

**JAIRUS' DAUGHTER**  
**JEW AND GENTILE: FELLOW CITIZENS**

**November 7, 2010**  
**7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Luke**  
**Revision D**

**GOSPEL: Luke 8:41-56**

**EPISTLE : Ephesians 2:11-22**

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 LESSON CONTEXT**

On the 7<sup>th</sup> 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 LESSON – Luke 8:40-56 (Matthew 9:18-26, Mark 5:21-43) Jairus' Daughter**

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.).

## ***JEW AND GENTILE: FELLOW CITIZENS***

**November 7, 2010**  
**24<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Revision C**

### **EPISTLE : Ephesians 2:11-22**

**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 the Jews of Ephesus 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 direction separate and distinct from the synagogue. Toward 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. Prochorus (of the Seventy and one of the first seven deacons) accompanied John as did Mary Magdalene for a while (Mary was called “equal to the apostles” in the early Church).

The Epistle to the Ephesians was meant to be circulated to all the churches in the area and has a general theme of the riches of Christ in the church. It is possible that this Epistle was what was called the “Epistle from Laodicea” (Colossians 4:16) that was being circulated.

### **Jews and Gentiles: Fellow Citizens**

The context of the Epistle lesson speaks about how we were made alive together with Christ, and how He raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:5-6). All this was done in order that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His Grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus (v.7). Therefore we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works that we should walk in them (v.10).

We were once Gentiles in the flesh (v.11). But now, we who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ (v.13). In another place, Paul refers to the Gentile Christians as the “Israel of God” (Galatians 6:16). This was spoken at a time when the Church-synagogue distinction was somewhat blurred. This was spoken even in the Old Testament: Isaiah predicted that Egypt and Assyria will return to the Lord and be blessed (Isaiah 19:21-25). Justin Martyr commented<sup>1</sup> that this verse (v.24) implies that Israel will be blessed only in third place after Egypt and Assyria. On the other hand, the Lord had told the Jewish leaders that they were *not* children of Abraham because they didn’t do what Abraham did or what God said (John 8:37-44). John Chrysostom states<sup>2</sup> that this does not mean that God has raised the Gentiles to the high heritage of the Jews (which includes the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the Law, the service of God and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom Christ came – Romans 9:4-5). Nor does it mean that the Gentiles have replaced the Jews. Rather, it means that He has raised both us and them to a heritage yet higher.

Christ has broken down the middle wall of separation (v.14). This could possibly refer to the tearing at Jesus’ crucifixion of the thick embroidered veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. In the context of this discussion – Jew vs. Gentile – more probably it refers to the Court of the Gentiles as compared to the Inner Court which only Jews could enter. Herod’s Temple (construction began in 19 BC) was more elaborate than previous ones and had several courts. The outermost was called “the Court of the Gentiles” and was the closest unclean individuals could come. Just inside that was “the Court of the Women”, and inside that was “the Court of the Israelites.” Regarding walls, there was the outer wall (of the Court of the Gentiles), the middle wall (separating the Outer Court from the Inner Court), and the inner wall of the Temple itself.

There are two aspects to the “middle wall of separation.” One is the separation of Gentile from Jew. This separation was necessary because the Gentiles did not keep the Mosaic Law; approaching a Holy God in uncleanness would prove fatal to them.

John Chrysostom wrote<sup>3</sup> of the middle wall as being a hedge that turned into enmity because of our disobedience. The Law was given as a hedge of security and an enclosure. “I made a hedge around it, and dug a trench, and planted a choice vine (Isaiah 5:2 LXX). “Why have you broken its hedges, so that all who pass that way may pick its fruit?” (Psalm 80:2). “I will take away its hedge and it will be for spoil. I will pull down its walls and it will be left to be trampled down” (Isaiah 5:5 LXX). The Law became a middle wall, no longer establishing them in security, but cutting them off from God.

With the coming of the Son of God in the flesh, He replaced the Old Covenant (Mosaic Law with all its details) with the New Covenant that is written on hearts (Jeremiah 31:31-34). Thus (Ephesians 2:15) He abolished the enmity; that is the commandments in ordinances restricting both Jews and Gentiles to certain places, certain rituals and limited access to God. Instead He created in Himself one new man from the two.

While the words used here speak just of the wall between Jew and Gentile, the same applies to barriers between races, between people of various social positions, and between sexes

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<sup>1</sup> Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho, 123.

