

## “Touched” Mark 5:25-34

<sup>25</sup> A woman who had had a hemorrhage for **twelve years**, <sup>26</sup> and **had endured much at the hands of many physicians**, and had spent all that she had and was not helped at all, but rather had grown worse— <sup>27</sup> **after hearing about Jesus**, she came up in the crowd behind Him and **touched His cloak**. <sup>28</sup> For she thought, **“If I just touch His garments, I will get well.”** <sup>29</sup> Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. <sup>30</sup> Immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself that the power proceeding from Him had gone forth, turned around in the crowd and said, **“Who touched My garments?”** <sup>31</sup> And His disciples said to Him, **“You see the crowd pressing in on You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’”** <sup>32</sup> And He looked around to see the woman who had done this. <sup>33</sup> But the woman **fearing** and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. <sup>34</sup> And He said to her, **“Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace and be healed of your affliction.”**

### Some Research

The word “touch” (touches, touched, touching) is used 141x in the Bible. *Note, I did not look up alternate sayings such as “laid His hands on.”*

A great many of those references are prohibitions, such as not touching a corpse, any unclean thing, or a woman (e.g., not your wife). Recalling the Sinai account (Exod 19:12-13 and holy objects, Num 4:15) is also important. Also, 2 Samuel 6:6-7 speaks of Uzzah reaching out toward the ark of God and taking “hold of it,” an action for which “God struck him down there for his irreverence.”

But after mining through the passages, some in particular speak to the imagery of “touch” which relate to Mark 5.

Leviticus 6:14-18 addresses the law of the grain offering. It is a holy offering and the sons of Aaron may eat the leftovers. Verse 18 says, “Every male among the sons of Aaron may eat it; it is a permanent ordinance throughout your generations, from the offerings by fire to the LORD. **Whoever touches them will become consecrated.**”

The passage continues in verses 24-27 by addressing the law of the sin offering. Verses 26-27 say, <sup>26</sup> “The priest who offers it for sin shall eat it. It shall be eaten in a holy place, in the court of the tent of meeting. <sup>27</sup> **Anyone who touches its flesh will become consecrated;** and when any of its blood splashes on a garment, in a holy place you shall wash what was splashed on.”

You may remember Leviticus 15:7. It says, “Also whoever **touches** the person with the discharge shall wash his clothes and bathe in water and be unclean until evening.”

Another OT passage of interest is Daniel 10:7-18. It says, <sup>7</sup> “Now I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, while the men who were with me did not see the vision; nevertheless, a great dread fell on them, and they ran away to hide themselves. <sup>8</sup> So I was left alone and saw this great vision; yet no strength was left in me, for my natural color turned to a deathly pallor, and I retained **no strength**. <sup>9</sup> But I heard the sound of his words; and as soon as I heard the sound of his words, I fell into a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground. <sup>10</sup> Then behold, **a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees**. <sup>11</sup> He said to me, “O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. <sup>12</sup> Then he said to me, “Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding *this* and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. <sup>13</sup> “But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia. <sup>14</sup> “Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to

your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet *future*.”<sup>15</sup> When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless.<sup>16</sup> And behold, one who resembled a human being was **touching my lips**; then I opened my mouth and spoke and said to him who was standing before me, “O my lord, as a result of the vision anguish has come upon me, and I have **retained no strength**.”<sup>17</sup> “For how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord? As for me, there remains just now **no strength in me**, nor has any breath been left in me.”<sup>18</sup> Then *this* one with human appearance **touched me** again and **strengthened me**.

Mark has many references to “touch.”

#### Mark 1:40-42

<sup>40</sup> And a leper came to Jesus, beseeching Him and falling on his knees before Him, and saying, “If You are willing, You can make me clean.”<sup>41</sup> Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out His hand and **touched him**, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed.”<sup>42</sup> Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.

#### Mark 3:9-10

<sup>9</sup> And He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the crowd, so that they would not crowd Him;<sup>10</sup> for He had healed many, with the result that all those who had afflictions pressed around Him in order **to touch Him**.

#### Mark 6:56

<sup>56</sup> Wherever He entered villages, or cities, or countryside, they were laying the sick in the market places, and imploring Him that they might just **touch the fringe of His cloak**; and as many as **touched** it were being cured.

#### Mark 7:32-35

<sup>32</sup> They brought to Him one who was deaf and spoke with difficulty, and they implored Him to **lay His hand on him**.<sup>33</sup> Jesus took him aside from the crowd, by himself, and put His fingers into his ears, and after spitting, He **touched his tongue with the saliva**;<sup>34</sup> and looking up to heaven with a deep sigh, He said to him, “Ephphatha!” that is, “Be opened!”<sup>35</sup> And his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was removed, and he *began* speaking plainly.

#### Mark 8:22-25

<sup>22</sup> And they came to Bethsaida. And they brought a blind man to Jesus and implored Him to **touch** him.<sup>23</sup> Taking the blind man by the hand, He brought him out of the village; and after spitting on his eyes and **laying His hands on him**, He asked him, “Do you see anything?”<sup>24</sup> And he looked up and said, “I see men, for I see *them* like trees, walking around.”<sup>25</sup> Then again **He laid His hands** on his eyes; and he looked intently and was restored, and *began* to see everything clearly.

#### Mark 10:13-16

<sup>13</sup> And they were bringing children to Him so that He might **touch** them; but the disciples rebuked them.<sup>14</sup> But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, “Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”<sup>15</sup> “Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it *at all*.”<sup>16</sup> And He took them in His arms and *began* blessing them, **laying His hands on them**.

### **Image Exegesis**

If we toss aside the OT passages that deal with God's direct prohibitions about coming into His direct contact through touch, we may conclude that "touching" holiness makes one consecrated (holy), strengthened, and/or healed. In fact, just touching the garment (Mark 5:28; 6:56) of the Holy One does the same! Of course, we want to make note of the fact that Jesus tells the woman, "your faith has made you well." So, for clarity's sake, we might say that touching the Holy One, when accompanied by faith, leads to tremendous blessing.

The only "exception" I can recall is Jacob's encounter (Gen 32:22-32) where God touches his hip socket, resulting in a limp (the opposite of healing). But even here, we should note that God blesses him during the encounter!