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Does Delay Equal Disaster?

Mark 5:35: (NKJV) "While He was still speaking, some came from the ruler of the synagogue's house who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?"

Most of us are not very patient, especially when we are facing a very difficult challenge. If we need help, well, we need help! And if it is a matter of life and death, then what possible reason could there be to delay? We will look into one of the dramatic events of Jesus' life that focuses on these very circumstances. We have Jesus, a dying child, her frantic father, a crowd and a woman who has been sick for years. We have delay and we have a seeming disaster as a result of that delay. So, what is the message here? Why did Jesus delay and what can we learn from it? Stay with us! The drama is about to unfold!

Our Only Question for Consideration:

What is the setting, what are the events, and what are the lessons?

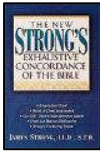
The Setting:

Let's begin with a quick look at the two previous dramas in which Jesus was involved:

Mark 4:35-41: Jesus is with professional fishermen, who know how to handle waves. This had to be bigger than anything they had experienced previously.

(Source: Bible notes from John A. Megisson) THERE AROSE A GREAT STORM OF WIND-- This must have been a remarkably severe storm. Some of the disciples were experienced fishermen, accustomed to the sudden squalls from which that sea is noted. For such courageous men as Peter, James and John to appeal to Jesus for super- human aid implies that the conditions were critical...

"Peace, be still:"



Peace: Strong's #4623 σιωπᾶω siopao see-o-pah'-o from siopē, silence, a hush, properly, muteness, involuntary stillness, or inability to speak

Be Still: Strong's #5392 φημιω phimoo fee-mo'-o from phimos (a muzzle); 1) to close the mouth with a muzzle, 2a) to stop the mouth, make speechless, reduce to silence 2b) to become speechless 3) to be kept in check

Jesus commands and calms the storm that would have otherwise taken their lives. When they come to the shore after this near death lesson of faith and awe, they are met by the following: (Combining Mark and Matthew for clarity)

Mark 5:1: (KJV) "And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes. ²And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs (two men) with an unclean spirit," **Matthew 8:28-34:** (KJV) "...exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. ²⁹And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time? ³⁰And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding. ³¹So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. ³²And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. ³³And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. ³⁴And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts."

Jesus again preserves life by commanding that over which no one else had power.

Observations on these two events:



- Jesus' faith is evidenced in his ability to sleep during the storm;
- Jesus' connection to the Father is evidenced by the calming of the storm;
- Jesus' position as God's Son is evidenced by the casting out of the legion of demons;
- Jesus' fearlessness is evidenced by his willingness to deal with whatever presented itself;
- In both cases there was no delay - as soon as the issue arose, Jesus acted.



The Events:

Mark 5:21-43 (NKJV), Matthew 9:18-26 (NKJV), Luke 8:40-56 (NKJV)
(with Jesus' words in Red)

For the sake of detail and simplicity we will combine the three accounts, with Mark 5:21-43 as a base. Here is the complete reading that the audio program discusses individually:

Luke 8:40: So it was, when Jesus returned, Mark 5:21: when (He) had crossed over again by boat to the other side, a great multitude gathered to Him; Luke 8:40: welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him Mark 5:21-23: by the sea. And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name. And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet and begged Him earnestly Luke 8:41-42: to come to his house (for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age) Mark 5:23: saying, "My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come and lay Your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live." Matthew 9:19: So Jesus arose and followed him, and so did His disciples, Mark 5:24: and a great multitude followed Him and thronged Him Luke 8:42: as He went. Mark 5:25-27: Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she Matthew 9:20: suddenly Mark 5:27: came behind Him in the crowd Matthew 9:20: and touched the hem of His garment. Mark 5:28-30: For she said, "If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well." Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction. And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd. Luke 8:45-46: And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?' But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me." Mark 5:32: And He looked around to see her who had done this thing. Luke 8:47: Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him Mark 5:33: the whole truth Luke 8:47: in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. Matthew 9:22: Jesus turned around Luke 8:48: And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace." Mark 5:35-38: While He was still speaking, some came from the ruler of the synagogue's house who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?" As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well." And He permitted no one to follow Him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James. Then He came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, Matthew 9:23: and saw the flute players Mark 5:38-39: and saw a tumult and those who wept and wailed loudly. When He came in, He said to them, "Make room, Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping." Mark 5:40: And they ridiculed Him Luke 8:53: knowing that she was dead. Mark 5:40: But when He had put them all outside, He took the father and the mother of the child, and those who were with Him, and entered where the child was lying. Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, "Talitha, cumi," which is translated, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." Luke 8:55: Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat." Mark 5:42-43: And they were overcome with great amazement. But He commanded them strictly that no one should know Luke 8:56: what had happened Matthew 9:26: And the report of this went out into all that land.

