represent showing true love to our brother. Even if he is incorrigible, we need to do our duty before God; a man will listen differently to a friend than a chance acquaintance.

“If a man robs someone we justly convict him, but yet we may fear being hated by him. Convict your brother; incur enmity for the love's sake which you owe to Christ and for the love's sake which you owe to your brother. Stop him as he is on his road to the pit of destruction. When we see him lying prostrate in the furnace of wickedness, let us raise him up. 'But', they say, 'it is no use; he is incorrigible.' However, we need to do our duty and then we have excused ourselves to God. It is for this that we have speech, and a mouth and a tongue that we may correct our neighbor. It is the dumb and reasonless creatures only that have no care for their neighbor, and take no account of others.”

“There is no evidence of friendship so true as to never overlook the sins of our brethren. And it is not on our neighbor, but on ourselves that we are conferring the chief benefit. It is for this that we are friends that we may be of use to one another. A man will listen in a different spirit from a friend than from a chance acquaintance.”

In this same vein, Ephesians 5:14 has been called an early baptismal hymn that may have been adapted from parts of Isaiah (Isaiah 26:19, 60:1). The message of the hymn is to awake from the sleep of sin (Romans 13:11-14, 1 Thessalonians 5:5-8) and arise from being dead in our trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1) and put on the armor of light (Romans 13:12) and walk in the light (John 12:35, 11:9, 9:4).

Redeeming the Time (Ephesians 5:15-17)

Having awakened out of the sleep of sin, Paul encouraged the saints to walk carefully, not as unwise but as wise and to redeem the time. The term “redeem” and “redemption” had connotations in 1st century Israel that have been largely lost today.

According to Mosaic Law, every firstborn from man or animals was to be redeemed (Exodus 13:11-12). The firstborn of clean animals were offered as a sacrifice (Numbers 8:17). The firstborn of unclean animals (e.g. a donkey) were redeemed with a lamb (Exodus 13:13, 34:20). And the firstborn of man was redeemed with a price: five shekels in silver (Numbers

² John Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians, XVIII, Moral.

18:16). Initially, the firstborn of every family was designated to serve the Lord as a priest (Exodus 13:2, 11, 12). But when only the Levites responded to Moses' call for repentance at the time of the golden calf (Exodus 32:26), the Levites replaced the firstborn in the Temple service (Numbers 3:12-13).

The principle behind redemption was a buying back; Christ did this for us by buying us back from the penalty of our sin (Hebrews 9:12-15). In the context of Ephesians 5, Paul spoke of the days being evil (Ephesians 5:16) and therefore needing to be redeemed or bought back. Paul used this same expression in his letter to the Colossians, which was written about the same time (Colossians 4:5).

Chrysostom stated³ that the time needs to be redeemed from the evils that men do. We are just passing through on our way to the Kingdom of God. By bearing all things, we redeem the time.

“Christ had said, ‘Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof’ (Matthew 6:34). In what sense does He call the time evil? It is not the essence of the day, or the day as so created, but it is the things transacted in them. Now the events which take place in it are good things from God and evil things from bad men. So then of the evils which happen in the day, men are the creators and hence it is that the times are said to be evil.”

“Therefore, the time is not yours. At present, you are strangers, sojourners, foreigners and aliens (cf. Hebrews 11:37-38, Ephesians 2:19); seek not honors, seek not glory, seek not authority or revenge. Bear all things (1 Corinthians 13:4-7) and in this way ‘redeem the time’ or buy up for yourselves the opportunity”.

So how does one redeem the time? In the latter part of Ephesians, Paul details a number of specifics:

- Worship in the Church (Ephesians 5:18-21)
- Husbands and wives (Ephesians 5:22-33)
- Children and parents (Ephesians 6:1-4)
- Slaves and master (Ephesians 6:5-9)
- Spiritual warfare, weapons and readiness (Ephesians 6:10-20)

The bottom line to all these is walking carefully, not as unwise but as wise (Ephesians 5:15), and understanding what the will of the Lord is (Ephesians 5:17). This involves not growing weary of doing good (Galatians 6:9) and conducting ourselves throughout the time of our stay here in fear (1 Peter 1:17). We can then use earthly goods and actions to store up treasure in heaven (Luke 18:22, 12:21, 33).

Being Filled with the Spirit – Ephesians 5:18-21

Chrysostom pointed out⁴ that wine has been given us by the Lord for cheerfulness and for medicinal purposes. “Give strong drink to him who is perishing and wine to him whose life is bitter” (Proverbs 31:6). “Wine can mitigate bitterness and gloominess and drive away clouds

³ John Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians, XIX, vv. 15-17.

