

When Brokenness Meets Restoration Power

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Date: 10 October 2021

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[0 : 0 0] Well, do you know what the most powerful force ever unleashed on Earth was? According to the numbers, the most powerful force ever unleashed on Earth in history was actually the AN-602.

It was a Russian nuclear bomb that was tested on 30th October 1961. That is the moment that the Earth, according to forces of physics, really experienced the most powerful thing that had happened.

This bomb that the Russians, remember this was in the Cold War, if you don't know your history. The Cold War, the Russians and the Americans were trying to outdo each other in developing bigger and more effective weapons.

Up until this point, where the Russians came up with this 57 megaton nuclear bomb that they tested in an archipelago in the sea above Russia, the flash of this bomb, when it went off, could be seen a thousand kilometers away.

It almost destroyed the plane that dropped it, even though that plane was 50 kilometers away by the time it exploded. They dropped it on a parachute so that the plane could get away. And it was 50 kilometers away when the thing exploded and it almost took down the plane.

[1 : 1 7] There was only some skillful flying that the pilot managed to recover. The blast wave of this bomb was registered on instruments on the other side of the world.

And it went around the world three times before it dissipated. The Russians, after they set off this bomb, realized, actually, we've gone too far. We can't use this bomb ever in war.

So they never developed it because it was too powerful. That's one powerful piece of equipment, one powerful weapon. It's quite scary, actually, that humans can do that.

I don't know if you know how an atom bomb works. You probably know that atom bombs are pretty powerful. But the way they work, they work on an atomic level, hence atom bomb.

And it's through the splitting of the atom, the nucleus of an atom. It forces the atom to split by making it unstable and then it splits into two halves.

[2 : 1 6] And that releases a whole lot of energy. And that causes, it's called nuclear fission. It causes a chain reaction. And that happens to atoms that surround it and atoms that surround those. And it just causes this huge explosion. Literally, if you understand nuclear physics, the atom bomb works by unmaking a stable atom.

By taking a stable atom and making it into chaos. By unmaking it. By uncreating it. That's how it works. To create this immense energy. So it takes something stable and turns it into a force of chaos.

Actually, if you think about it, all weapons throughout history, that's how they work. They work to unmake. If you think every weapon in war works to undo something in creation.

Whether it's a sword that unmakes your flesh. Literally by splitting it. Or a bullet that goes into your heart or into your lungs.

And makes it stop working like it's meant to by unmaking it. Or if it's a biological weapon that unmakes your organs inside you. That's what all weapons do.

[3 : 20] They take something that is created and they try to uncreate it. And so, all weapons are really instruments of uncreation. Instruments of unmaking.

And since the fall, mankind, fallen mankind, has been finding better and better ways to undo creation. That's really what the history of warfare is if you think about it.

It's mankind's attempts to find better and better equipment to undo what God made. To undo creation. And they've come up with some immense, powerful ways to do that.

Like this Russian nuclear bomb. Well, we're now reading through Mark. And we're discovering that 2,000 years ago, there was another type of incredible power that was unleashed in this world.

Way before 1961. And that power was unleashed in this world when Jesus came. But, the difference was that the power that he unleashed on the world wasn't an unmaking power.

[4 : 31] It wasn't a power to uncreate like an atomic bomb does. It was the opposite. The power that he brought, more immense than any atomic bomb, was actually the power to do the opposite.

It was the power to restore creation. It was the power to put things back together. It was the power to make broken things whole again. In effect, you could think of the power of Jesus as a reverse atomic bomb.

Where the atomic bomb splits the atom and makes chaos out of order. Jesus, when he came for the first time in human history, brought a power that can do the opposite.

That can bring order out of chaos. That can bring healing and restoration out of brokenness. That's what we've been discovering so far as we've been reading Mark.

And in this passage we're looking at today, I want you to open your Bibles in Mark 5. We're going to be looking at two stories of when, and they're amazing, because it's when broken humans, humans who are experiencing some kind of brokenness in the world, some kind of chaos in their lives, come into contact with this immense restoring power.

[5 : 46] What happens? What happens when broken humans come into contact with this restoration power? And it's two stories of two separate people, but they're connected in a way that Mark often does.

If you read through Mark, and you'll see he's already done this, and we're going to see it again, where he takes two stories and he puts them together. The way he does it is that he puts one story in the middle of another, like a sandwich.

