

CRIPPLED BY A DEMONIC SPIRIT

Luke 13:10-17

Those opposing Jesus were more worried about their animals, than about their own people who were suffering.

ISRAEL'S FORMAL REJECTION OF THEIR MESSIAH AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ARE PRESENTED AS JESUS TRAVELS TOWARD JERUSALEM (9:51-19:27).

- A. Demonstration of rejection 9:51-11:54
- B. Instruction in view of rejection 12:1-19:27
 - 1. Proper conduct for His followers 12:1-48
 - 2. Distinguishing consequences of alternatives 12:49-13:9

TRUE NATURE OF REJECTION 13:10-16:31

Luke combines a series of incidents from Jesus' ministry which demonstrate the true nature of the rejection he is describing:

The theological objections to Jesus were a smoke screen, to veil the true motive of Israel's leaders: *they don't want to receive Him!*

DEMONSTRATION OF ISRAEL'S CONDITION 13:10-17

DEMONSTRATION BY ILLUSTRATION 10-13

Israel's condition is illustrated, by the account of the crippled woman.

Description of her symptoms 13:11

She couldn't walk
She is bent over- she walks crooked.

Her most obvious problem is the inability to walk.

She didn't begin this way.
She has been afflicted by this illness for 18 years.
Apparently she began normal, enjoyed life like any healthy person,
and then was stricken by this affliction.

She has suffered for 18 years. This is no temporary affliction. Despair and hopelessness have undoubtedly set in.

18 years of pain have no effect on Jesus' ability to solve it. They add to the hopelessness of the victim, but have no effect on the One who came to liberate her.

She is not capable of straightening herself out.

No use to blame or yell at her. She can't do anything about it.

Description of her real problem

While the most obvious problem is her inability to walk, that crippled condition is caused by an evil spirit. 13:11

Jesus is able to free her from both cause and symptom.

No indication given that any conditions were placed on her healing. Jesus speaks and it is done. We don't know if she ever did trust Him—or if she even knew who He was. He took the initiative.

The woman's gratitude is shown by praise to *God*—not the healer, even when it was Jesus who did it!

Symbolic significance of her problem

Inclusion in a theological discussion of Jesus' rejection implies deeper significance than the first impression you get listening to the historical facts.

The woman represents Israel.
Israel is also unable to walk—according to God's standards.

Christ had been calling the nation to Himself—even as He called this woman. He offered to make the nation whole so they could walk uprightly before Him. But the nation would not come. The story indicates their need and how He can meet that need, if they will come to Him.

John Martin: "It was Jesus' mission . . . to loose them from crippling influences and to bring them to uprightness. Here was a graphic example of Jesus' touch, bringing the woman to a position of uprightness. Jesus healed her by His words and by touching her. Immediately she straightened up and praised God."

Ironside: "All through the centuries since, that is what the gospel has been doing—making crooked people straight. Sin makes us crooked. . . . As God looks down upon us He discerns the crookedness in all of us; but when we come to Christ He can straighten us out."

Luke relates Israel's condition to demonic sources—following Jesus' example (cf. 11:24-26).

Jesus is able to solve their problem and produce praise to God – but they don't want Him to do that!

DEMONSTRATION BY THE LEADERS' REACTION 14-17

Further light is given concerning Israel's condition in the reaction of the synagogue official.

Instead of responding positively to His invitation, they fight His use of power on the Sabbath. As if to say, "go away and come again another day. This isn't the right time."

Presentation of their problem 13:14

Rather than recognize the miracle, or its implications concerning Jesus' power over demonic forces, they become angry because He acted on the Sabbath.

The official couldn't say much about Jesus because of the great deed He has done, so he takes out his frustration on the crowd.

The irony in the attack: he tells them to come back during the week to be healed – but who will do it? This woman has been there for years and no one has helped her. Her opportunity to be healed came because that was the day *Jesus was there*. If she waited a day, she'd lose her chance.

He is hypocritical in many ways, but none more significant than using the law to object zealously to a deed which fulfilled the spirit and purpose of the law.

He is zealous for the letter, while denying its fundamental principle: love.

Evidence of their real problem 13:15-16

They are more interested in their animals than in the suffering of God's people.

The official treated his animals better than he treated her. They were of use to him. What good was this woman?

He cared more about legalism, rules and religious system than about people.

He has a vested interest. He doesn't want anyone or anything to threaten his own position. He doesn't want to shake the status quo.

If God permits people to help thirsty animals on the Sabbath, wouldn't He want us to care for other people, who are made in His own image?

If they could loose their animals to water them (when they have been bound but a few hours), it must be alright to loose this poor woman from her infirmity (after keeping her bound for 18 years).

The opportunity is present for Abraham's children to be set free and the Pharisees are concerned about what day it is.

What would be more appropriate on the day of rest than to free a woman from bondage and set her at rest from the physical struggle to survive that she had been living for the past 18 years?

Satan puts people in bondage, but freedom comes from trusting Christ.

By trying to prolong the woman's bondage, *they were collaborating with Satan*—though doing it in God's name—, not with God.

20th C. parallel-movements value animal rights more than human rights. People protect wildlife but kill human life. That protect the eggs of eagles, but allow human fetuses to be killed. Something is wrong with our perspective, especially when these practices are promoted in the name of Christianity.

God loves animals and wants us to use this resource wisely, but every time Scripture says that, it goes on to say, "*How much more does He care for us, who were made in His own image?*" If He cares about an eagle's egg (and He does!) then He certainly cares about unborn humans!

If God cares about cruelty to animals, then He certainly cares about child abuse and spouse abuse, and other crimes against humanity.

Response from the crowd 13:17

Jesus' opponents were humiliated, but the crowds were delighted.

Jesus' mighty deeds excited the crowds and motivated them to worship God.

HOW DOES THIS MESSAGE RELATE TO OUR LIVES TODAY?

God is still doing glorious things. He is still straightening out crooked people. This morning He is offering to straighten out your life.

Are you "doubled over" and unable to straighten out your life?

Have you been bound for years by a spirit you can't overcome to get yourself straightened out?

Jesus came to free you from bondage to that spirit. He can set you free today, just as he did this woman on that Lord's day.

She walked out with her life straightened out because she had come face to face with Jesus. There were still issues to deal with, but He had straightened her. He made the difference. It no longer mattered for how long, or how, Satan had held her bound. She was free, because Jesus touched her!

The significance is allegorical—but it is still true: when Jesus touches us we are made straight. It doesn't matter how many years Satan has bound us, or what kind of gross, degenerate, crookedness he has used to hold us. When Jesus touches your life, he straightens out the crookedness of your past and makes you straight!

*She knew who deserved the glory for what Jesus had done for her. She didn't straighten out her own life. She couldn't. God did it all and He deserved all the glory—but He did it completely and she was free! **13:13***

If men care enough for a donkey to loose it and lead it to water. How much more does God care about people that He Himself has made and loved!

What tensions between caring for people and keeping religious rules do you experience? Which gets more attention? Why?

There are still people around who care more about the rules than they do about the person who has been bound by Satan for 18 years and years to be freed from his shackles. Which are we?