

Read the passage through carefully and imagine that *you* are the woman. Did you ask to be healed? How did Jesus know about you? How did you feel when Jesus called out and touched you?

Read it through again and imagine you are the synagogue official. Why were you angry? What did you know about Jesus and his teaching before this incident – had *you* invited Jesus to teach in the synagogue that day?

How did you feel at the end of the day?

Read through a final time as if you were Jesus. How did you know about this woman? Did you expect the official to be upset when you healed her on the Sabbath? Luke writes that the official was angry, did you respond in anger?

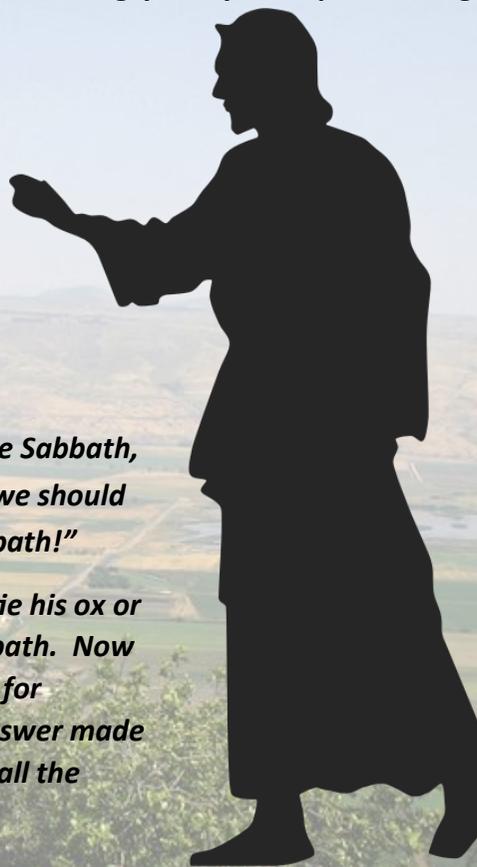
Bible Passage - from Luke 13: verses 10-17

One Sabbath Jesus was teaching in a synagogue. A woman there had an evil spirit that had made her ill for eighteen years; she was bent over and could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called out to her, "Woman, you are free from your illness!" He placed his hands on her, and at once she straightened herself up and praised God.

The official of the synagogue was angry that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, so he spoke up and said to the people, "There are six days in which we should work; so come during those days and be healed, but not on the Sabbath!"

The Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Any one of you would untie his ox or his donkey from the stall and take it out to give it water on the Sabbath. Now here is this descendant of Abraham whom Satan has kept bound up for eighteen years; should she not be released on the Sabbath?" His answer made his enemies ashamed of themselves, while the people rejoiced over all the wonderful things that he did.

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Further thoughts:

What does this encounter tell us about how Jesus treated people? – look at his interaction with the woman, then with the official. What does it tell us about Jesus' attitude to the Jewish Law?

What do we understand about the woman having an evil spirit which had made her ill? Jesus said Satan had kept her bound for eighteen years – what did he mean by this? Would this incident have been dealt with in the same way in the 21st Century?