⁴ John Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians, XIX, vv. 17-18.

from the brow; thus the Scripture says, ‘Wine makes glad the heart of man’ (Psalm 104:15). Paul also wrote to Timothy, ‘Use a little wine for your stomach and your frequent weaknesses’” (1 Timothy 5:23).

Wine is also good for external medicinal purposes. In treating the man left for dead, the Good Samaritan poured wine and oil on his wounds after applying bandages (Luke 10:34).

But like the covetous, some people are not satisfied with just a little and use God’s gift for drunkenness, rioting and their own self-destruction. Paul contrasts this with being filled with the Spirit. About seven years earlier, he had written to the Romans about how the Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17).

Other ways of redeeming the time and being filled with the Spirit that Paul mentions are:

- Speaking to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:19).
- Singing and psalming in your heart to the Lord (Ephesians 5:19).
- Giving thanks always for all things (Ephesians 5:20).
- Submitting to one another in the fear of God (Ephesians 5:21), that is, out of humility (1 Peter 5:5).

Chrysostom stated⁵ that we can use spiritual drink and be filled with the Holy Spirit by singing Psalms. We do this with understanding, not just mouthing the words.

“Do you wish to be cheerful; do you wish to employ the day? I give you spiritual drink. For drunkenness even cuts off the articulate sound of our tongue; it makes us lisp and stammer and distorts the eyes and the whole frame altogether. Learn to sing Psalms and you shall see the delightfulness of the employment. For they who sing psalms are filled with the Holy Spirit as they who sing satanic songs are filled with an unclean spirit.” Chrysostom adds that “singing and psalming in your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:19) refers to doing so with close attention and understanding, and not just mouthing the words while our heart is roaming elsewhere.”

“And is then this Spirit within us? Yes, indeed, within us! When we have driven away lying, bitterness, fornication, uncleanness and covetousness from our souls, when we have become kind, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, when there is no coarse jesting, when we have rendered ourselves worthy of it, what is there to hinder the Holy Spirit from coming and lighting upon us? Not only will He come unto us, but He will fill our hearts; and when we have so great a light kindled within us, then will the way of virtue be no longer difficult to attain, but will be easy and simple”.

Giving Thanks for All Things – Ephesians 5:20

Another aspect of being filled with the Spirit is thankfulness. The Greek word meaning to give thanks (*eucharisteo*) has been transliterated into English as the word Eucharist referring

⁵ John Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians, XIX, vv. 18-21.

to the Lord's Supper. When the Lord first instituted the Lord's Supper, He used the same terms: giving thanks (*eucharisteo*) over it and blessing it (Matthew 26:26-39, Mark 14:22-26, Luke 22:15-20). Following the Lord's Supper, Jesus and the Twelve sang a hymn before leaving for Gethsemane (Matthew 26:30, Mark 14:26). This hymn was probably part of the liturgy that was sung after the Passover meal.

But Paul said to give thanks for all things, not just those that we consider blessings. Remembering the story of Job, there were things going on that Job had no knowledge of. The Lord had pointed out Job's righteousness to Satan; but Satan had challenged the Lord's judgment (Job 1:8-11, 2:3-5). Satan was allowed to afflict Job with every evil imaginable such that Job was destitute and in great pain (Job 1:13-19, 2:7-13). Yet Job's words were "Blessed be the Name of the Lord" (Job 1:21).

John Chrysostom stated⁶, "If you give thanks when you are in comfort and in affluence, in success and in prosperity, there is nothing great, nothing wonderful in that. Compare this to a man giving thanks when he is in afflictions, in anguish, in discouragement". As an example, one might recall Paul and Silas, broken and bleeding and sitting in a Philippian jail, but praying and singing hymns to God – at midnight (Acts 16:23-25).

Chrysostom encourages⁷ us to give thanks even for hell itself and for the things that we don't want. Hell can be good as a bridle on our hearts; some things we receive keep us from sin.

"Surely it is a thing beneficial to those who attend to it, when the dread of hell is laid like a bridle on our hearts. Let us therefore give thanks not only for blessings which we see, but also for those which we don't see and for those which we receive against our will. Many are the blessings He bestows upon us without our desire, without our knowledge". In this regard, we need to remember how the story of Job ended. Job benefited greatly from his affliction both in this world and in the age to come (Job 42:10-17, James 5:10:11).

Chrysostom also encourages⁸ us to increase our thanksgiving whenever poverty, sickness or disasters affect us.

