

Luke 13:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

Analysis

Jesus heals on the Sabbath: 'And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself' (καὶ ἴδοὺ γυνὴ πνεῦμα ἔχουσα ἀσθενείας ἔτη δεκαοκτώ, καὶ ἦν συγκύπτουσα καὶ μὴ δυναμένη ἀνακύψαι εἰς τὸ παντελές). This woman had suffered 18 years under demonic bondage ('spirit of infirmity,' πνεῦμα ἀσθενείας), bent double, unable to straighten. Jesus' compassion overcomes Sabbath regulations—He calls her 'daughter of Abraham' (v.16), affirming her covenant status despite physical affliction. His healing demonstrates that the Sabbath's true purpose is liberation from bondage, foreshadowing gospel freedom from sin's slavery.

Historical Context

Jewish Sabbath restrictions had multiplied through oral tradition (Mishnah tractate Shabbat lists 39 prohibited activities). While emergency medical care was permitted, Jesus' critics viewed this chronic condition as non-emergency. Jesus exposes their hypocrisy—they untie animals for water on Sabbath (v.15) but object to liberating humans from Satan's bondage. His argument from lesser to greater (animals vs. humans) follows rabbinic logic while subverting their conclusions. This confrontation exemplifies Jesus' Sabbath controversies throughout His ministry.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' healing on the Sabbath reveal that religious rules must serve human flourishing rather than become ends in themselves?
2. What does calling this afflicted woman 'daughter of Abraham' teach about God's covenant faithfulness even in suffering?

Interlinear Text

καὶ οἶδού, γυνὴ ἦν πνεῦμα ἔχουσα ἀσθενείας ἔτη
And behold a woman there was a spirit which had of infirmity years
G2532 G2400 G1135 G2258 G4151 G2192 G769 G2094

δέκα καὶ ὀκτὼ, καὶ ἦν συγκύπτουσα καὶ μὴ
eighteen And G3638 And there was bowed together And no
G1176 G2532 G2532 G2258 G4794 G2532 G3361

δυναμένη ἀνακύψαι εἰς τὸ παντελές
could lift up in G3588 wise
G1410 G352 G1519 G3838

Additional Cross-References

Luke 8:2 (Spirit): And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

Luke 13:16 (Parallel theme): And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?

Psalms 6:2 (Parallel theme): Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed.

Mark 9:21 (Parallel theme): And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child.

Luke 8:27 (Parallel theme): And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs.

Acts 4:22 (Parallel theme): For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed.

Luke 8:43 (Parallel theme): And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any.

Psalms 146:8 (Parallel theme): The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous:

Psalms 145:14 (Parallel theme): The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.

Psalms 38:6 (Parallel theme): I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long.