He sandwiches a story in the middle of another story. So he starts another, then ends the first one. And he does that here. And we're going to look at both of those stories. I think the way to do it this morning is to look at them separately, look at each of the stories separately and see what we learn, and then look at them together, because they're meant to be read together at the end.

And so let's look at the first, actually, I'm going to start with the inner story of the two, which is the story of this woman. And then later we're going to look at the outer story. So the inner story is one of a woman who's unnamed, and she's got this horrible disease, unknown, just this horrible sickness, a constant flow of bleeding.

And it's something that medical science could not do anything about. So have a look at verse 25 to 26. Now a woman suffering from bleeding for 12 years had endured much.

[7 : 07] Under many doctors, she spent everything she had and was not helped at all. On the contrary, she became worse. Okay, so this is before, you know, medical aids and state-sponsored medical care.

This woman was not only suffering from a disease that could not be cured, but she was now destitute. She was in poverty because she had spent every last penny on trying to get healed, and these doctors had taken it, but they couldn't do anything for it, much as I'm sure that they had tried.

Maybe you know what that feels like. Maybe, I'm sure, someone listening here has some kind of sickness, probably more than one person, that medical science cannot solve.

Fortunately, through, you know, science and medicine, there's a lot of things we can put off for a while. We can never completely cure the brokenness in our bodies, but we can put it off for a while.

But there's a lot of stuff that we can't, and many people I know who are listening to this have a sickness that medical science cannot solve. And sickness is really, it's just a reminder that we are in a fallen world, and it's a reminder of the limitations of medicine and medical science to undo the brokenness.

[8 : 39] And how little medicine can actually do to reverse the fall, because it can't in the end. But this woman has heard that there's a man who can.

There's a miracle man in town. And so she hears about this miracle man. And I'm sure she remembers the Old Testament stories of Elijah and Elisha, the prophets, the men of God, who did similar miracles of healing people, and even raising some people from the dead.

So we read one of those stories earlier. And so she knew that there were people who could carry heavenly power, restoring power. So she did what she could to get to this guy, to get to this miracle man.

And she's thinking, if I can just touch him, maybe this power will rub off on me, and I can access this heavenly power through him. And verse 27, having heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd.

She doesn't want to be noticed. She just wants to get close enough to him, to reach out and touch him. And she touched his clothing. But it's at that moment that something happened that she didn't expect.

[9 : 48] Something more than she expected happened. And something very strange happened. Read on with me from verse 29. Instantly, her flow of blood ceased, and she sensed in her body that she was healed of her affliction.

At once Jesus realized in himself that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and said, who touched my clothes? His disciples said to him, you see the crowd pressing against you, and yet you say, who touched me?

But he was looking around to see who had done this. The woman, with fear and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before him, and told him the whole truth.

Something weird is happening here. Right? We don't often see this kind of interplay and transfer of power in the Gospels. You know, Jesus was walking along.

There's this crowd. He's going. We'll see later towards Jairus' house. He's on an assignment, and yet he stops. There's this crowd pushing around him. He stops.

[10 : 53] His disciples are trying to keep the people away, and he says, who touched me? His disciples are like, what? Everybody's touching you. What do you mean? But he knew that there was a transfer of power, and the woman also knew that something powerful had happened.

Something more than she expected. I think from what we can read here, she expected to come, touch him, and go, and then hopefully maybe she got home, and she started sensing maybe something was different.

But she didn't expect something so instant, something so powerful, and she probably was thinking, you know, this is much more than just a miracle man.

Because you think about the Old Testament prophets and the miracles that they did. Now, not all the prophets did miracles. There was only particular times when God was revealing new things that he would affirm those things with powerful signs in his messengers, like Elisha and Elijah, but even their miracles were limited.

If you look at how Elijah and Elisha did these miracles, like in the story Elias read for us earlier, they would pray in earnest, and then there would be this elaborate ritual that they would do.

[12 : 07] So Elijah had to stretch himself out of this boy three times. In other words, they were desperately appealing to heaven for heaven's power to come down and to fix the situation.

They mediated heaven's power. The prophets did. They were go-betweens. They were instruments of heaven's power then coming down and doing something on earth.

But this woman here in this story realizes that this power that she experienced wasn't mediated by Jesus. It was Jesus.

And that's the thing, I think, that is shocking in this passage. And we see that because when she realizes that this power that she's just experienced was far more than she expected, she is overcome with fear and trembling.

Verse 33. The woman with fear and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down at his feet. Fear and trembling, I think much like the disciples experienced on the Sea of Galilee when Jesus calmed that storm.

