

WEEK 23, 2025

Bible Reading

	Event	Matt	Mark	Luke	John
1	Jesus Labors on the Sabbath	12:1-8	2:23-28	6:1-5	
2	Miracle 11 – The Withered Hand	12:9-14	3:1-5;	6:6-11	
3	Miracle 12 – Many Healed	12:15-21	3:7-12	6:17-19	
4	Miracle 13 – Demon-possessed blind and dumb healed	12:22-23			

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. **Matthew 12:1** “At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were hungry, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.
2. But **when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day.”**

If they said Jesus’ disciples did that which was not lawful to do on the sabbath day, that means there was a law of the sabbath day.

- a. What is sabbath, and state its origin? (1mark)
- b. Which day is the weekly sabbath day? (1mark)
- c. State two examples of work that the law of sabbath forbids. (2mks)
- d. What is the penalty for violating the law of sabbath? (1mark)

Answer:

- a. Sabbath means rest. It means to stop working. And it originated in the book of Genesis where God rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done. (Genesis 2:2)
- b. The weekly sabbath day is the seventh day of the week. That is, Saturday.
- c. Examples of work forbidden on sabbath are :-
 - i. Harvesting or Preparing Food was prohibited. (Exodus 16:22-30. This explains why the Jews frowned at Jesus’ disciples in Matthew 12 who harvested corn to eat. Eating food is allowed on the sabbath, but harvesting and preparation of food were to be done prior the sabbath day).
 - ii. Carrying of burdens was prohibited (Jeremiah 17:21-22. This explains why the Jews frowned at the man Jesus healed on the sabbath day, who carried his bed in John 5:10.)

- d. The penalty for violating the law of the sabbath is death. (Exodus 31:14-15; Numbers 15:32-36)

2. When Jesus' disciples were accused of violating the law of the sabbath in **Matthew 12**, and were therefore deserving of death, how did Jesus justify them?

Answer

Jesus justified his disciples by quoting two scenerios :-

- i. In 1 Samuel 21:1-6, when David and his team were **hungry**, they broke the law of God and were not blamed for it. They entered into the temple, and ate the sacred bread that only the priests were allowed to eat.
- ii. He also referenced how the priests were permitted, by the law, to break the law of sabbath by working in the Temple on the sabbath day. The Temple gave them immunity in breaking the sabbath. As such, Christ, who is greater than the temple, has the power to immune those working for him against the sabbath law. (This means, even if they are counted guilty of breaking the sabbath law, Christ has the power to give them immunity, being greater than the temple)

(More explanations :- Jesus was saying, yes, the law of the Sabbath says, "Do not work on the Sabbath day, and anyone who works on the sabbath is to be put to death", yet, there were exemptions to that law. One was the case of hunger, like David and his team, and the other was the case of the priests working in the temple. In fact, Jesus also gave another exception in Matthew 12:11-12 and Luke 13:15 of how if someone is in danger or sickness, work of deliverance and healing is to be allowed. All these are to say that, the law is good, but our wellbeing is more important than the law itself. Hence, he quoted Hosea in Matthew 12:7, saying, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice. Meaning, he is more compassionate about our wellbeing than his desire for religious observances like keeping the law of the sabbath.)

3. In several places in the four gospels, Jesus declared himself to be greater than things and people. State three of such things/people.

Answer

- i. He is greater than the temple. (This appeared in the bible reading for this week. Matthew 12:6.)
- ii. Greater than Solomon in wisdom. (Luke 11:31)
- iii. Greater than Jonah in preaching and calling. (Luke 11:32)
- iv. Greater than Abraham in age. (John 8:53-58, for he existed before and from the beginning of time.)
- v. Greater than Jacob in giving. (John 4:12)

4. A preacher quoted **Exodus 20:8**, “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy”, and said, that scriptures instructs believers to observe sabbath and not go to work or do their business on Sundays. What is your opinion on this?

Answer

First and foremost, the sabbath is not Sunday, but Saturday. Sunday is the first day of the week, while Saturday is the seventh day of the week.

Secondly, if a man is to keep the sabbath day, it goes beyond not going to work or opening shop, it extends to not washing clothes, not cooking food etc. Deciding not to observe sabbath is deciding not to do any work whatsoever on that day.

Thirdly, Apostle Paul said, in **Colossians 2:16-17**, that we believers are freed from being judged by any man on keeping the Sabbath. For the sabbath was foreshadowing Christ, and the moment Christ came, he fulfilled sabbath and we no longer need to keep the sabbath day.

5. In the Old Testament, the law of Sabbath forbids working on the Sabbath day. Work goes beyond going to farm or doing buying and selling. Healing and deliverance of people or animals were also counted as work. Jesus, on a sabbath day, desired to heal a man with withered hand in **Matthew 12:9-13**, how did he justify this work of healing on such a day?

Answer

He asked the audience, if a man among them had one sheep, and that sheep fell into a pit on the sabbath day, will such man work on that sabbath day by lifting the sheep out of the pit, or not? The answer is of course, Yes. Then, he said, how much more then is a man better than a sheep. He ended by saying, though work is forbidden on sabbath day, but it is lawful to do good works of healing and deliverance on sabbath day.

6. According to God's plan, Jesus' ministry was meant to last for about 4 years. But, right from the beginning of his ministry, his life was endangered by :-
- i. Envy of the Pharisees and religious leaders of his high wisdom, miracles and fame.
 - ii. The multitude of people that come to him for healing and deliverance.

