

Matthew 9:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

Analysis

A synagogue ruler approaches Jesus: 'My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live' (η θυγατηρ μου αρτι ετελευτησεν αλλα ελθων επιθες την χειρα σου επ αυτην και ζησεται). Mark and Luke identify him as Jairus and clarify she was dying when he left, dead when they arrived. Matthew's compressed account emphasizes the ruler's extraordinary faith: believing Jesus can raise the dead. 'Lay thy hand upon her' shows faith in Jesus' healing touch. 'She shall live' (ζησεται, future tense) expresses confident expectation of resurrection. This ruler risks reputation by publicly approaching Jesus, demonstrating that desperation drives people past social barriers to Jesus. His faith acknowledges Jesus' authority over death itself, anticipating Jesus' ultimate resurrection victory.

Historical Context

Synagogue rulers (αρχισυναγωγος) were leading laymen responsible for synagogue administration, worship order, and selecting readers. They held significant community status and authority. For a synagogue ruler to approach Jesus publicly demonstrated either genuine desperation or remarkable faith (or both). Touching the dead made one ceremonially unclean (Numbers 19:11-13), yet Jesus regularly broke purity barriers to heal. Jewish theology affirmed resurrection

at the end of history (Daniel 12:2) but individual resurrections were rare (1 Kings 17, 2 Kings 4). Jairus's faith exceeds conventional hope, believing Jesus can raise his daughter now.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does Jairus's faith despite his daughter's death teach about trusting Jesus in impossible circumstances?
2. How does desperation sometimes drive people to Jesus when comfort keeps them distant?
3. What does Jesus' willingness to raise the dead reveal about His authority and compassion?

Interlinear Text

Ταῦτα	αὐτήν,	λαλοῦντος	αὐτήν,	ἰδού,	ἄρχων	εἰς	
these things	her	While he spake	her	behold	a certain ruler	G1520	
G5023	G6846	G2980	G846	G2400	G758		
ἐλθὼν	προσεκύνει	αὐτήν,	λέγων	ὅτι	Ἡ	θυγάτηρ	μου
come	and worshipped	her	saying	G3754	G3588	daughter	My
G2064	G4352	G846	G3004			G2364	G3450
ἄρτι	ἐτελεύτησεν·	ἀλλὰ	ἐλθὼν	ἐπίθες	τὴν	χεῖρά	σου
is even now		dead	but	come	and lay	G3588	hand
G737		G5053	G235	G2064	G2007		G5495
ἐπ'	αὐτήν,	καὶ	ζήσεται				thy
upon	her	and	she shall live				G4675
G1909	G846	G2532	G2198				

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 8:2 (Worship): And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

Luke 13:14 (Parallel theme): And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.

Matthew 9:24 (Parallel theme): He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.

John 11:32 (Parallel theme): Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

2 Kings 5:11 (Parallel theme): But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.