[13 : 18] Remember that? They started that story by fearing the storm. The story ended with them fearing the one who had control over it even more than they feared the storm.

I think that's the kind of fear, this realization that heaven's power has now come to earth and it is standing right in front of us. And they were overcome with fear. This woman especially, I think, because she was unclean.

According to the laws of Leviticus, for a Jewish woman to have a flow of blood like this, she would be cut off from the worshipping community. She would be considered unclean until the flow of blood had stopped.

Even then she had to have a week before she could come back into fellowship with people. This woman had a constant flow of blood for 12 years. She had been unclean. She had been cut off from the people.

She shouldn't be out in public. And now she realizes she is face to face with the holy power. How fearful do you think she is? Because when holiness comes into contact with uncleanness, the uncleanness is destroyed.

[14 : 24] The unclean person is destroyed. But here, instead of being destroyed, she is restored. The person who is unclean isn't destroyed, but the uncleanness is removed.

Verse 34. Daughter, he said to her. Now she's trembling. She's thinking, what is he going to say? What's going to happen? He says, your faith has healed you.

Literally, actually, he says, your faith has saved you in the original. Go in peace and be healed from your affliction. Okay, so the story in the middle of this sandwich of stories shows us that there's this incredible, unexpected power, but it's not mediated.

It's here on earth and it's a power to restore, not to destroy. But then let's look at the outer story and what we learn here. This is a very different story, but there are a lot of similarities and Mark connects the two.

This is a story of a high-ranking man in the community. We know his name. He is probably well-known. Peter probably knew him already. His name was Jairus. But high-ranking as he is, he is also faced with the undoing of creation.

[15 : 45] He is also experiencing the effects of the fall in his family because of his daughter who is dying. But he's very different to the woman.

Where the woman approaches Jesus secretly and shamefully from behind, he comes right face-to-face with Jesus. He's a synagogue ruler. The crowd probably parted when he came.

And he boldly approaches Jesus because he's religious and he's respectable. But it turns out that he has an equally desperate request. Look at verse 23. He begged Jesus earnestly, My little daughter is dying.

Come and lay your hands on her so that she can get well and live. So Jesus went with him and a large crowd was following and pressing against him. So you've got this tension in the story now.

This respected Jewish man's daughter is at home and she's on her last legs and will Jesus be able to get there in time to stop this sickness from overcoming her?

[16 : 48] Well, it turns out that because of this middle story of the woman and him being held up by her, he doesn't get to the daughter in time.

Look at, where am I now? Look at verse 35. While he was still speaking, people came from the synagogue leader's house and said, Your daughter is dead.

Why bother the teacher anymore? Too late. Or so they thought. But this is where the story gets really, really interesting now because until now, in Mark, people had known that Jesus can have this power to undo sickness, to reverse the flow of chaos and brokenness in someone's life.

But they still assumed that once death came, then it was too late. Then it was too late to do anything. Nothing can be done. Death has won. And death has a habit of winning and overpowering even the most powerful people, doesn't it?

And that is the human assumption, right? We fight against death. We try to stay healthy. We try to eat healthy. We try to stay fit. As people are getting older, they do things which is going to delay their aging process.

[18 : 09] When something happens and they're in the hospital and they're on their last legs, the emergency room and the doctors and the nurses are all frantically trying to keep this person alive, trying to keep them breathing.

They're on machines. Just keep them going. But once death comes, once you hear that heart machine go, beep, you know what happens?

All activity stops. Doctors put down their instruments. It's too late now. And there's this hush in the emergency room because once the pulse stops, it's over.

I think there was that same hush here in this story. Why bother the teacher anymore? Beep. It's over. It's too late. But look what Jesus does.

Verse 36. Onwards. When Jesus overheard or ignored the same word, what was said, He told the synagogue leader, don't be afraid.

[19 : 14] Only believe. See, the synagogue leader and all of them and the family were fearing like the disciples in the storm feared at the beginning. They were fearing the circumstance, fearing death.

They weren't yet fearing the one that the woman feared. You see how these stories are actually connected. They reflect on each other. So Jesus tells them not to fear in that way, only believe. He goes on.

Verse 37. He did not let anyone accompany Him except Peter James and John James' brother. And when they came to the leader's house and saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly, he went in and said to them, why are you making such a commotion and weeping?

In that culture, even the poorest families would have employed professional mourners at the death of a loved one.

