

Research: Jesus heals Man with withered hand in Luke

Luke 6:6,7, 9-13

6And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught:
and there was a man whose right hand was withered.

“In the Gospel of Hebrews (65 – 100 CE) the man with the withered hand is described as a mason, who begged help from Jesus, saying, “I was a mason earning my living with my hands. I pray Thee, Jesus, restore me my health, that I may not disgracefully beg my bread” (Dummelow 667).

Another commentary states that the “Lucan addition probably stresses what is for most people the hand for work, and it thus heightens the condition of the unfortunate person” (*AB Luke i-ix.* 611).

“Withered” in Greek is *xeros* and means “wasted, withered, dry land, atrophied, stunted” (Strong # 432).

“A withered hand. More correctly, his hand withered. The participle indicates that the withering was not congenital, but the result of accident or disease. Luke says his *right hand*” (Vincent).

“His right hand. A very precise mode of statement. Lit., his hand the right one. Luke only specifies which hand was withered. This accuracy is professional. Ancient medical writers always state whether the right or the left member is affected (Vincent).

7And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.

The Pharisees were just waiting for Jesus to make some kind of overt mistake so they would have evidence to accuse him in a formal way. According to Jesus, it was always lawful to do good no matter what day of the week it was. The malice and hatred of the Pharisees towards Jesus prompted them to set him up in this way and see if he would take the bait.

“**Watched**” in Greek is *paratere* and means “denoting ill, . . . keep, observe, especially with sinister intent. To watch narrowly, to observe as the gates of a city . . . to observe a person insidiously” (Hebrew-Greek Key Study Bible).

““No feature of the Jewish system was so marked as its extraordinary strictness in the outward observance of the Sabbath, as a day of entire rest. The scribes had elaborated, from the command of Moses, a vast array of prohibitions and injunctions, covering the whole of social, individual, and public life, and carried it to the extreme of ridiculous caricature” (Shotwell 59).

“When Jesus ignored or took issue with these irksome and spiritually unnecessary restrictions he was accused of Sabbath-breaking. This offense was a flagrant sin in their eyes, second only to that of the blasphemy of his Messianic claim” (Shotwell 268).

Healing was permitted on the Sabbath only if a life was in danger (Ex. 22:2; 23:13); however, Jesus often healed people on the Sabbath who were not imminently dying. The man at the Pool of Bethesda had been lame for thirty-eight years. The man born blind had been blind since birth and both of these healings happened on the Sabbath day, as did the healing of the man with the withered hand.

“The rabbis were increasingly incensed at Jesus’ continued infraction of their Sabbath prohibitions, but they never brought a formal charge of Sabbath-breaking against him: the mercy of his works and the sympathy and approval of the people restrained them” (Shotwell 268).

8But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.

“He knew their thoughts - their dark, malicious designs - by the question, which they proposed to him, whether it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath-days (Matthew) (Barnes’ Notes).

“When he perceived or was informed of the presence of the afflicted sufferer in the synagogue, who no doubt had come there with a view of seeing Jesus and asking his help as a physician, Jesus publicly bade the sufferer to stand out in a prominent place in the assembly, and then in the hush that followed proceeded with his public instruction, the poor man with the withered hand standing before him. The Gospel which Jerome found among the Nazarenes gives at length the prayer of this man with the withered hand. "I was a mason earning my livelihood with my own hands; I pray thee, Jesus, restore me to health, in order that I may not with shame beg my bread." This Nazarene Gospel was only used among a sect of early Jewish Christians, and has not been preserved” (Pulpit Commentary).

“and he arose and stood forth; he rose up from his seat, and stood up in the midst of the synagogue, and of the people, that he might be seen of all” (Gill’s Exposition).

9Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy *it*?

“Jesus’ question goes beyond the fact that the healing could have been postponed a day. After all, it was not a critical illness that might take a turn for the worse if not treated immediately. Were that the case, rabbinical law would have permitted healing on a Sabbath. But Jesus implies in his double question that if any illness is left unattended when healing can be provided, evil is done by default. Jesus is not breaking the Sabbath; he is using it to do good to a human being in need” (Expositor’s Bible).

10And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

“Jesus turns from the crowd in the synagogue and from the Pharisees and speaks to the man, thus showing his authority over the Sabbath. “The man might have said that he had no strength; that it was a thing which he could not do. Yet, being commanded, it was his duty to obey. He did so and was healed” (Barnes 57).

“The poor man, having faith in this wonderful Healer – which no doubt the whole scene would singularly help to strengthen – disregarded the proud and venomous Pharisees, and thus gloriously put them to shame” (Jamieson).

Restored is *apokathistemi* in Greek and means “to restore to its former state”.

Whole is *hygies* in Greek and means “a man who is sound in body; to make one whole i.e. restore him to health; metaphorically, teaching which does not deviate from the truth; whole”.

The word “Whole” is used in the healing of the Woman with issue of blood, man with withered hand, blind Bartemaues, the centurion’s servant, Jairus’ daughter, nobleman’s son, the man at the pool, to name some of them.

Whole in English dictionaries;

Whole: cure, make whole, make intact, free of injury, unhurt, restored, free of defect or impairment, sound. Healthy, free from disease, deformity, mentally or emotionally sound, having all proper part; complete, total, undiminished, entire, undivided, unbroken, uncut, seamless.

11And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

They were filled with madness] Rather, unreasonableness. The word implies *senselessness*, the frenzy of obstinate prejudice. *communed*]

Rather, began to commune. This public miracle and public refutation clinched their hatred against Him(Cambridge Bible).

12And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

“We often think one half hour a great deal to spend in meditation and secret prayer, but Christ was

He went out into a mountain - Jesus was accustomed to resort to such places to hold communion with God, [Mark 6:46](#). He did it because it was retired, free from interruption, and fitted by impressiveness and grandeur to raise the thoughts to the God that had formed the high hills and the deep-shaded groves.

And continued all night in prayer to God - There has been a difference of opinion about this passage, whether it means that he spent the night in the act of "praying" to God, or in a "place" of prayer. The Jews had places of prayer, called "oratories," built out of their cities or towns, where they could retire from the bustle of a city and hold communion with God. They were built on the banks of rivers (compare [Acts 16:13](#)), in groves, or on hills. They were rude inclosures, made by building a rough wall of stone around a level piece of ground, and capable of accommodating a small number who might resort thither to pray. But the more probable opinion is that he spent the whole night in supplication; for:

3. It was an occasion of great importance. He was about to send out his apostles - to lay the foundation of his religion - and he therefore set apart this time especially to seek the divine blessing.

whole nights engaged in these duties.”(Barnes’ Notes).

13And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples:

52 PANT MAT:

Simon

Andrew

James

John

Philip

Bartholomew

Thomas

Matthew

James of Alphaeus

Thaddaeus

Simon the Kananite

Judas Iscariot