

Sabbath Rest
Jesus Heals on the Sabbath
By Robin Davenport, Guest Writer

Today's Treasure

One Sabbath day as Jesus was teaching in a synagogue, he saw a woman who had been crippled by an evil spirit. She had been bent double for eighteen years and was unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Dear woman, you are healed of your sickness!" Then he touched her, and instantly she could stand straight. How she praised God! But the leader in charge of the synagogue was indignant that Jesus had healed her on the Sabbath day. "There are six days of the week for working," he said to the crowd. "Come on those days to be healed, not on the Sabbath." But the Lord replied, "You hypocrites! Each of you works on the Sabbath day! Don't you untie your ox or your donkey from its stall on the Sabbath and lead it out for water? This dear woman, a daughter of Abraham, has been held in bondage by Satan for eighteen years. Isn't it right that she be released, even on the Sabbath?" This shamed his enemies, but all the people rejoiced at the wonderful things he did.

Luke 13:10-17

While teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath, Jesus sees a woman who has been crippled for 18 years. His heart is moved with compassion. Her freedom from bondage becomes His top priority. Jesus calls her over, speaks healing to her, and with one touch she is immediately healed. For the first time in eighteen years, she stands up straight! Most likely she had suffered constant back pain, labored breathing, digestive issues, mobility difficulties, social exclusion, and a constant view of the ground. Just one touch from Jesus and her contracted muscles and joints began to relax. For the first time in 18 years, she took a long and deep breath as she began to unfold into a standing position. Her eyes soaked in the sights of the world above the ground as she stood up straight. Using all the breathing capacity her expanded lungs would allow, "How she praised God!"

The leader in charge of the synagogue lashed out in anger at the crowd. "There are six days of the week for working. Come on those days to be heard, not on the Sabbath." Jesus protected the true purpose for the Sabbath and those who had come to Him with sincere hearts. He addressed the root heart problem of the self-righteous leaders. "You hypocrites!" He publicly removed their masks of self-righteousness and revealed their

shame. No wonder they hated Him. They stood naked before the crowd with no defense. Anger and resentment gave way to shame and nakedness.

“But all the people rejoiced at the wonderful things he did.” The people came to the synagogue on the Sabbath with an open heart to receive. They became eyewitnesses who could testify of the power and love of God because they had seen a woman who had been crippled 18 years immediately stand up straight at the word and touch of Jesus. They had witnessed bondage give way to deep breaths of relief and renewed strength enabling this woman to shout praises to God.

LIFE GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT

How do we approach the Sabbath at the synagogue? Do we enter the church as the crippled woman with open hearts that accept Jesus’s healing and freedom from bondage? Freedom that brings deep breaths of praise and joy from our innermost being. These deep breaths of praise and joy testify that we have truly experienced Sabbath rest with Jesus. Or do we approach the Sabbath at the synagogue with hearts of bitterness just looking for something to criticize? Are we trying to justify our own self-righteousness and hide behind a mask of hypocrisy that would reveal our shame and nakedness? Do we become angry and point out the faults of others when we see those in bondage walk away in freedom? Are we nursing a root of bitterness that keeps us from experiencing Sabbath rest with Jesus?

PRAYER

Father, Please reveal any mask of hypocrisy we wear to try to hide our shame and nakedness. Set us free from any bondage that restricts our ability to breathe deeply and without restraint. Empower us with your joy to testify that we have experienced the freedom and healing that comes from Sabbath rest in You.
In Jesus name. Amen