<sup>2</sup> John Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians, V, vv. 13-15.

<sup>3</sup> John Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians, V, vv. 13-15.

(Galatians 3:28). Paul says: “for you are all one in Christ.” The Lord clarified this by a question put to Him by the Sadducees, who didn’t believe in a resurrection of the body. According to Mosaic Law, if a man died childless, the man’s brother was obliged to marry his brother’s widow and raise up children for his brother. The Sadducees asked Jesus whose wife would the widow be in the resurrection if seven brothers all had married the oldest brother’s widow in succession. Jesus’ answer was that “in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels of God in heaven” (Matthew 22:23-30). In this life, we all have roles to play based on what we’ve been given; but that will change in the resurrection.

Just creating one new man wasn’t enough, however. A second aspect of “the middle wall of separation” is that His death and resurrection was also necessary in order to reconcile both Jew and Gentile in one body to God the Father (v.16). Chrysostom stated that Christ became a Jew by circumcision (Luke 2:21); but by becoming accursed (Galatians 3:13, Deuteronomy 21:23), He became a Gentile outside the Law. And the word reconcile (*apokatallasso*) in v.16 implies a reconciling thoroughly; that is it is a strengthened reconciliation that hints at a restoration to a primal unity.

What happens, then, asks Chrysostom, “after God has employed so many methods to reconcile us that we should again fall back into enmity? How great an evil is it! This enmity no fresh baptism, but hell itself awaits.” Since Christ had abolished the enmity in His flesh, where the enmity is “the Law of the commandments in decrees” (v.15), to return to the “enmity” is to deny the benefit of the death of Christ.

In this context there is the fleshly man, the natural man (referring to the soul, 1 Corinthians 2:14) and the spiritual man. “The virtue of the flesh is her subjection to the soul. It is her vice to govern the soul. The horse may be good and nimble, but when the horse gets the mastery over the charioteer, she produces ten thousand mischief’s.” The same is true about the Spirit governing the soul. “The soul, while dwelling in the body, makes it beautiful; but when she leaves it destitute of her own native energy and departs the greatest loathsomeness ensues (i.e. death). So also it is when the Spirit forsakes the soul (and the body); the loathsomeness which ensues is worse and greater.”

Paraphrasing Chrysostom, he said<sup>4</sup>: “The flesh of itself is neither good nor evil, for what could the body ever do of itself (without the soul)? As soon as the body has deprived itself of reason and of the supremacy of the soul, then it goes wrong; similarly the soul without the Spirit. For example, the body has a natural desire of food, not feasting; of drink, not drunkenness; of pleasure, not fornication. It is the soul that pushes the body into excesses beyond reason”. This is why it is the Lord’s intent that the Spirit should direct both body and soul in the Body of Christ.

And through Him, both Jew and Gentile now have access to God that is greater than that of the High Priest under the Old Covenant. Therefore, Gentiles are no longer strangers (Greek: *xenos* = foreigner) and foreigners (Greek: *paroikos* = one dwelling near) but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God (v.19). This is built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus being the chief cornerstone that links together the walls and the foundation (v.20, Psalm 118:22, Matthew 21:42, Luke 20:17, 1 Peter 2:7-8), and is a building

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<sup>4</sup> John Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians, V, Moral.

that grows into a Holy Temple in the Lord (v.21) for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. “This is the purpose<sup>5</sup> of the reconciling: that each of us severally are a Temple and all of us together are a Temple”.

This was a mystery which had been hidden in God from the beginning of the ages (Ephesians 3:9). And as this mystery unfolds, the manifold wisdom of God might be revealed by the Church to the principalities and powers (two ranks of angels) in the heavenly places (3:10). Paul was extremely appreciative of the gift of the Grace of God given to him that he should be able to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of this mystery (3:7-8). And we can be likewise appreciative that we can participate also.

Paul compared the Grace given to the Gentiles to a wild olive branch that was grafted in to the root and richness of a cultivated olive tree, where some of its branches were broken off (Romans 11:16-25). This should cause us to be humble because:

- We do not support the root; the root supports us (v.18).
- If God did not spare the natural branches, He won't spare us either (v.21).
- When the fullness of the Gentiles comes in, the natural branches can and will be grafted back in (vv.24-25).

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<sup>5</sup> John Chrysostom, Homilies on Ephesians, VI, v. 17.