Luke 8:40: So it was, when Jesus returned, Mark 5:21: when (He) had crossed over again by boat to the other side, a great multitude gathered to Him; Luke 8:40: welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him Mark 5:21: by the sea.

Jesus' popularity and reputation are expanding. He went from one crowd to another.

Mark 5:22: "And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name."

Who is Jairus?



As a "ruler of the Synagogue," according to the custom of that time, he was a member of the local Sanhedrin, the court which tried certain classes of offenders. He would be a respected member of the community.

As a man of high station, no doubt he was acquainted with the noblemen of the same city whose son Jesus had healed.

John 4:46-53: Jairus' familiarity with this previous event would have been a thoroughly motivating factor for him to find Jesus, for his daughter was in the same state as the nobleman's son.

Mark 5:22-23: "...²²And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet ²³and begged Him earnestly, Luke 8:41-42: ...to come to his house ⁴²(for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age) Mark 5:23: saying, "My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come and lay Your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live." (Matthew's account reads 'even now is dead')

About the child's condition, from Mark 5:22:

At the point of death: Strong's #2192 εχω echo ekh'-o; to have, i.e. to hold

...literally, holding death, just now expiring, no time for delay.



From Matthew 9:18:

Even now: Strongs #737 arti (ar'-tee); just now:

Dead: Strongs #5053 teleutao (tel-yoo-tah'-o); to finish life, expire (demise):
KJV - be dead, decease, die.

Example: Luke 7:2: "And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to **die <5053>**."

So, the dire circumstances are obvious - For Jairus there was no other option but to find Jesus, as the life of this little girl was teetering on the edge - delay would mean disaster!



Observations:

- This was his only daughter;
- She was only 12 years old (therefore called "little;" after age 13 should have been called a young woman according to Jewish tradition);
- She was literally beyond hope, "holding" death in her hands;
- Jairus reveals *great faith* in his laying out his vision of the miracle to come. He believed Jesus could do it.

Matthew 9:19: *So Jesus arose and followed him, and so did His disciples*, Mark 5:24: and a great multitude followed Him and thronged Him Luke 8:42: *as He went*.

The throngs were nothing new to Jesus: Mark 3:7-9, Luke 12:1, Luke 19:1-4 So, Jesus is fighting through the crush of people - imagine Jairus - leading the way, half walking half running...

Mark 5:25-26: *"²⁵Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, ²⁶and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse."*

The issue of blood: Leviticus 15:25:

- This was a chronic condition;
- All of her money had been spent on the search for a cure;
- She had sought second, third and fourth opinions, to no avail;
- According to the Law, she would have been in a constant state of uncleanness;
- Over the 12-year period the condition only worsened;
- She was seemingly at a point of no hope when Jesus came to town;
- There was little time, for who knows where Jesus would be off to next - so for this woman, delay would mean disaster!

Mark 5:27: *When she heard about Jesus, she* Matthew 9:20: *suddenly* Mark 5:27: *came behind Him in the crowd* Matthew 9:20: *and touched the hem of His garment*. Mark 5:28: *For she said, "If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well."*

Another example of great faith!

- She must have fought her way through the crowd;
- She managed to reach out to the hem of his garment only;
- Her faith was strong enough to need just a touch.

There was a special significance to the hem of garments: Numbers 15:37-41: The hem was designed as a remembrance of Godliness. The method of this miracle became common: Mark 6:53-56:

Mark 5:29-30: *"²⁹Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction. ³⁰And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd."*

Jesus stopped. He FELT the healing. Amidst the rush to the home of Jairus, where a child lay dying, this woman, fixed within her own impossible condition brings all progress to a halt.

Here we have the exultation of being healed: Psalms 30:1-2; Here we also have the trepidation of being revealed because Jesus stopped and turned around.