I read that apparently even the poorest families were expected to get two flautists and a professional whaler to, you know, and they would be outside the house and then professionally going, whoa!

[20 : 24] Just wailing so that everybody knew something terrible had happened. Death had won. Jesus comes along, goes to this professional whaler and says, stop it. Stop it.

And He just walks past them. And they're shocked. And then He says, the child is not dead but asleep. And they laughed at Him, verse 40. But He put them all outside. Get out.

These people who just think that death is in charge. Get out. And He took the child's father, mother, and those who were with Him and entered the place where the child was. Then He took the child by the hand and said to Talitakum, which is translated little girl, I say to you, get up.

Immediately the girl got up and began to walk. She was 12 years old. At this they were utterly astounded. I want you to notice how different this resurrection of this girl was from any Old Testament resurrections that had happened like Elijah and Elisha.

They also, God exercised restoration power through them temporarily to raise people. But it wasn't in them. We've discovered it was in Jesus.

[21 : 41] And look how different it is. There's no elaborate prayer. There's no stretching himself out. There's no kneeling down and appealing in prayer. All He does is He speaks.

Does that remind you of anything? In just the same way as God began creation with the undoing of the primordial chaos just by speaking let there be light.

So here we are witnessing that same raw creation power come back to earth to reverse the forces of chaos and brokenness in the world and to reverse even death itself.

And that is a power that has come back to our world and it's a power that hasn't left. That power remained.

Jesus told His disciples when I go back to my Father I'm going to send you the Holy Spirit. And it's in the Holy Spirit for the last 2,000 years that that restoration power has continued that work of undoing chaos and darkness in people's lives.

[22 : 51] And that power is available to you today right now. Not to give you restoration temporarily but to give you permanent restoration from sin and death to reverse the forces of chaos and brokenness and the fall in your life.

and what's even more exciting than that is that the weapons that we as a church get to wield are not atomic bombs and guns which are weapons to destroy and to undo creation.

We get to wield even more powerful weapons to restore to bring lives back together as we preach the word as we bring people to church as we share the gospel as we pray for people what we are doing is we are bringing the same restoration power into dark chaotic situations that they can get nowhere else.

What a privilege that we get to wield weapons of restoration because the world does not have access to that power but through us but through the church.

That power has come. It is able to restore. It is able to undo death and chaos and depravity and sin and all its effects and it is available through God's people as they proclaim God's word.

[24 : 25] This is where the power lies as I said earlier Romans 1.16 in the gospel is God's power but if we keep it closed and we keep it to ourselves and we stay at home then the power does not go out there.

So sign up for membership classes. Outreach team let's get going. Let's exercise this power that the world can experience from nowhere else but God's holy universal church that we believe in.

if we do believe in that then we will be involved in it. But let's now take these two stories together right? Let's take the story of the woman and the story of Jairus and put them together which is what we're meant to do.

Mark sandwiches them like that so that we do compare them and if we're still not convinced then he puts a whole lot of markers to connect them together. Did you notice the use of the number 12 for example?

The woman was subject to bleeding for 12 years. The girl was 12 years old. There's all of these little markers that connect the two stories and force us to compare them. So what happens when we compare these two stories?

[25 : 35] What happens when we compare Jairus and the woman? Well what we discover I think are two things that we need to take away today. Firstly they both have equal need even though they're so different.

They both have an equal need of restoration from curse and chaos. the woman's hopelessness was evident. We're told that and she knew that her situation could not be fixed by anything.

She had tried everything. It was hopeless but Jairus' situation at the beginning wasn't hopeless. There was still hope. His daughter was still alive.

Jairus doesn't realize how hopeless his situation is until death enters the scene and only then does he realize how truly hopeless he is and he is only then truly challenged how much he believes in this man.

Jesus. He had to realize how hopeless his situation was and so do you and so do I. No matter who you are no matter how much resources you have no matter how good your medical aid is I think these stories are here to show us no matter who you are you need to realize how hopeless you are without Jesus in your life and how much you actually desperately need his power to rescue you from the unrelenting march of chaos and death that seeks to overcome your life every day and will if you don't have his restoration power in your life.

