

MOTHER'S DAY - THE UNEXPECTED MIRACLE

Scripture used: [Luke 13:12-13 \(NIV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Last weekend, New Beginnings set aside time in our Gatherings for prayer for healing. We received miracles and blessings, showing once again that Jesus has the last word in all things. Today, on Mother's Day, we give praise to mothers, and we focus our attention on the unexpected miracle of the "bent-down woman" who gets lifted up by Jesus - an example of God's love finding us even when we don't expect it, in ways that heal us and transform our lives.

KEY POINTS

1. As a disabled woman in the Middle Eastern context of her day, this woman in the account would have had an extremely low social standing. She is bent over physically and is literally looked down upon. After 18 years of affliction, it is almost certain that she would have given up hope for restoration, and would likely try her best to remain unseen in social environments. And yet, she chose to be present in the synagogue on the day that Jesus came through town. Like her, we need to recognize the power of continuing to show up to places where we can encounter the grace and mercy of God.
2. Mother's Day is a painful day for many. It can remind us of trauma. We think of a lost child, either one who has died or one who has cut off contact. Or we think of the beloved and indispensable mother we lost, sometimes way too soon. But the good news of this account is good news for us as well. "When Jesus saw her, He called her forward." Jesus sees us in our totality - not through eyes that are judgmental and condemning, but through eyes of love and compassion. Likewise, his hands are not hands of abuse or violence, but hands of healing.
3. The story is happening in the middle of His teaching in the synagogue - it's a lesson for all those assembled, many of whom are bent-over in figurative ways. Many of us may have faced affliction that causes us to "double up" and turn inward, to cease to have hope of thriving and transformation. Jesus extends an invitation to all to turn our attention to Him. What He will do for the woman, He can do for us as well. She does not petition, does not formulate an expectation. But she exposes herself - in the sense of making herself visible and vulnerable. Jesus puts His hands on her, and she straightens up. She received His power. He elevates her, and she becomes "the miracle in the village": a woman who has been changed. She looks at herself differently, from a hapless victim to an actor with agency. This is a stunning transformation.
4. Not all men are bad men. Good men respect, empower, and protect others, including and especially women. As women, mothers, and mother-figures are rightly celebrated today, they may want to take a moment to celebrate and acknowledge the gift of the good men in their lives. And all of us should take heart from knowing the heart of Jesus, the Son of God, who sees each one of us, who meets us at our point of pain and trauma, and is able to heal and restore.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Think of your mother and the mother figures you have had in your life? What is one memory that you are grateful for? How did you experience love in a way that allowed you to recognize God's love?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider [Luke 13:12-13 \(NIV\)](#). Are there chronic areas of pain or trauma in your life where you no longer expect healing or transformation from God? As you consider this woman's story, and Jesus meeting her in a way that she did not expect, would you consider bringing your hurt before God in prayer? Often, the wounds in our lives are things that we don't want others to see, and yet some measure of healing often comes when we allow others in. Are there one or two people that you trust to share your burden or pain with?
- 3) **DO** - Celebrate your mother or a mother figure in your life this Mother's Day! Especially if you are a woman who has been wounded by evil or abuse from a man, spend time reflecting on the care, compassion, and healing that can be found in the gentle touch of Jesus' hands. Come join us for a new series on "Life on a Mission" next week.