By what wisdom did Jesus keep himself from being killed in such circumstances?

Answer

For the Pharisees and religious leaders, in many cases, Jesus withdrew himself from them to save his life. (In **Matthew 12:15, Mark 3:6-7**, he withdrew himself from the Pharisees who wanted him dead. In John 4:1-3, he left Judea for them. In John 8:59, he hid himself and went out of the temple. So, in many cases, he withdrew himself from them)

For the crowd, in **Mark 3:7-9**, when great multitude came to him from everywhere, he spoke to his disciples that they should get a ship ready for his escape, because of the multitude, otherwise, he would be thronged (crushed) by them. (This emphasizes the necessity for protocol officers for ministers of God, especially those that are famous. If a minister of the gospel is not well

organized and safety conscious, the crowd of people will put such minister's life at risk. Wisdom is therefore needed).

7. **Mark 12:18,19,21** “18. Behold my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. 19. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. 21. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.”

In the Scripture above, Mark quoted Isaiah 42:1-4.

- i. Who was the servant mentioned in **verse 18**?
- ii. Explain what was said of the servant in verse 19.
- iii. Also, briefly explain what was said of him in verse 21.

Answer

- i. The servant mentioned by Isaiah was Christ. It was Christ that God spoke of, saying, “This is my beloved Son, **in whom I am well pleased**”.
- ii. In verse 19, it was said that he shall not **strive** nor **cry**. Yes, he did not **strive** or fight the Pharisees and religious leaders who wanted him dead. Instead, he often withdrew himself away from them.

And when Isaiah said no man shall hear his voice in the streets, he fulfilled that, in that he told the people not to make him known. (**Matthew 12:16**)

- iii. Verse 21 talks about the Gentiles (non-Jews) trusting in him. This was fulfilled, in that great multitudes came to him, including the Gentiles to hear him and be healed. (**Mark 3:7-8 and Luke 6:17 mention people from Idumea, Tyre and Sidon who came to him. Those cities were of the Gentiles (non-Jews). They came to him and were healed of their diseases**).

8. **Matthew 12:22** “Then was brought unto him one **possessed with a devil**, blind and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.” **(GOLDEN)**

- i. What does it mean to be possessed with a devil?
- ii. Can a person who is born-again be demon-possessed and why?
- iii. What is the difference between demonic-possession and demonic-oppression, and relate both to a believer.

Answer

- i. The word “possessed” means “owned”. So, to be possessed with a devil means to be owned by a devil. A man who is demon-possessed is owned, controlled and influenced by the devil.
- ii. A person who is born-again cannot be demon-possessed. That’s because a man who is born-again is bought by the blood of Jesus, and therefore belongs to the Lord. At the moment of conversion, a believer becomes indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and immediately becomes owned by God. God and Satan can’t own a soul simultaneously. Therefore, if a man is owned by God, he can’t be owned by Satan at the same time.
- iii. Demonic-possession is about ownership while demonic-oppression is about attack (oppression). A believer cannot be demon-possessed, but a believer can be demon-oppressed. If a believer gives room for Satan, Satan can oppress and afflict such believer. But being oppressed by Satan does not mean the believer is possessed or owned by Satan.

(NOTE :- If a believer gives room to the devil, mostly through sin, it can open the door for the devil to oppress them. This does not mean such believer belongs to Satan, but through sin, they have opened the door for the enemy. We can therefore be in a church meeting, and see a brother/sister who we know to be born-again and spirit-filled to yet be manifesting the presence of a devil. Not in all cases does this imply that their salvation is not genuine. We need to exercise authority over such demon, and deal with it. If we are not sure of the person’s salvation, we may as well need to lead such to the Lord).

9. Not every sickness is natural, some are spiritual, caused by demons. Using **utterance**, **sight**, **mindset** and **strength**, state how the devil can oppress a man. And what is the way out?

Answer

- **Utterance** :- Devil can hold a man's voice, rendering him dumb. **Matthew 9:32, Luke 11:14**
- **Sight** :- Devil can hold a man's sight, making him blind. **Matthew 12:22**
- **Mindset** :- Devil can attack the mind of a man, making him lunatic (mad). **Matthew 17:14-18**
- **Strength**. Devil can make a person weak, and not be able to lift certain part of the body. **(This is also called spirit of infirmity. Luke 13:10-17)**

If any of these sicknesses is caused by the devil, visiting the hospital is not the way out. Only the power that is in the name of Jesus can be used against such. And certainly, this power works all the time. Glory to God!

10. In **Matthew 12:22-30**, after Jesus healed the man possessed with a devil of blindness and dumbness, the people asked themselves in **verse 23**, "is not this the son of David?"

- i. What did the people mean by asking "Is not this the son of David?"
- ii. What was the Pharisees' response to the question?
- iii. Briefly summarize Jesus' response to the Pharisees.

Answer

- i. When they asked "is not this the son of David?", they meant, "is not this the Messiah (Christ)?" Because, among the Jews, the phrase "son of David" was used in referencing the anticipated Messiah. **(So, when Bartimaeus the blind man cried, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me". He called him "the son of David", acknowledging him to be the Messiah that the prophets spoke about).**
- ii. The Pharisees, in denying Jesus' Messiahship, responded the people, that although Jesus was casting out devil, but it was not by the Spirit of God, but by the spirit of Beelzebub.

- iii. Jesus replied to the Pharisees, saying, every kingdom, city or house divided against itself cannot stand. If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself, and how shall then his kingdom stand?