

# THE HEALING OF THE WOMAN WITH THE FLOW OF BLOOD

—by Bishop Nikophoros Theotokis—

**“Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by anyone, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.” (Lk. 8:43-44)**

The woman with this particular illness, according to the testimony of many historians, was of Greek descent, she was from the city of Caesarea located in the region of Philippi (which is also referred to as Paneas), and her name was Veronica. Out of gratitude and as a reminder of the healing she received from Christ the Savior, next to the entrance of her home she erected a bronze statue [of Jesus], at the base of which there emerged and grew a certain plant that would heal all types of illnesses. This statue remained standing, up until the days of Julian the Apostate (360 AD) who demolished it.

This woman had suffered from excessive blood loss for twelve consecutive years, and she had spent all her money on doctors. However, not only were the numerous physicians unable to help her, but her condition actually worsened, as St. Mark the Evangelist describes: **“She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse” (Mk. 5:26).**

She heard about Jesus and the amazing miracles He had performed. Thus, she decided to go see Jesus Christ. Having pushed her way through the crowd of people and having stood behind Him, she touched the edge of His garments. Immediately, that very moment, the flow of blood dried up, and the hemorrhage stopped. The woman realized and physically felt that her condition had been cured.

Take note of the circumstances associated with her ailment, and you will comprehend the immensity of the miracle. Hemorrhage resulting from excessive menstrual blood flow in itself is a condition that is difficult to cure. Due to the lengthy duration, that is the twelve continuous years, the abnormal flow of blood had become a natural physical state for this woman. The failure of the physicians to treat this illness, and the progressive worsening of her disorder made it just about impossible for this condition to be cured. Nonetheless, the bleeding stopped completely—once and for all—the very second the sick lady touched the edge of Christ the Savior’s garment.

What natural power held back—in an instant—the blood flow? What physical property—in the blink of an eye—stopped its movement and its course, which had persisted for twelve years? This was certainly not the result of any natural power or phenomenon. The godly power of the Savior Jesus Christ alone accomplished this. Unquestionably, the healing of the lady with the issue of blood is an astounding and extraordinary miracle.

**And Jesus said, “Who touched Me?” When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, “Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, ‘Who touched me?’” (Lk. 8:45)**

He who knows everything asks who touched Him. Everyone present, however, denies to have touched Him—apparently, no one saw the woman touch the edge of Christ’s garment. In turn, Peter and the rest of the Apostles say the following to Him: “Master, the multitudes of people are pushing You and crowding around You, and You ask, ‘who touched Me?’” Nonetheless, Jesus Christ insists that someone did indeed touch Him. Why? In order for the woman’s faith to be revealed, for the miracle of His godly power to be unveiled, and thus for everyone present to believe in Him.

**But Jesus said, “Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me” (Lk. 8:46)**

Ointments, creams, patches, and other medicines contain active ingredients. When placed on a particular part of our body, the microscopic chemical constituents within these drugs are released and, in following, absorbed through the skin. Thus, improvement takes place through the action of pharmacological compounds. The edge of the Lord Jesus Christ’s garment had no such properties—such medicinal elements were neither emitted from His garment nor absorbed by the woman’s affected tissues. Hence, when Christ says, “I perceived power going out from Me,” do not imagine that any material or chemical compound was released from His clothing. Rather, realize that Jesus Christ, Who knows the secrets of man’s heart, (aware of her faith and the fact that she touched His garment) healed her with His almighty, divine power.

**Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately (Lk. 8:47)**

The woman, likely on account of simplicity or ignorance, assumed that Christ did not notice that she had touched His garment and that He was not aware that she had been healed. When, however, she perceived that nothing remained undetected by the Savior, and when she realized that Jesus knows all things, she became frightened lest she upset her benefactor by remaining silent and concealing the miracle. Thus, trembling she fell before Christ and revealed to Him why she had touched His garment, and she affirmed in front of the entire multitude of people how she immediately became well.

**And He said to her, “Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace (Lk. 8:48)**

How did the most-merciful and all-powerful Lord respond? First, he expels her fear and gives her courage: “Daughter, be of good cheer.” Next, giving us a lesson in humility, He attributes the miracle not to Himself but to the woman’s faith: “Your faith has made you well.” Finally, He grants her the peace of God: “Go in peace.” Furthermore, He assured her that she would henceforth be free of her illness, as St. Mark the Evangelist states: **“And be healed of your affliction” (Mk. 5:34).**

Truly, this woman’s faith was great! Even though she was ill and weak (because fatigue is the major symptom associated with iron deficiency anemia), she raced toward Jesus Christ, she forced her way into the masses, and she pressed ahead despite being squeezed and crammed by the crowds. She believed that she would be healed from her illness if she only touched the edge of Christ’s garments, as St. Matthew the Evangelist states: **“For she said to herself, ‘If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well’” (Mt. 9:21).**

Also take note, dear reader, how people suffering from all sorts of illnesses were cured by Jesus Christ not only through the command of His words (Lk. 18:42), the laying of His hands upon them (Lk. 4:40), and the saliva from His mouth (Mk. 7:33 & 8:23), but also through the grace contained within His garments. We observe this same miraculous occurrence with the saints as well; for as the Holy Scriptures inform us, the **“handkerchiefs and aprons” (Acts 19:12)** which the Apostle Paul used to wipe the sweat from his face would cure sick people from their illnesses. From this, the Orthodox Church was taught to respect and revere not only the sanctified relics of the saints, but also the clothing and other personal objects of holy men.