"Let us increase our thanksgiving when evil comes our way; thanksgiving, I mean, not in words nor in tongue, but in deeds and in works, in mind and in heart". Chrysostom reminded us of the words of our Lord and of the Prophet Isaiah: "What man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good gifts to those who ask Him" (Matthew 7:9, 11). "Can a woman forget her nursing child and have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget you but I will not forget you" (Isaiah 49:15).

Submitting to One Another – Ephesians 5:21

⁶ John Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians, XIX, vv. 18-21.

⁷ John Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians, XIX, vv. 18-21.

⁸ John Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians, XIX, vv. 18-21.

Paul's statement, "submitting to one another in the fear of God" belongs Ephesians 5:20 as a fourth part of the definition of being filled with the Spirit. [The other three are (1) speaking to one another in Psalms; (2) singing in your heart and (3) giving thanks always]. To illustrate this, the Lord had taken a young child in His arms. (According to tradition the child was Ignatius of Antioch, later the 3rd Bishop of Antioch). "Whoever receives one of these little children in My Name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me." The point was that "if anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant (literally deacon: Greek *diakonos*) of all" (Mark 9:35, 37). The above statements Jesus made following a dispute between the Twelve over who would be the greatest.

A little later, James and John (along with their mother Salome – Matthew 20:20) asked Jesus to grant that they might sit on His right and left in His Glory. This caused another dispute among the Twelve, to which Jesus replied: "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant (Greek: *diakonos*). And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served (*diakoneo*) but to serve (*diakoneo*) and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:42-45). Thus submitting to one another is not a new teaching that Paul came up with, but is just part of basic humility.

Chrysostom pointed out⁹ that mutual submission – all waiting upon one another – makes for a much happier, more pleasant life than a forced domination by one individual including fear and apprehension. What then if someone does not choose to submit to us?

"Continue to submit to him, not simply yielding, but really submitting. Entertain this feeling towards all, as if all were your masters. For you will soon have all as your slaves. This is 'subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ' in order that we may subdue all the passions, be servants of God and preserve the love we owe to one another".

⁹ John Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians, XIX, vv. 18-21.

JAIRUS' DAUGHTER

November 9, 2014
7th Sunday of Luke
Revision D

Gospel: Luke 8:41-56

In the West, today's Gospel lesson is read from either Matthew at this same time in the church year, or from Mark in mid-July.

Understanding the role of the Twelve Apostles is crucial to understanding the Church. Their names are on the foundations of the gates of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:10-14) and they will sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:22-30). But yet, they did not just fall out of the sky on Pentecost ready to evangelize the earth. And the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was not just a magic elixir that enabled them to do anything. Rather, they had some struggles of their own that they needed to go through. And the Lord spent time with them to train them in what they should do. And the Holy Spirit then enabled them to do that. Today, we will look at some of the training the Lord used to prepare them for Pentecost.

Gospel Context

On the 7th Sunday of Luke, the Gospel lesson was about the Gadarene demoniacs who lived in the tombs, broke their chains and cried out day and night after cutting themselves with stones. Jesus and the Twelve rowed across the Sea of Galilee to heal these poor guys, then rowed right back. On the way over to Gadara, they were rowing into a fierce storm and Jesus calmed the storm. The Twelve reacted, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?" (Mark 4:41).

Upon their arrival back in Capernaum (which is today's Gospel lesson), Jesus raised Jairus' daughter from the dead. Right after that, He sent the Twelve out two by two to heal the sick, cast out demons and raise the dead all by themselves (Matthew 10:8). Today's Gospel lesson, then, is part of the training program. In just two years, Jesus would be sending the Twelve out to evangelize the earth, but at this point they're struggling to figure out who He is!

There are (at least) three stages of recognition that the Twelve experienced:

1. As Messiah when they were called and shortly thereafter (John 1:41). This alone is not sufficient. "Messiah" means "the anointed one"; King David and Aaron the High Priest were also anointed.
2. As the Son of God following some of these incredible miracles (Matthew 14:33). This is a crucial recognition! Satan also recognized this and trembles at it (James 2:19).
3. As I AM in terms of the Word of the Cross where they take up their cross also (John 8:38). Satan doesn't do this!

Gospel: Luke 8:40-56 (Matthew 9:18-26, Mark 5:21-43)

When Jesus arrived back in Galilee after healing the Gadarene demoniacs, he was met by a crowd that included the ruler of the local Synagogue (probably Capernaum). The ruler asked Jesus to come to his house to heal his daughter. On the way, a woman touched the hem of Jesus' garment and was instantly healed of a flow of blood (or hemorrhage).

