



HERMENEUTICS OF *θεραπεία* (HEALING) OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER IN LUKE 8:40-42,49-56 IN RELATION TO THE CHRIST APOSTOLIC CHURCH, NIGERIA

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Abstract: *Health is central to human living. Humans have always sought ways to conquer forces like illness, pain, and negative powers that jeopardize human living. Healing is the restoration of what has been hindered, whether at the relationship level, individual level, and at the level of the relationship between humanity and environment. Indeed, human beings exist as an integrated whole comprising the body, the mind, and the spirit. Therefore, health and illness affect the whole human being. The healing performed by Jesus involved more than the healing of the physical. Indeed, the healing performed by Jesus involved the restoration of the wholeness of human life. The study aims to examine the significance of the healing of the daughter of Jairus as recorded in Luke 8:40–42, 49–56 and the implications for the healing ministry of the Christ Apostolic Church, Nigeria. The study employs hermeneutic and exegetical approaches and descriptive survey design. Findings contribute to the affirmation that healthy life is central to realization of human purposes. The study concludes that healing is an intrinsic aspect of worship and salvation, therefore, includes healing. The study recommends that church leaders should emulate healing ministry of Jesus as portrayed in the Luke's Gospel.*

Keywords: *θεραπεία, Healing Miracles, Redemption, Sickness, Christ Apostolic Church (C.A.C.)*

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INTRODUCTION

Wholeness in different aspects, physical, emotional, and spiritual results from health. God's purpose for humanity is not only to be in good health but also prosperity as contained in III John 2. Healing is an important aspect of biblical theology. Sickness becomes a challenge that can be solved by the action of God, either through natural means or supernatural intervention. In the ministry of Jesus Christ, the role of faith in healing sometimes appears closely aligned. Abogunrin (2018)



explains the faith-healing connection as: "The connection between faith and healing is very evident in the sense that healing always takes place in an ambience where faith resides because faith becomes the catalyst in the process of healing." Healing in the New Testament occurs in an ambience of faith in the person and the authority of Jesus. Indeed, health is a ubiquitous value, and health services appear as a major cultural trend in many Western societies.

In a biblically based understanding of health and healing, salvation itself becomes integral as evidenced through the healing ministry of Jesus. According to Adeleke (2018), "health is generally understood to be a comprehensive concept comprising elements of physical, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being. Though health can be explained differently by those who practice medicine or public health as a profession, there is a close relation with the concept of salvation as understood within the Christian worldview." In terms of Jesus's healing ministry, faith is a crucial component. Normally, faith is held to comprise a religious concept of healing as encompassing only those aspects of human recovery that are not a part of medicine. This allows a clear-cut division of labor between a physical healing component entrusted to doctors' skills and a spiritual component separated to be looked after by the Church. Healing must encompass not only human beings but the whole of human existence including both natural as well as supernatural factors. This is true whether it is healing through the provision of such natural processes as are provided through God's grace or healing through direct intervention by God. Healing still utilizes the repair work done by God through the human and natural systems (Alana, 2019).

EXEGESIS OF THE HEALING OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER IN LUKE 8:40–42, 49–56

The case of the daughter of Jairus occurs in all three Synoptic Gospels, though each evangelist presents the episode in light of its own distinct theological concerns. Mark and Luke specify the synagogue official's name as Jairus, although in the case of Matthew, the official's name is not given. According to Aulén (2014), the available textual evidence suggests that the use of the name was originally in doubt in the Gospel of Mark, given that several early manuscript traditions do not use the name. According to Adarabierin (2014), the possible reason for not using the name may be in a deliberate attempt to standardize the account in the Gospel of Mark to resemble the shorter account in Matthew, although the use of the name may be a harmonization of Mark's account with the longer account in Luke.

Within some manuscripts, and particularly among the Byzantines, there exists an ablative phrase that makes the text of Mark significantly longer and seems to clarify the Greek construction. The idea that the apostle Jesus should come and place his hands on the child to heal her and give her life may well include this phrase but may well omit the words that seemed to be too harsh for Jairus to use—the apostle's presence apparently demanded greater respect (Back, 2015). However, Luke describes Jairus as "a ruler of the synagogue" who, in spite of his exalted position in society, seeks consolation from Jesus as a father would, when his only daughter is on the point of death. As the head of the family, he requests that his daughter is at the point of death is expedient to appeal for protection and care for the vulnerable members, especially the children in the family. According to Bruce (2019), Jesus could have healed Jairus's daughter from a distance, he decides to go together with Jairus, thus encourage his faith the consoling words, "Don't be dismayed; just believe." The decision of Jesus to go to the house of the leader of the synagogue demonstrates his determination to show respect to human life.



