

For the week beginning Monday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025

**Luke 13:10-17**

## **Jesus Heals a Crippled Woman**

<sup>10</sup> Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. <sup>11</sup> And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. <sup>12</sup> When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." <sup>13</sup> When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. <sup>14</sup> But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the Sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured and not on the Sabbath day." <sup>15</sup> But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it to water? <sup>16</sup> And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the Sabbath day?" <sup>17</sup> When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame, and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things being done by him.

Recently, seeing a friend for the first time in several years I noticed he was quite bent over and it reminded me of the well-known passage in Luke about the bent over crippled woman. Whilst my friend's condition is caused by a medical condition, this passage demonstrates the Divinity of Jesus through His healing action.

Jesus was teaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath when he saw a bent over woman "with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years".(v11) A malevolent spirit oppressing her, not necessarily 'possessing' her but clearly burdening her. Calling her over to Him, He healed her affliction with just a few words.

Addressing her the way Jesus did instantly restored both her social and physical well-being – the social aspect emphasised in v16, where Jesus identifies her status as a member of the community by addressing her as "a daughter of Abraham", in other words, as "one of us" as we too are sons and daughters of Abraham. She was finally free – free to live in the Grace and Mercy of the One who loved, cared for and knew everything about her. Standing tall she praised God. What a moment! Jesus' action toward the woman beautifully demonstrated His Divinity.

Among the people present were the angry religious leaders of the synagogue, challenging Jesus for healing on the Sabbath day, something strictly forbidden at that time, but Jesus dealt with this immediately. He offered a new perspective of the Law, which shamed his opponents who then joined in with all the rejoicing at the healing!

The bent over woman represents everyone who has ever struggled to rise above the pain of oppression, low self-worth and judgment from others. She is everyone who has struggled with illness, addictions, loss of value, or of innocence. She is everyone who has lived in a situation that is intolerable, or been told "You Can't do this or you can't do that" and believed it.

She is anyone who has lost hope.

Healed by Jesus she is a powerful symbol of deliverance, leading to full restoration – a wonderful reminder of God's redeeming Grace and Mercy!

Lent is a time for us to remember and identify with those who suffer under the weight of physical, emotional or spiritual burden. With the Grace of God, may each one of us look around, seeing people who are burdened and meet their need the best way we can, filled with the Love of God.

Rev'd Tish Bird