[27 : 11] because if you think you are okay now if you think you are fit and healthy you have a good diet you have got prospects you have got access to financial resources you know this was kind of gyarus he was a good well respected member of society if you think no I am okay without Jesus you won't think that when you come face to face with death because no power in the world is able to overcome that except the power that Jesus brings so you need his power far more than you think in your life you need to realize how hopeless you are gyarus had to still realize how much he needed that how much he really needed Jesus and maybe you do too maybe you don't realize how much you need Jesus maybe he's just a passing interest maybe you're just watching online and seeing what you can get from him you need to realize wherever you're sitting you need him far more than you think and all of us need to realize that that's what these stories challenge us to consider about our own lives we are not gyarus at the beginning of the story we are actually the woman but I think even Christians who do know they need

Jesus can still listen up because I feel the conviction of this myself I think we can also equally get into the habit of forgetting how much we need restoration power of the Holy Spirit in our lives I think because we enjoy so much of the grace of God we get into these habits of thinking we're okay we've got what we need we're sorted and so what happens when we forget how desperate we are for the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives we stop going to church every Sunday I'll go every second Sunday I'll have a lion I don't really need church it's nice to go to my friends are there but we don't we don't we lose this desperation you know it's it's not we shouldn't come to church because we feel like we're going to get something nice out of it we should come to church because we're desperate desperation should drive us here but I don't think we often do I think I think we forget how desperate we are for the

Holy Spirit and his power and the means of grace that he provides through the church we don't hunger and thirst after it like the Old Testament saints did you know I was reading one of David's Psalms and he just 83 or 4 or something he just says I long for the Lord the presence of the Lord like a deer pants for water I yearn hunger and thirst for it that I think is what should drive the saints back to church and to prayer every day if you if your habits are slipping and your prayer times are slipping and your quiet times are slipping and maybe your church attendance are slipping perhaps it's because you've forgotten how desperate you are for the power of the restorative power of the Holy Spirit in your life and sometimes God will put even his children in trials and desperate situations just to remind them of that fact so that we are driven back to him so that we do realize how how we are no less desperate than this woman was now I think that's the first thing we need to realize but the second thing we need to see as we compare Jairus and the woman is not only that they both had equal need of restoration but did you notice they both had equal access to restoration power even though they were so different and this is this is such an encouraging thing to read see the major difference in the start of these stories did you notice was that the access they first had to Jesus was completely opposite

Jairus could approach him face to face the crowd probably parted he could go right to Jesus he was respectable he had access to Jesus he was a religious well respected righteousness type of person the woman completely opposite she was unclean she shouldn't have been out in public there was a crowd between her and Jesus she approached him from behind in secret because she was in shame and yet actually what these stories show us when we compare them together is that these people were no different from each other Jairus and the woman weren't different because it turns out they both had equal access to this restoration power through simple faith in Jesus irrespective of their standing irrespective of their religiosity irrespective of the works they had done it was only faith simple faith and that was enough to bring them both access to this amazing restoration power look at verse 34 daughter he said to your faith has saved you that's it not your efforts not your work just your faith in verse 36 don't be afraid only believe see what Jesus is looking for just faith in him simple faith and these this faith here is not a well-developed theology it's just simple faith that's where it starts to show us that no matter who you are no matter what you've done and maybe only you know maybe you would never tell the people around you here at church because they're too respectable maybe you've got some really dark secrets in your thought life or things you've done in the past that you're ashamed of but no matter who you are no matter what you've done no matter how unclean you think you are Jesus is able and willing to restore you from the chaos in your life and the things that have made you unclean in God's sight if only you come to him in faith that he is the one God has sent to restore this world and to restore you in it that's all and when you do when you have access through faith to him then you need to realize you have access to an incredible power a power that is able to undo the forces of chaos in your life and your heart and your will and your mind and in God's good time as you continue in faith it will also restore you that power that incredible restoring power will restore you from all sickness and brokenness and even death itself well let's go forward in knowledge that we have access to that incredible power let's pray

Lord Jesus we thank you for coming to this earth and unleashing an incredible power to restore people that this world has never seen before Lord in the inner world full of sin and chaos and conflict where humans are more and more trying to undo your creation we thank you that there is a power that overcomes all of that that restores people that restores homes that restores lives as we come to you in faith and we pray that you would help us to do that help us Lord to realize especially as Christians how needy we are of this restoration power that you have made available in this age through your Holy Spirit help us never to neglect the means that you have made in your church available for us to tap into that power and we pray Lord that you would help us not to keep it to ourselves but to make it available in the lives in the workplaces you've put us in the schools you've put us in the community that you've placed us so that you would be glorified and your kingdom would grow and your power would expand throughout the earth in Jesus name

[35 : 51] Amen