

Matthew 12:1-32

The Question about the Sabbath (1-8)

- ◆ Not long afterward Jesus was walking through some wheat fields on a Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, so they began to pick heads of wheat and eat the grain. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to Jesus, “Look, it is against our Law for your disciples to do this on the Sabbath!” Jesus answered, “Have you never read what David did that time when he and his men were hungry? He went into the house of God, and he and his men ate the bread offered to God, even though it was against the Law for them to eat it—only the priests were allowed to eat that bread. Or have you not read in the Law of Moses that every Sabbath the priests in the Temple actually break the Sabbath law, yet they are not guilty? I tell you that there is something here greater than the Temple. The scripture says, ‘It is kindness that I want, not animal sacrifices.’ If you really knew what this means, you would not condemn people who are not guilty; for the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.”
- ◆ The Pharisees are accusing the disciples for picking up wheat to eat as it was against the law to do such on a Sabbath day. In defence of the disciples Jesus gave two examples of David and of the priests. The message he was driving was of showing kindness rather than enforcing a law that was of no good in that situation.
- ◆ We should learn to assess a situation and give fair judgement accordingly to that situation, sometimes we should use our humanity rather than the rigid law. Let’s do unto others as we would want them to do unto us, we should show empathy. We should exercise humanity.

The Man with a Paralyzed Hand (9-14)

- ◆ Jesus left that place and went to a synagogue, where there was a man who had a paralyzed hand. Some people were there who wanted to accuse Jesus of doing wrong, so they asked him, “Is it against our Law to heal on the Sabbath?” Jesus answered, “What if one of you has a sheep and it falls into a deep hole on the Sabbath? Will you not take hold of it and lift it out? And a human being is worth much more than a sheep! So then, our Law does allow us to help someone on the Sabbath.” Then he said to the man with the paralyzed hand, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and it became well again, just like the other one. Then the Pharisees left and made plans to kill Jesus.
- ◆ The rigid law can make us foolish, these law enforcers would withhold good because it’s a Sabbath day. The law is good to prevent a state of anarchy but sometimes it needs to be bypassed by humanity. We should aim to do good always, we shouldn’t take advantage of loopholes in the rigid law to cause harm.

God's Chosen Servant (15-21)

- ◆ When Jesus heard about the plot against him, he went away from that place; and large crowds followed him. He healed all the sick and gave them orders not to tell others about him. He did this so as to make come true what God had said through the prophet Isaiah: “Here is my servant, whom I have chosen, the one I love, and with whom I am pleased. I

will send my Spirit upon him, and he will announce my judgment to the nations. He will not argue or shout, or make loud speeches in the streets. He will not break off a bent reed, nor put out a flickering lamp. He will persist until he causes justice to triumph, and on him all peoples will put their hope.”

- ◆ The prophecy of Jesus mission and deeds by prophet Isaiah was being fulfilled. Jesus was Gods beloved servant and he had the Spirit of God upon him. He didn’t argue, shout or make loud speeches in the streets. He did break a bent reed nor put out a flickering lamp (i.e. he didn’t condemn the lost rather he uplifted them). He persisted till justice was triumphatic and all people should put their hope in him. That was Christs mission and how he executed it. He is still doing the same today; when we’re bent reed he straightens us or when our lamp is flickering and makes us blaze.

Jesus and Beelzebul (22-32)

- ◆ Then some people brought to Jesus a man who was blind and could not talk because he had a demon. Jesus healed the man, so that he was able to talk and see. The crowds were all amazed at what Jesus had done. “Could he be the Son of David?” they asked. When the Pharisees heard this, they replied, “He drives out demons only because their ruler Beelzebul gives him power to do so.” Jesus knew what they were thinking, and so he said to them, “Any country that divides itself into groups which fight each other will not last very long. And any town or family that divides itself into groups which fight each other will fall apart. So if one group is fighting another in Satan's kingdom, this means that it is already divided into groups and will soon fall apart! You say that I drive out demons because Beelzebul gives me the power to do so. Well, then, who gives your followers the power to drive them out? What your own followers do proves that you are wrong! No, it is not Beelzebul, but God's Spirit, who gives me the power to drive out demons, which proves that the Kingdom of God has already come upon you. “No one can break into a strong man's house and take away his belongings unless he first ties up the strong man; then he can plunder his house. “Anyone who is not for me is really against me; anyone who does not help me gather is really scattering. For this reason I tell you: people can be forgiven any sin and any evil thing they say; but whoever says evil things against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who says something against the Son of Man can be forgiven; but whoever says something against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven—now or ever.
- ◆ The Pharisees were saying Jesus’ power to drive out demons was from the demons leader Beelzebul. Jesus then taught an important lesson, united we stand, divided we fall. The kingdom of Heaven was upon the people, it was driving out the evil but the people we not seeing it. Our sins can be forgiven but saying evil things against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

Jesus was breaking the chains of the law that were being used to put people in bondage by appealing to humanity. It’s not only about the law but also society imposed standards and ways of living. We might be bound in multifunctional ways that have been passed down through generations, they need to be broken. Let’s call Christ and he will help us break those chains.