

## SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR SUNDAY – JUNE 11, 2023 @ CAPC OAKLAND

### Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION UPDATED EDITION

<sup>9</sup> As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax-collection station, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

<sup>10</sup> And as he sat at DINNER IN THE HOUSE, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with Jesus and his disciples. <sup>11</sup> When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" <sup>12</sup> But when he heard this, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. <sup>13</sup> Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous but sinners."

<sup>18</sup> While [Jesus] was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader came in and kneelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." <sup>19</sup> And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. <sup>20</sup> Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, <sup>21</sup> for she was saying to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well." <sup>22</sup> Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that moment. <sup>23</sup> When Jesus came to the leader's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, <sup>24</sup> he said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. <sup>25</sup> But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. <sup>26</sup> And the report of this spread through all of that district.

### LANGUAGE NOTES & TEXTUAL CONNECTIONS

**Matthew** The gospel of Matthew tells the story of the life, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Although anonymous, the early church fathers were unanimous in holding that Matthew, one of the 12 apostles, was its author. Today however modern critical scholars are unsure on the exact authorship. The Jewish nature of Matthew's Gospel may suggest that it was written by someone who thoroughly knew Judaism possibly in Syrian Antioch, addressed to churches that were largely Jewish in origin as opposed to multicultural.

the tax-collection station:: the tax was not on land and individual but tolls on transported good. Tax collectors were contracted to collect a certain amount; any surplus was theirs. The taxes served the Roman ruling elite. So it in a sense was traitors taxing their own people, skimming off the top for a profit, all to benefit the 1% of the empire.

DINNER IN THE HOUSE:: many significant things happen in houses worship (Matthew 2:11), merciful healing, and intimate, social relationships (8:6, 14; 9:6-7). Houses symbolize faith and unfaithful responses to God's will revealed in Jesus (see Matthew 7:24-27).

Sinners :: this word identifies them as those who disobey God's wills, such as Gentiles outside the covenant (Matthew 5:46-47) and any person whose manner of life was basically antithetical to the will of God. It divides not only Jew from Gentile but also "faithful" Jews from "unfaithful" Jews. It identifies, distinguishes, and disapproves of those not living in accord with a group's claims.

a leader :: or ruler, who approaches Jesus with respect by kneeling, like the magi and the leper (see Matthew 2:2, 11; 8:2 and also 4:9-10). It is not specified over whom he is a ruler, though the term indicates a member of the social elite.

come and lay your hand on her :: the actions of this ruler are contrasted with those of the leader/rulers of the Gentiles who lord it over other (Matthew 20:25). Here he recognizes his limits, seek Jesus, brings life, and benefits another person. He offers an alternative pattern of leadership appropriate to the community of disciple.

a woman who had been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years : Nothing is said of her social status. She appears to be contrasted with that of the leader. Her hemorrhage is not specified. The word used here appears in Leviticus 15:33 to denotes defiling bodily discharges (semen and menstruation). But its meaning is not limited to menstruation or vaginal discharge; it includes any bleeding. Nor does the story mention the impunity or social ostracism so prevalent in discussion of such bleeding (see Leviticus 15 – forced to live outside the camp). The emphasis falls upon her suffering (12 years!). No mention is made of other medical help. Is she too poor, or was it ineffective?

Psalm 30  
CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH VERSION

<sup>1</sup> I will praise you, Lord!  
You saved me from the grave  
and kept my enemies  
from celebrating my death.

<sup>2</sup> I prayed to you, Lord God,  
and you healed me,  
<sup>3</sup> saving me from death  
and the grave.

<sup>4</sup> Your faithful people, Lord,  
will praise you with songs  
and honor your holy name.

<sup>5</sup> Your anger lasts a little while,  
but your kindness lasts  
for a lifetime.  
At night we may cry,  
but when morning comes  
we will celebrate.

<sup>6</sup> I felt secure and thought,  
"I'll never be shaken!"

<sup>7</sup> You, Lord, were my friend,  
and you made me strong  
as a mighty mountain.  
But when you hid your face,  
I was crushed.

<sup>8</sup> I prayed to you, Lord,  
and in my prayer I said,  
<sup>9</sup> "What good will it do you  
if I am in the grave?  
Once I have turned to dust,  
how can I praise you  
or tell how loyal you are?"

<sup>10</sup> Have pity, Lord! Help!"

<sup>11</sup> You have turned my sorrow  
into joyful dancing.  
No longer am I sad  
and wearing sackcloth.

<sup>12</sup> I thank you from my heart,  
and I will never stop  
singing your praises,  
my Lord and my God.

LANGUAGE NOTES & TEXTUAL CONNECTIONS

The **Psalms** are a collection of 150 songs, or poems, that form a sort of worship songbook within the Bible. It was most likely written and compiled over many years, possibly taking its initial form in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE. But it is more than a treasury of prayers and hymns for liturgical and private use on chosen occasions. It was most likely viewed by its final editors as a book of instruction in the faith and in full-orbed godliness -- thus a guide for the life of faith in accordance with the Law, the Prophets and the canonical wisdom literature. There are psalms of lament; praise and thanksgiving.

**QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:**

- What engaged you, enraged you, or surprised you in these texts?
- What have people lost in the text from Matthew, that maybe their mourning or grieving?
  - The tax collectors
  - The ruler
  - The daughter of the ruler
  - The bleeding woman
  - The disciples
- As you read Psalm 30 how does it speak to you? Have you ever uttered such words or such a prayer in your life? When? Why? How did God interact with you and your prayer? Who in the text of Matthew 9 might have prayed such a prayer?
- What invitation do you hear the Spirit of God speaking to you – *or to us, as a church* – to act, speak, be, or change, through this word of scripture?