

THE RISING OPPOSITION TO JESUS

BIBLE TEXT : John 11:47-54; Luke 13:10-17

LESSON 146 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Greater love bath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

John 11:47-54

⁴⁷ Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

⁴⁸ If we let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

⁴⁹ And one of them, *named* Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

⁵⁰ Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

⁵¹ And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

⁵² And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

⁵³ Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

⁵⁴ Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

Luke 13:10-17

¹⁰ And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.

¹¹ 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*.

¹² And when Jesus saw her, he

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

The Healing of the Crippled Woman

Jesus continued His good work: forgiving sins, healing the sick, and bringing happiness to the downtrodden wherever He went. The scribes and Pharisees, however, did not want to see anything good in what Jesus did. He had condemned them for their sinful hearts, and they were jealous of the happiness He brought to those who believed in Him.

One Sabbath Day when Jesus was preaching in a synagogue He noticed a woman who was badly crippled. She had come to the synagogue to worship God, probably never considering that she would ever be well again, but loving God anyway in spite of her affliction. When Jesus saw her He called her to Him and healed her.

The woman had been bent over for 18 years and always had to look at the ground. Now she could stand straight like everyone else. Think how happy she must have been!

No Love

Was the ruler of the synagogue happy that a miracle had been performed in his church? No. He was like the rest of the scribes and Pharisees who said, "Away with him, away with him." They did not want this just

Man to rule over them. He said that Jesus was breaking the Sabbath. Can you imagine his thinking it was wrong to heal that poor crippled woman on the Sabbath? If the ruler of the synagogue had had any love in his heart, he would have rejoiced with the woman that such a wonderful Person was here who could heal sick bodies.

A Child of Abraham

The Jews considered themselves much better than the people of the other nations. If this woman had been a heathen the ruler might have thought he had a reason for his attitude; but she was a "daughter of Abraham." She was a Jewess and had the same religion as he — until Jesus healed her. Then she believed on Jesus.

Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees that they would take their cattle out to give them a drink on the Sabbath. They were thoughtful and kind to their animals, but they did not care about this woman who had suffered for 18 years. When Jesus reasoned with them thus, they became ashamed of themselves. And the friends of the woman rejoiced greatly.

A Greater Miracle

Jesus had performed another great miracle which caused much arguing among the people. He had raised Lazarus from the dead.

Many of the Jews had come to mourn with Mary and Martha over the loss of their brother; and when they saw the miracle of his coming back to life, some of them believed that Jesus was the Messiah. Who else could bring back to life a man who had been dead four days? But there were others who were angry

called *her to him*, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

¹³ And he laid *his* hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

¹⁴ And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.

¹⁵ The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou* hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or *his* ass from the stall, and lead *him* away to watering?

¹⁶ 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?

¹⁷ And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

QUESTIONS

- 1 What miracle irritated the Jews in today's lesson?
- 2 Where was the miracle performed?
- 3 How did the ruler of the synagogue feel about this miracle?
- 4 How do you think he should have felt?
- 5 What was the prophecy of Caiaphas?
- 6 In what way was it true?
- 7 What was the decision of the council?
- 8 How did the Jews suffer for crucifying Jesus?

because of the great deed Jesus had done. They went to the religious leaders, the members of the Sanhedrin, and wanted them to stop the work Jesus was doing. They argued that if such miracles continued the people would forsake the old Jewish faith and would gather around Jesus and want to make Him king.

In Bondage

The Jews were in Roman captivity, but so long as they lived quietly the Romans allowed them to worship as they pleased and let the high priest do a certain amount of ruling. Now if the people should want to proclaim Jesus king, it would mean an effort to overthrow the Roman government. Of course that would make Caesar angry and he would come to fight against the Israelites; and no doubt being stronger, would put down the revolution and take away such liberties as they had.

Caiaphas was the high priest that year. The priests were no longer the descendants of Aaron, as God had planned. Any man could buy the position from the Roman government for money. As head of the council, Caiaphas now spoke up in agreement with the arguments that the scribes and Pharisees had given: "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." Why should all the Jews suffer at the hands of the Romans? Jesus was the one who was causing all the trouble. Why could He not be put to death and thus stop all the controversy before Christ's followers got out of control?

True Prophecy

God knew that the people would listen to what the high priest said, for they still considered him, more or less, their representative before God. So although Caiaphas meant his angry words to be abusive to Jesus, God used him to speak a true prophecy of the Savior's mission. He had come to die to save sinners from eternal death. The death of one Man, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was to provide the atonement for the sins of many.

Those words brought a decision from the council. They would immediately take Jesus and put Him to death. In that way they would put down what they considered a revolutionary plot, and would spare the Jewish nation from ruin.

Iniquity's Full Cup

If these Jews could only have realized what they were doing! (**Luke 19:43-44** ⁴³ For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, ⁴⁴ And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation). God does not send His full judgment until the cup of iniquity is full. We remember that God had promised to destroy the Amorites for their wicked deeds, but He told Abraham that in his day their wickedness was not yet complete. Four hundred years later came their destruction,

The Jews had often, in their history, rebelled against God, and He had let trouble come upon them. But they filled their cup of iniquity when they crucified Jesus, the Messiah who had come to rescue them and to save them from their sins. They had thought to keep themselves in favor with the Romans by slaying the Christ (which was only an excuse for their jealousy), and instead, God's judgment came upon them in the form of a siege by the Roman soldier, Titus, in which siege unspeakable cruelties were put upon the Jews. Today they are still suffering God's

judgment. The men who crucified Jesus said, "His blood be on us, and on our children," and how truly have those words followed them until this present day!