In particular, Jesus allows only Peter, James, and John to accompany him, along with the parents of the child. The presence of the three apostles is in witness and preparatory work for their later role in such acts. When they gain arrival, Luke portrays what is filled with deep collective grief. This kind of lamenting, which might also include professional mourners, has a very similar Yoruba culture of communal weeping and displaying emotions. The mourners erupt into laughter when Jesus says the child is only asleep and has not died, as they firmly know the child has indeed died (Baëta, 2017). However, Luke uses the verb *κατεγέλων* to show their mocking attitude. Even as people familiar with death and its physical appearance, Jesus' use of 'sleeping' has a far deeper theological implication. The use of *καθεύδει* by Luke to denote sleep, here is intended to denote death that can be reversed through the power of God. Thus, death is redefined by Luke, however, it's not necessarily a final and ultimate end but could be a temporary problem that can be solved by the power of God. Awodeyi (2021) further expatiates the inclusive nature of Jesus' ministry by emphasizing that both parents are allowed into the room along with the three disciples.

Thus, through awarding the mother an equivalent presence at this crucial stage, Jesus seeks to subtly subvert patriarchal presumptions common amongst Jewish communities and Africans generally who normally seek to exclude women from pivotal or ritual events. This event is also a precursor to Jesus' own resurrection, which would later come to pass when Luke announces through Jesus: 'He has been raised.' Thus, by confirming that 'if one died, yet by God's power they were raised to life,' Jesus at an early stage seeks to integrate an appropriately transformed conception of death through the lens of their own proposed resurrection: 'Their deaths did not lead to life; rather their living would lead to death' (Barth, 2018). Jesus' instruction that the girl be supplied with food after her restoration reflects the combination of the restoration of the spirit and feeding of the body. Thus, confirming the authenticity of the miracle.

On the other hand, from the literary viewpoint, intercalation is demonstrated by its placement in the healing of the woman who suffered from hemorrhage. Abogunrin (2018), posits that the high tension is as a result of the death of the girl, when Jesus is busy healing the other woman. However, this hopelessness is quickly dowsed by the greater power of God, which is demonstrated by the resurrection of the dead (Berkhof, 2019). The story also reminds the reader, where Jesus raises the son of the widow at Nain in the gospel of Luke 7:11-17. In both instances, the dead person is the only son, there is compassionate solace offered to the sorrowful families, and life is given by the authoritative word of Jesus. According to Alana (2019), these similarities hark back to the Elijah tradition in 1 Kings 17:8-24 and strengthen the messianic figure of Jesus as the bringer of good tidings to the poor, the suffering, and the weak. In this part of the Gospel of Luke, the presence of crowds is quite prominent. To begin with, they welcome Jesus in a zealous manner, but the depth of their spiritual understanding remains very shallow. As in the parable of the Sower, in the case of the crowds, their understanding gets choked by thorns of fear, doubt, and misunderstanding almost immediately. The derision of the crowds towards the announcement by Jesus of the girl's status reveals the spiritual shallowness of the crowd in contrast to the faith of Jairus or the woman who had the issue of blood (Carson, 2017).

Luke initiates the flow of the major plot with the expression "while he was still speaking." This indicates the transition back to the major plot that had been interrupted. The messenger sent to report the death of the girl refers to Jesus as "Teacher." This is an expression commonly employed by those outside of the immediate disciples of Jesus. Oderinde (2017) explains that Jesus' reaction is



one of placing fear aside and placing faith instead, summarizes the major theological insight of Luke 8, namely that authentic faith is grounded in an appropriate understanding of Jesus' identity and authority. Even those who are closest to Jesus have problems with such an understanding, as demonstrated by figures such as John the Baptist, who wants an affirmation of his messianic role. His citation of his acts of healing and restoring life, including that of those who are dead, is an objective proof of his mission and task that is divine. His restriction of access to the room is his way of preparing an appropriate setting where the parents and disciples of his own selection are able to gain an increased understanding of who he is, as a prelude to the eventual question of who he is that is asked later on in Luke 9:20 (Coogan, 2021).

