

Who was Jairus in the Bible?

Jairus in the Bible was the father of a 12-year-old girl whom Jesus raised from the dead. Jairus was a ruler in the synagogue of Capernaum (Mark 5:22), so he was a well-known religious leader. Jairus came to Jesus, pleading with Him to come lay His hands on his only daughter, who was near death. He humbled himself before Jesus, falling down at His feet (Luke 8:41). Jairus expressed faith in Jesus' ability to heal his child, and Jesus began to follow him home (Mark 5:23-24). The story of Jairus is recorded in the Bible in Mark 5:22-41 and Luke 8:41-56.

As Jesus walked with Jairus, they had to press through a large crowd. In the Bible the description is that "the crowds almost crushed him" (Luke 8:42). It is likely that the crowd slowed Jesus' progress considerably, and this must have been frustrating for Jairus-time was of the essence, since his daughter was at the point of death. In the midst of the crowd, a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years came up behind Jesus and touched the hem of his robe, saying to herself, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed" (Mark 5:28). Her flow of blood dried up immediately. Jesus felt that power had gone out from Him, and He turned to ask who had touched His clothing. The woman came to Him, trembling in fear, and, falling before Him, told Him the truth (verse 33). Jesus said, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering" (verse 34).

As Jesus was speaking to the woman, some people from the house of Jairus arrived and told Jairus that his daughter was dead and there was no need to trouble Jesus anymore (Mark 5:35). Jesus overheard the news and gave Jairus two commands and a promise: "Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed" (Luke 8:50). Together, they continued toward the house of Jairus. When they got there, the mourners were wailing and weeping,

but Jesus asked them, “Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep” (Mark 5:39). The mourners turned into scoffers, laughing and making fun of Jesus (verse 40). Undeterred, Jesus went into the house, taking with Him Jairus and his wife, along with Peter, James, and John (Luke 8:51).

Jesus entered the room where Jairus’ daughter lay. He took the dead girl by the hand and said, “Talitha koum,” which means, “Little girl, I say to you, arise” (Mark 5:41). Immediately, the girl’s spirit returned (Luke 8:55), and she got up and began walking around (Mark 5:41). Everyone was “completely astonished” (verse 41); literally, they were “removed from a standing position” or, as we might say, they were “floored” or “thrown for a loop.” Jesus then commanded Jairus to give his daughter something to eat but not to tell anyone about the miracle (Luke 8:55-56).

It is interesting to note that the daughter of Jairus was twelve years old—the same number of years as the woman in the crowd had suffered from her infirmity. Also, Jesus calls the woman He healed “Daughter” (Luke 8:48)—the only time He calls an individual that—amid the many references to Jairus’ daughter in the same narrative. The story of Jairus in the Bible is really a miracle within a miracle, with two “daughters” and two stretches of a dozen years.

When Jesus stopped on His way to Jairus’ house to speak to the woman in the crowd, He allowed time to pass. Jesus was not worried about Jairus’ daughter dying. He knew all along that He would heal her, even if that meant raising her from the dead. In a beautiful act of mercy, Jesus stops to care for the woman in the crowd who had reached out to Him in faith. Jairus undoubtedly felt the urgency of his situation, and he probably chafed at what he saw as a delay. His daughter was lying at death’s door, and

Jesus was taking His time. Jairus learned that God's timing and purpose are not like ours. Sometimes He requires patience from us, sometimes He waits longer than we think is rational, and sometimes He allows temporary loss in order to show us the eternal abundance of His blessing (see Ecclesiastes 3:11; 2 Corinthians 4:17).

Jairus was a leader in the synagogue, and the bleeding woman in the crowd was likely an outcast because of her ailment (see Leviticus 15:25-27). But Jesus graciously met their respective needs and responded to their faith with equal love, power, and willingness to heal. He "shows no partiality to princes and does not favor the rich over the poor, for they are all the work of his hands" (Job 34:19).