History of the Synagogue:

The traditions of the synagogue go back to Moses (Acts 15:21). However, as an institution, it probably originated with Ezra and the return from captivity in Babylon (see Ezra 7:9-10). There was a formal service at the synagogue on the Sabbath, but it wasn't the same as at the Temple in Jerusalem since no animal sacrifice was done at the synagogues. Focus was on the reading – probably by chanting – of the Scriptures, where certain parts of the Scriptures were required to be read at certain times of the year. [For example Exodus 12:24-27]. The music was probably a little different also since the “instruments of David” were only used at the Temple in Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 23:5, 1 Chronicles 25:1-7, 2 Chronicles 29:25-28).

Synagogues were located throughout the world wherever there was a Jewish community. On Paul's missionary journeys, it was his common practice to stop at the synagogue on the Sabbath. Some synagogues received him, while others didn't (compare Berea to Thessalonica in Acts 17:1-13).

The ruler of the synagogue had a role similar to pastors in churches today. He conducted the public worship, appointed who should read the Scriptures and prayers, selected someone to preach (if he didn't preach himself), and supervised care of the building and property. Most synagogues also had elders and attendants. The elders formed a council for judgment in civil and religious matters and the attendant had the care of the scrolls as well as the job of executing the punishment of scourging and teaching the children to read.

Later on after Pentecost, many priests became obedient to the Faith (Acts 6:7) and so did some synagogue rulers such as Crispus (Acts 18:8) and Sosthenes (Acts 18:17) in Corinth.

A Little Faith Goes a Long Way:

Both Jairus and the woman with a hemorrhage exhibited a little faith – they came to Jesus convinced He could help. Both also had their faith tested a little also. Jairus had to stretch his faith from believing Jesus could heal sickness to believing He could raise the dead. Jesus also encouraged Jairus to do so. Jairus' faith was further tested with the public ridicule from the mourners.

From the healing of the woman's hemorrhage, we have an example of the use of physical objects for spiritual purposes. Jesus taught that one thing sanctifies another. Here power went out from Him (Luke 8:46) via a touch of the hem of His garment. The Master sanctified the garment and the garment sanctified the hem. Jesus had criticized the scribes and Pharisees for saying that whoever swears by the Temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the

Temple, he is obliged to perform it. Jesus pointed out: Which is greater, the gold or the Temple that sanctified it? (Matthew 23:16-17). Thus, one thing sanctifies another. This is also the case with icons, holy water, holy oil and many instances of relics of the saints.

We in the West are unaccustomed to dealing with holy relics. In 2 Kings 13:20-21 is an account of a man being raised from the dead by touching the bones of Elisha. And in this account, it was completely unintentional; no faith at all existed on the part of the burial crew. The relics of Elisha had been sanctified by the power behind the life of Elisha. Similarly during the two years that Paul was in Ephesus on his Third Missionary Journey, handkerchiefs and aprons that touched Paul's body were used to heal diseases and cast out evil spirits (Acts 19:12). Again, one thing sanctified another.

When Jesus stopped and said, "Who touched me?" (Luke 8:45-46), the woman was petrified. She had made the Teacher unclean and He had caught her doing so! (Anyone with a bodily discharge was unclean, and so was anyone who touched them – Leviticus 15:1-7). But the Son of God cannot be made unclean unless He so permits (as He did on the Cross – 2 Corinthians 5:21). Therefore, uncleanness touching the Clean One became clean also. After she fell at His feet and confessed, He said, "Be of good cheer, your faith has made you well!"

John Chrysostom compared the woman to the synagogue ruler. Besides the synagogue ruler being a well-known public figure and the woman being an outcast, Chrysostom said: "Do you see the superiority of the woman to the ruler of the synagogue? She did not detain Him (but he required His presence); she took no hold of Him, but only touched Him (but he required the laying on of His hand – Matthew 9:18). Even though she came later, she was the first to go away healed" (Homily XXXI on Matthew 9).

Chrysostom pointed out that the woman did not approach Jesus boldly since she was ashamed of her affliction and considered herself unclean. Under the Law, her affliction was considered a "great uncleanness" (Ibid.). According to the Mosaic Law, she was unclean for the entire twelve years of her flow of blood (Leviticus 15:25). Likewise, anyone touching her bed or anything she sat on was also unclean (Leviticus 15:26-27), as was anyone touching her (Leviticus 15:7). Being unclean, she was equivalent to a leper and couldn't participate in the worship or sacrifices of Israel.

Since by touching Jesus, she would make Him unclean also, this may be why she touched only the hem of His garment (Luke 8:44), as if that would make a difference to the Pharisees.

