

Summary Luke 13:10-17 Sabbath Healing 6th October 2024

Illustration: An account of the observance of Sabbath during our trip to Israel in recent years.

They were stringent on the observance of Sabbath in the days of Jesus. The religious leaders saw healing as part of a doctor's profession and hence classified as work which must be avoided on Sabbath, but there were exceptions to that rule.

Text - Luke 13:10-17 will be examined under three characters in the narrative: **1. The healed woman. 2. Jesus Christ the healer. 3. The Synagogue leaders.**

Introduction: Jesus was teaching in a synagogue. Among the worshippers was a woman who had suffered for 18 years due to the presence of a spirit that caused her to be bent over double (v.11) She "*could not straighten up at all*".

The healed Woman-

There was both a medical and spiritual reason for her affliction. Though suffering, she made her way to the place of worship and what a blessing that was for her.

Imagine her awful condition; being so bent over meant she was probably half her height and all she could mostly see was people's feet and the ground. It was impossible to really see the sky or look at others face to face. Imagine that we had someone with that condition in our church. How would you share the peace with her?

She would have few friends, if any, because of popular belief that if you suffered from such an affliction, you were a bad person and God was punishing you. People would be afraid that physical contact with her might make them unclean so, for 18 years, she must have been ostracised. What a lonely life! Due to pain when walking, sitting, or going to bed at night, normal life was impossible for her.

Application: Her physical condition gives us a picture of the horrible burden that the guilt of sin lays upon us - it weighs us down—presses us low—robbing us of life and joy! As King David described it regarding to his own time of guilt before God, "*For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer*" (Psalm 32:4). Who could ever free themselves of it? Who could ever lift themselves up to the condition of holiness? Try as hard as we may to free ourselves of it, we are helpless under the terrible burden of sin.

Frankly, if you can't see your own inward-self in this poor woman's outward condition, then you have never allowed yourself to come to terms with the truth of how holy God is—and of how guilty we all are before Him.

It's striking that she continued to attend the synagogue in spite of her sickness. She didn't give up and presume that God couldn't do anything for her. Rather than self-pity, self-isolation and moaning, she saw value in going to seek God. If she hadn't been there, on that Sabbath, Jesus wouldn't have noticed her and healed her.

Hebrews 10:25 encourages us to join with others to worship regularly. It is when you are down, and feel left alone that you need God most. In times of trial, don't abandon your faith, Christian counsel and fellowship. The challenge - is not to stay away from church for flimsy reasons but to draw closer to Jesus during times of despair or greatest need.

She didn't go to ask Jesus to heal her. However, when healed, the first person she must have seen eyeball-to-eyeball in a long while was Jesus, and she praised God (v13). She did not describe herself as lucky to be where she could be healed.

She recognised that Jesus is God, and He healed her. How wonderful it would be for each of us to **be so conscious of God's Sovereign unseen hand that we easily acknowledge Him as He moves in our lives** rather than attributing events to luck.

Jesus Christ the healer

Jesus saw her in the crowd and interrupted his teaching in order to transform this woman's life. He called her forward and first spoke freedom to her; then placed His hands on her and immediately she straightened up and praised God.

- It's possible that she preferred to be unnoticed and unobserved. 18 years of crippling affliction may have made her very shy about being noticed. On her own, she may never have come forward but He didn't wait for her. He called her to Himself. **I'm so very glad that, in my sinful condition and sense of condemnation, Jesus didn't wait for me to go to Him, but instead called for me to come!** (Matthew 11:28-30)
- **Application:** Note that Jesus dealt with her spiritual condition before healing her body. **The redemption of our souls is much more important than our physical ailments.** Jesus came to seek and save the lost, and that's where He started. Jesus came to free us from the prison of Satan's grip. Jesus demonstrated that suffering must not be allowed to continue till tomorrow if it could be helped today.

People, especially in the West, tend not to consider the possibility that some conditions are not just physical, but carry a hostile spiritual dimension. The possibility of spiritual dimensions in certain situations should make us more sensitive to prayer for those in such conditions, so that spiritual resources can be brought to bear. (James 5:14-15)

The Synagogue leader

-Upset at the irrefutable miracle, but blinded to God's work. Rather than rejoice, he rebuked the people. Interesting that he never spoke directly to Jesus. The Sabbath was his excuse. -Jesus called him and other opponents **hypocrites- those who put up an outward show but are really fake. V15**, Jesus refers the provision in their Law to water their animals. V16 He uses that to argue that if animals can be watered on the Sabbath, why should the woman not be healed. He showed how their own hypocrisy condemned them.

Application: I love this woman for her story; because she illustrates the burden I bore in my own sin, shame and guilt before I met Jesus and was forgiven. She also illustrates how burdens are taken away by Jesus. He looses the devil's captives; and makes the crooked ones straight. I also love the Lord Jesus, who shows His mercy to such sinners even in the place where people use religious rituals and rules to condemn.

But I/you must ask myself; Are there times I/you am/are a hypocrite like the synagogue leader, tied to traditions and rules? Or will I/you stand up for Jesus, ready to live a life that makes others say, *'That one is a child of God I want to know God too?'*

The best way to apply the lessons we learn from this woman's story is to come to Jesus just as we are; and to let Him set us free from burdens, be forgiven and be made whole. As the apostle Paul put it—*Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. (Gal 5:1).*