Luke 8:45-46: *"⁴⁵And Jesus said, "Who touched Me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, 'Who touched Me?'" ⁴⁶But Jesus said, "Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me."* Mark 5:32: *And He looked around to see her who had done this thing."*

Why would Jesus ask? Wouldn't he know not only who, but why as well? We know the answer is yes, because we can see from other Scriptures: Mark 2:5-8:

What do we have?

- A delay - a child lay dying, yet Jesus stops.
- A miracle - an old condition instantly healed.
- A piercing question of accountability - "Who touched me?"



- A firmness - even though everyone was crowding Jesus, he summoned the one who "touched" him, for there was a lesson to be taught.

Luke 8:47: "Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him **Mark 5:33:** the whole truth **Luke 8:47:** in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. **Matthew 9:22:** Jesus turned around **Luke 8:48:** And He said to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

This was the confession of the fearful yet faithful woman - trembling, bowing, telling all before all. It reminds us of several Psalms: **Psalms 38:8-11**, **Psalms 66:16-20**

There is graciousness and thankfulness for the great gifts. What a great reward for a great faith! But wait! Look at how much time this has taken! Wasn't there a matter of a dying child that Jesus was on his way to attend to? What would Jairus have been thinking all this time? There is no mention that he was impatient with Jesus.

Mark 5:35: "While He was still speaking, some came from the ruler of the synagogue's house who said, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Teacher any further?"

Here is one of those defining moments in life. You stand between rage and despair. The delay that this woman has imposed upon Jesus has cost your daughter her life. For that instant between hearing the news and hearing Jesus give an answer, you are crushed. Disaster has struck and hope is lost.

Mark 5:36-37: "36As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He said to the ruler of the synagogue, "Do not be afraid; only believe, and she will be made well." 37And He permitted no one to follow Him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James."

The defining moment continues - Jesus now immediately gives hope where there was none. Now some of the lessons of delay begin to come into focus. The challenge of faith is always a major test. Here is another account of a healing that took great faith: **Mark 9:20-27**

Mark 5:36-38: "38Then He came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, **Matthew 9:23:** and saw the flute players **Mark 5:36-38-39:** and saw a tumult and those who wept and wailed loudly. 39When He came in, He said to them, "Make room, Why make this commotion and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping." **Mark 5:40:** 40And they ridiculed Him **Luke 8:53:** knowing that she was dead. **Mark 5:40:** But when He had put them all outside, He took the father and the mother of the child, and those who were with Him, and entered where the child was lying."

Jesus' response to the intense mourning was seemingly completely out of place. The delay caused by the woman with the issue of blood had unleashed a disaster and a flood of emotion. Yet, the Master calms them all (like he did with the sea!) and ushers them all out of the house except the parents and three disciples. Now, the work of the Kingdom could be done.

Mark 5:41: "Then He took the child by the hand, and said to her, "Talitha, cumi," which is translated, "Little girl, I say to you, arise." **Luke 8:55:** Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat."

Delay in the hands of Jesus was an opportunity for greater blessing. This event did not end in disaster; rather it had an ending of jubilation and life!

Mark 5:42-43: "42...And they were overcome with great amazement. 43But He commanded them strictly that no one should know **Luke 8:56:** what had happened **Matthew 9:26:** And the report of this went out into all that land."

The Lessons:

Does delay equal disaster? How do we measure disaster? Trial and tribulation may seem to go on too long, yet their purpose is the growth that leads to eternity. We need to view our lives with a long-range perspective.

Hebrews 12:9-13: The easy way is actually the hard way, and the hard way is easy because it is how we learn. Does delay equal disaster? Not in God's hands. Are we looking at the immediate time frame or the bigger picture?

Daniel 12:1, Habakkuk 2:2-3, Matthew 24:4-8: How could God allow such things? It is a disaster that is temporary to teach us a much bigger lesson.

Zephaniah 3:8-9: Something miraculous and wonderful happens in light of the disaster.

Isaiah 55:6-13: Prophecy shows us a wonderful ending after difficulty. God only has happy endings, and his timing in our lives is always perfect - we just need faith.

*So does Delay Equal Disaster?
For Jonathan and Rick (and Vicki) and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*