Death Becomes Merely a Sleep:

When Jesus arrived at the synagogue ruler's house, He was greeted by the tumult of the weeping and wailing of the mourners (Mark 5:38). Jesus' response was to tell them all that the child was not dead, but sleeping. And they all ridiculed Him (Luke 8:52-53). Jesus said the same thing later on regarding Lazarus (John 11:11). Chrysostom comments: "He is teaching us not to fear death: for it is no longer death, but has henceforth become a sleep. Since He, Himself was to die, He uses the persons of others to prepare His disciples beforehand to be of good

courage and to bear the end meekly. Since in truth, when He had come, death was from that time forward a sleep” (Ibid.). This was not so apparent, however, until after Christ’s Resurrection.

We note that Jesus did not rebuke the mourners or criticize them for ridiculing Him. Chrysostom said that the flute players and the noisy wailers (Matthew 9:23) and the tumult (Mark 5:38) served a useful purpose. All this testified that the child was for sure dead and they even ridiculed Jesus for stating otherwise. Thus the wailers served as proof that the miracle occurred; but they were declared unworthy to witness the event (Ibid.). This is why He put them all out of the house and brought only Jairus, his wife, plus Peter, James and John into the room when He raised the child (Luke 8:51). Later, Peter did the same thing when he raised Tabitha (Acts 9:39-41).

Chrysostom went on to apply the Gospel lesson to life in his day. Why, he asked, do people mourn and weep at the funeral of a Christian? Doing so testifies that the resurrection is a fable, and that the deceased is gone and has no hope. By doing so, “How will you be able to persuade the Greek that you believe otherwise?”

“If indeed he departed a sinner, his wickedness has stopped; for certainly, had God known that he was being converted, He would not have snatched him away before his repentance. But if he ended his life righteous, he now possesses all good in safety. From this, it is clear that your tears are not of kindly affection, but of unreasoning passion. For if you loved the departed, you should rejoice and be glad that he is delivered from the present waves” (Ibid.).

Something else occurred at the raising of Jairus’ daughter that would come to have significance over a year later. The wife of Pontius Pilate and her 12-year old son were also present at the house of Jairus at that time. And Jesus healed Pilate’s son of some form of lameness in addition to raising the daughter of Jairus.

Later according to tradition¹⁰, during Jesus’ trial before Pilate, when word was brought to Pilate regarding his wife’s dreams (Matthew 27:19), he said to the Jewish leaders, “You know that my wife is a worshipper of God, and prefers to adhere to the Jewish religion along with you”. They said to him, “Yes; we know”. Pilate then mentioned what his wife said. The Jews answered Pilate, “Did we not tell you that He was a sorcerer? Behold, he has sent a dream to your wife”.

According to tradition¹¹, Claudia Procula, Pilate’s wife, was a granddaughter of Augustus Caesar, and she was also a good friend of Fulvia, the wife of Jairus, the Synagogue Ruler. Pontius Pilate used to love to engage in intellectual and philosophical arguments with Jairus. Claudia Procula was present at Jairus’ house when Jesus raised Jairus’ 12-year old daughter from the dead (Mark 5:41-43), and her own 12-year old son was healed of lameness at the same time. She had tried to influence her husband in favor of Christ, but to no avail. Pilate had been concentrating on his political career, desiring a higher position in Egypt. Hindering Pilate was

¹⁰ Roberts and Donaldson, “Part I, The Acts of Pilate”, Chapter 2, First Greek Form, Apocrypha of the New Testament, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 7, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 1994.

¹¹ Catherine van Dyke, tr., “The Letters of Pontius Pilate and Claudia Procula”, *Relics of Repentance*, 1st Edition, Issana Press, Lincoln, NE 68503, 1990.

none other than Herod, where the two supposedly became friends over Jesus' trial (Luke 23:6-13). Herod wanted to install a cousin in place of Pontius Pilate, and this had created a rivalry between them.

After Herod saw Jesus and became friendly with Pilate, Herod pressed Pilate to get Jesus' trial over with quickly so that the two of them could embark on a fishing trip. Herod later double-crossed Pilate and spoke secretly against him to Caesar. Pilate's young son, on hearing that his father had allowed the execution of Jesus, the One who had healed him, could not bear it and suddenly dropped dead.

Pilate never got the promotion he was looking for. A few years after Pentecost, he was called to appear before the Emperor in Rome regarding why he released Barabbas, an insurrectionist and a murderer. By the time Pilate got to Rome, Claudius was dead and Caligula was on the throne. Pilate was not able to defend himself and was exiled to Gaul. Claudia went with him to help, but Pilate committed suicide there. Claudia returned to Jerusalem and spent the rest of her life in prayer and fasting with the Myrrh-Bearing Women.