As interpreted by Dodd (2012), although Luke's ordering of events appears to cloud the exact sequence between the mourners, this approach helps to create a clearer dramatic effect. “Do not weep” is an address intended for the larger group, while the act of revival happens within a private setting. “The laugh of the mourners expresses a rejection rather than a lack of understanding,” meaning they deliberately refuse Jesus' authentic declaration about death, reflecting an obtrusive ignorance. Wieland (2022) demonstrates that despite Jesus' crowd having an accurate understanding that the child was dead, it was Jesus' word of “dream” that exposed a hidden religious reality—that when confronted with “God's power,” even “death will undergo a transformation over which it will have no control.” But failing this realization would be a rejection of Jesus' “divine power.” Within this setting, Jesus' actions violate purity codes when intentionally touching this deceased child, mandating that “she arise.” He immediately responds, illustrating how powerful Jesus' word of “life” was—that this child responded right away, implying that this word was 100% potent. Instructing them “to give her some food” also illustrates that this child was fully restored (Odulana, 2021).

Moreover, it implies that this child was getting ready for re-introduction into a “social/family setting,” an important symbol demonstrating that this child was fully restored into a “typical,” meaning “normal,” living setting. The reaction of these parents illustrates how these parents were reflecting a typical human reaction when encountering “divine intervention.” Interestingly, though, this request for them “to tell no one” implies that Jesus was deliberately trying “to discourage sensationalistic reactions that might upstage his religious/missionary agendas.” Furthermore, within an introduction that precedes appointing a “Twelve,” implying that Jesus was launching an important religious “mission,” it was important that Luke point out that “the proclamation of the kingdom takes precedence over an exaggerated pre-occupation with ‘wondrous’ miracles” (Owolabi, 2015).

HEALING IN THE CHRIST APOSTOLIC CHURCH, NIGERIA

In the biblical paradigm and traditional African views of the world, healing is regarded as a community matter that involves the whole individual and the community. Oshun (2019) supports the idea that the paradigm of healing that views health and ill health as a community matter resonates with the African perspective of community responsibility. In other words, health and ill health are always regarded not just as personal or private matters in African traditional ethics and perspectives. Tolbart (2019) implicitly suggests that in African traditional perspectives of the world, health is not just the opposite of disease as the biomedicine tradition would perceive health or wellness. Instead, health is regarded as a state of balance encompassing physical energy, mental agility, and spiritual or cosmic alignment.



This is achieved through the right relationships with nature as well as with the divine, spiritual, and ancestral spheres. Failure of this web of relationships is thought to invoke health consequences for both the individual as well as the community (Olusola, 2019). Miracles of healing are very prominent in the theology and practices of the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC). As explained by Paulus (2019), the church reserves special days—especially Wednesdays and Fridays—for healing services, although prayers for the sick are considered an endless responsibility. In certain church assemblies, people who have come for healing are offered accommodative space in the Pastorium for the duration of their recuperation, whereas faith homes operate in a manner not much different from clinics or maternity clinics. The confession of faith of CAC, especially under Article (xii), section i, explicitly states the church's belief in the miracle of healing. In support of the church's confession, Oloye (2022) and Pink (2021) indicate that the church frowns on the dependence on orthodox medical practices and does not permit the use of ritual or symbolical substances considered characteristic of some Aladura bodies, such as green water or banana stalks.

This healing according to the CAC, as described by Pittenger (2016), encompasses numerous interrelated practices, which include the confession of sins, as sometimes the disease may be seen as the end product of these wrongs or the actions of hostile spirits; the laying on of hands, "anointing with oil when necessary, using holy water for drink or ablution, and fervent prayer with faith and spiritual power." These supplications are often couched in assertive language, invoking "the power of the name of Jesus to resist disease and to effect restoration." Great stress is laid upon "the power in the name of Jesus and in His blood." As stated by Rea (2015), Phimmer (2022) and Rengstorf (2013), the church's believers exhibit a deep faith in the efficacy of the sanctified water. The sanctified water is thought to serve as a channel of healing, a protective mechanism against forces of evil, and a healing agent against detrimental materials. Some degree of coercion of God to act is thought to be demonstrated by the healing prayers offered by the CAC. The healing prayer leaders are thought to act as if they are commanding God to act. This assumes a lack of understanding of the church's theological perspectives. The church's discouragement of the usage of modern medical facilities had been a subject of concern raised by some individuals, yet the church indicates that the efficacy of the healing of the afflicted demonstrated by the church captures the essence of the healing of the sick as commanded within the context of the bible (Robbins, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Indeed, healing within the ministry of Jesus is, in its most fundamental aspects, the activity of God's saving work in Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. Healing miracles, in particular, seem to be increasingly misused in the contemporary context of the Church, not only in terms of dubious claims but also with tragic accounts of people forgoing their necessary care in order to be healed by God, only to eventually die. Nonetheless, such misuses ought not to mean that the ongoing reality of God's healing work within the Church is somehow diminished. In fact, when the correct role of Jesus as the real healer is acknowledged and asserted within the Church, it would seem to limit the reality of ministers laying hold of too much personal power.



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