

Read Exodus 20:8-11; Deuteronomy 5:12-15

Take a look at your insert. Discuss the Sabbath.

1. What is different about Jesus' understanding of the Sabbath vs. the synagogue the leader's perspective?
2. What might our Sabbath look like if we adopted Jesus' perspective?

THINKING POINTS:

1. In what way does this lesson change, or enhance your understanding of God/Jesus/Spirit?



TALKING POINTS

Lesson 6

"The Woman Who Was Set Free on the Sabbath"

Luke 13:10-17

Focus scripture

Luke 13:12-13

"When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, 'Woman, you are set free from your ailment. When he laid hands on her immediately she stood up straight and began praising God.'"

Food for Thought:

Is there a time in your life when you have had a significant perspective change?

1. <https://ifcouldteachthebible.com/2017/09/21/the-number-eighteen-in-the-bible>

2. shiva.com, LLC | Copyright © 2021. All Rights Reserved.

3. "The Tower of Siloam". Associates for Scriptural Knowledge. 2003. Retrieved 2008-02-10

"Attention is the beginning of devotion." Mary Oliver

Review: What do you recall from last week's lesson of the woman anointing Jesus, that was meaningful for you

Vocabulary:

Shabbat or **Sabbath** (Hebrew: שַׁבָּת). Although frequently translated as "rest" (noun or verb), but "ceasing [from work]" is a more literal translation, as resting is not necessarily denoted

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND:

Our story today is of the Bent Woman, being released from her condition on the Sabbath; with the number 18 – numerology – playing a role.

As we are learning in our studies, the writers of the gospel used stories to make a point. Regardless of whether the timeline or the numbers are historical, their use by the gospel writer points to a meaning deeper than the words themselves. The first hearers and readers of our gospel text had different perspectives than we do. They heard these stories differently, hearing and recognizing symbols and references we often miss. One of these arises in the number of years that the woman was bound.

"The number 18 is a complex number in scripture, denoting, both oppression and life. In Israel's history, 18 years recalled several times of oppression. Luke also refers to the number 18 in the passage preceding our story today.

Hebrew components of the words that make-up eighteen: Eight is "more" than the perfect of seven and the "teen" is related to ten, or "tithes." Some scholars paint the idea of "plumpness" or beyond enough that is God's." ¹ (*edited*)

In Hebrew numerology "chai" Which translates as "life," equals the number 18. Numerically, the words consist of the eighth (8th) and tenth (10th) letters of the Hebrew alphabet Chet (ח) and Yod (י), adding up to eighteen. Together these letters form "chai" which signifies life and represents being alive." ² (*edited*) In Jewish circles even today \$18, or multiples thereof, are common as monetary gifts for celebrations.

This is also a story about perspective: The perspective of the woman who was bent over for 18 years, who only saw what she could see from that position. It is also a story about perspective as Jesus and the religious leader looked at what God's word says about the sabbath from two different perspectives.

The woman in our story was bound by her bodily dysfunction to look in only one direction, and to not see other perspectives. This is also a metaphor for psychological and emotional trauma and bondage.

Bondage, and/or freedom from bondage:

Read Judges 3:12-14; Judges 10:6-8; Luke 13:4

1. Is there a significance that all three passages (Luke especially) are using the number 18?
2. Does it have more meaning if it's historically/numerically accurate or parabolically accurate?

Historically, Siloam is a neighborhood south of Jerusalem's Old City. "Archaeological excavation has revealed what some Biblical scholars believe to be the ruins of the tower. If so, it is likely the ruins belong to a second tower that was rebuilt after the first tower collapsed. The ruins are a circular foundation approximately 6 metres across."³ It is currently part of greater Jerusalem and is referred to as the City of David.

Freedom from bondage

Read Luke 13:10-13

1. Consider your daily activities. How would you go about your tasks if you were bent at the waist, unable to stand up straight?
2. What does the woman's presence at the temple say about her persistence?
3. In what ways could her condition be used as a metaphor?
4. How might you describe this as less of a healing, but more like freedom from bondage?

Read Luke 13:14-17

1. How did Jesus see this woman?
2. What name does Jesus give this woman?

The Sabbath

Shabbat (Sabbath) observance entails refraining from work activities, often with great rigor, and engaging in restful activities to honor the day. Shabbat is a festive day when Jews exercise their freedom from the regular labors of everyday life. It offers an opportunity to contemplate the spiritual aspects of life and to spend time with family. It is meant to be a good thing, not only rest, but uplifting and joyous.

According to Jewish law, Shabbat starts a few minutes before sunset. Candles are lit at this time. It is customary in many communities to light the candles **18 minutes** before sundown.