

Luke 13:10-17 Healing of a Woman with a Spirit of Infirmity.

Main idea: Jesus has a heart of compassion to set the oppressed free.

v10 Jesus is teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Jesus did seven miracles on the Sabbath (Mark 1:21-28, 29-31, 3:1-6, Luke 13:10-17, 14:1-6, John 5:1-18, 9:1-16).

V11 This woman has been bent over for 18 years! This is on account of a demon or unclean spirit. We are not told how the demon came in to this woman, only that she has a spirit of infirmity. Her condition is both physical and supernatural. Some physical conditions and sickness are due to satanic/demonic attack.

"Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?" Luke 13:16

"So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and afflicted Job with painful sores from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head. 8 Then Job took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes." Job 2:7,8

"Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." 2 Corinthians 12:7-9

Certainly, brothers and sisters involved in deliverance ministry would confirm that when people are delivered from being demonized, often they are healed from physical ailments of medical conditions.

"Her disability was severe, plagued her much of her life, and was undoubtedly well-known" Summers, *Commentary on Luke*

"Evidently a demon played some part in the woman's suffering. This meant that Jesus' healing involved overcoming supernatural as well as natural forces." Constable, *Notes on Luke*

Jesus came to set people free from their afflictions. That was his purpose. It was one of the ways that people would know that he was the Messiah and that the kingdom of God had come upon them.

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free," Luke 4:18

"But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." Luke 11:20

**Do you believe that Jesus has power over the spiritual forces of evil?
Do you believe that Jesus can heal today?**

v12,13 Jesus is in complete control of the situation. He again is demonstrating that he is the Messiah, God's chosen one. He has every reason not to touch the woman: it is the Sabbath,

she is a woman, she has a spirit of infirmity, and he would be made unclean if he touched her. This miracle is a public display that he is divine i.e. that Jesus is God.

"Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves." John 14:11

In this encounter with the demon, notice that it is not the demon that has the stage. Jesus doesn't even allow the demon to speak!

"In the synagogue there was a man possessed by a demon, an impure spirit. He cried out at the top of his voice, **34** "Go away! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" Luke 4:33,34

"When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth." Mark 9:20

"When Jesus stepped ashore, he was met by a demon-possessed man from the town. For a long time this man had not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived in the tombs. **28** When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell at his feet, shouting at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!" Luke 8:27,28

There is something very beautiful about this scene; no one is too far from the love of God! I believe that this incident is all about Jesus and the woman. It highlights God's compassion for the oppressed. She has suffered long enough (v16) and the time for her suffering needs to come to an end immediately. Jesus stops in the middle of his teaching because the woman is more important. In Jesus' eyes, she has to become the priority. He has compassion on the woman and heals the woman instantly which shows that he has power over the supernatural and acting under God's authority.

This miracle happened so that God gets the glory and the woman's response is correct in that, '... immediately she straightened up and praised God'. She attributes God with the miracle and thus by her actions is declaring that God is in their midst!

"The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, **7** maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin." Exodus 34:6,7

What do you need the Lord's compassion for in your life today?

Who do you know that needs the compassion of the Lord?

Is the Holy Spirit asking you to be compassionate towards someone?

v14 Notice that the synagogue ruler talks to the people - including the woman - instead of Jesus. Instead of praising God for the miracle which has undeniably just happened, the synagogue ruler chastises the people because of his interpretation of the law! He refuses to believe that Jesus is the Messiah and therefore God. The Jews did not allow work on the Sabbath and healing was the work of a doctor. Therefore, Jesus was breaking the Sabbath by 'working'. The irony is that Jesus' profession was as a carpenter and not a doctor. This should have been even more obvious that a miracle had taken place. The synagogue ruler is totally blinded and without mercy. His heart has no compassion for the suffering of the woman - despite the fact that she has had this condition for 18 years ! He is being legalistic and hard hearted. The synagogue ruler epitomizes those who cannot interpret the signs that God is

among them (Luke 12:56). His lack of compassion is the direct opposite response to the lavish outpouring of compassion from Jesus. He is indignant by the compassion shown on the Sabbath. He would rather see that this woman remain in bondage because of his interpretation of the law than rejoice with her because she has been set free.

"He (the synagogue ruler) had not even the courage to speak directly to Jesus." Barclay, *Gospel of Luke*

The synagogue ruler is chastising Jesus indirectly about the law of the Sabbath. However, the one he is chastising is Lord of the Sabbath!

"Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. **28** So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." Mark 2:27,28

Do you struggle to show compassion to people this morning?
Are you so 'religious' that you have become blinded to people's needs?
Do you need to repent for having a hard heart towards those who need your compassion?

v15,16 Jesus has a harsh rebuke directly towards the synagogue ruler and calls him a hypocrite. He refers to his legalism by referring to the law. He defeats his argument by arguing from his own basis - the law. The law says that it was legal to give your ox or donkey a drink of water on the Sabbath and the synagogue ruler would have done this. Jesus points out his hypocrisy by saying that the synagogue ruler cares more for his ox than this woman with the affliction. According to the synagogue ruler, it is acceptable for this woman to remain in pain but not acceptable for his ox to go thirsty!

"The expression "a daughter of Abraham" indicates not only that she was Jewish but also a true believer, a woman of faith." MacDonald, *Believers Bible Commentary*

"The difference is that she was unbound by God, and she was not set free from a stall but from the captivity of Satan." Garland, *ECNT Luke*

If Jesus were here today what would he say about the condition of your heart?

v17 Jesus puts his opponents to shame. His opponents felt 'humiliated', instead they should have felt remorse and repented of their hypocrisy. Sometimes sin can blind people. As the woman was set free, the synagogue ruler is in bondage to legalism. She received compassion, mercy and a new life; the synagogue ruler received condemnation, was unbelieving and hard hearted towards God.

"Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son." John 3:18

This last section illustrates the two choices about Jesus. Either the person rejoices and believes in Jesus or they reject him and do not believe in Jesus as Savior.

What do you believe about Jesus today?