**July 15, 2022**

**APOSTOLIC VERSE BY VERSE BIBLE STUDY**

**Straightway Church of Christ, Inc.**

**37 Market Street, New Haven, CT 06513**

**Bishop M. Ruel McCoy, Sr., Servant / Shepherd**

**The Late Bishop E. Samuel Green, Establishmentarian**

**IN THIS PLACE IS [ONE]**

**GREATER THAN THE TEMPLE**

**MATTHEW 12:1-30**

***Matthew 12:1-2***

***1 "At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were and hungred, 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."***

These Pharisees were caught up in the law. Pharisees were known for their knowledge of Scripture and their love of rules. According to the Mosaic law, you couldn’t work on the Sabbath, but the Pharisees had created so many additional regulations and introduced so many scenarios to the way the Sabbath was handled that they considered the disciples’ actions equivalent to working in the grain fields. They did not realize that the Word of God had taken the form of flesh, and this was He that was the actual “fulfilment of the law” walking through the corn field. These Pharisees were so caught up in the "thou shalt nots" in the Bible, they had no time to do anything for God.

***Matthew 12:3-4***

***3 "But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him;"***

***4 "How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?"***

Notice Jesus’s response to the judgmental Pharisees: Haven’t you read what David did? That is to say, “Don’t you know your Bibles?” To mention David was to mention a Jewish hero. You see David, the beloved of God, truly understood God. God is not out to get us. God is our very best friend and knows when we are hungry and thirsty. He will make a way for us to meet our needs, not our wants. When David and his men were running from Saul, he took the bread of the Presence from the house of God—the tabernacle—for them to eat, even though it was only for the priests. Scripture itself, then, testifies that God’s laws were never meant to get in the way of taking care of the necessities of life. The Sabbath was for the benefit of man, not for his destruction.

***Mark 2:27 “And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:”***

***Matthew 12:5-8***

***5 "Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?"***

***6 "But I say unto you, That in this place is [one] greater than the temple."***

***7 "But if ye had known what [this] meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless."***

***8 "For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day."***

Jesus also reminded them that the priests violate the Sabbath all the time! They have to do God’s work on the Sabbath. The Pharisees were legalists, serving to remind us that whenever the commands of God prevent you from loving and serving God, you’re using his commands inappropriately. Jesus quoted from Hosea 6:6 to show that the Lord is a God of mercy, not judgmentalism. He’s not impressed if you know your Bible but have a heart of stone. Finally, Jesus finished with the clincher: Something greater than the temple is here. The only thing greater than God’s house is God; therefore, Jesus was letting them know who he was. Then he added, The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath. And since it’s his show, he gets to decide how the Sabbath is honored. You see, what Jesus was trying to get them to do was to understand the "spirit" of the law, and not the "literal" law. Jesus was trying to explain that the building is not what we should worship. We are to worship God with our spirit. You see, if they truly understood God, they would have realized who Jesus was and would have not criticized Him for anything. You see, He was not subject to their ordinances.

***Matthew 12:9-10***

***9 "And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue:"***

***10 "And, behold, there was a man which had [his] hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him."***

On another occasion, Jesus saw a man with a shriveled hand in a synagogue, and the Pharisees asked if it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath. However, they weren’t asking an honest question but looking for an opportunity to accuse him.

***Matthew 12:11-12***

***11 "And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift [it] out?"***

***12 "How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days."***

Jesus turned the tables on them, as he so often did. Who wouldn’t help his sheep if it fell into a pit on the Sabbath? No one, of course. The Pharisees, then, were willing to do for a sheep what they wouldn’t do for a hurting man! Jesus reasoned those acts of mercy don’t dishonor the Sabbath especially since people are more valuable than animals. You see, these religious people were trying to find some reason to get rid of Him. They knew that Jesus would not let the sabbath keep Him from helping someone in need. He was telling these people, in a way that they could understand, what He was doing. They had sheep, and He knew that if they had a sheep missing, they would go and find him, even on the sabbath. Jesus is our Shepherd, and we are His sheep. He takes care of His sheep.

***Matthew 12:13-16***

***13 "Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched [it] forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other."***

***14 "Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him."***

***15 "But when Jesus knew [it], he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all;"***

***16 "And charged them that they should not make him known:"***

Obedience to Jesus brings restoration. This was the case here, as well. As soon as this man did what Jesus said, His hand was restored. The Pharisees were jealous. They had no power in their lives. You see, these people would not accept the Saviour, so He just moved on to others who would. The reason He did not want it told, was so He could work freely. Then he mercifully healed the man, while the Pharisees showed their true colors by plotting to kill Jesus. Though his crowds were growing as he healed them all, Jesus warned them not to make him known.

***Matthew 12:17-24***

***17 "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,"***

***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 shew judgment to the Gentiles."***

***19 "He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets." Matthew 20 "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory."***

***21 "And in his name shall the Gentiles trust."***

***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."***

***23 "And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?"***

***24 "But when the Pharisees heard [it], they said, This [fellow] doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils."***

Attacking Jesus for his Sabbath observance wasn’t enough for the Pharisees. When he healed a demon-possessed man and the crowds went wild, the Pharisees accused Jesus of driving out demons by the power of Beelzebub—that is, by Satan—the ruler of the demons. You see, Jesus will not force Himself on anyone, but when the religious people turned Him down, He turned to the Gentiles. These people knew Jesus as one of them. They thought He was only flesh and blood. They knew for sure that they could not heal this man. They did not realize whose presence they were in. He wasn’t seeking public notoriety. He wasn’t seeking to be a superstar. As Matthew says, he wanted to fulfill God’s Word as written in Isaiah 42:1-4, demonstrating the Messiah’s compassion.

***Matthew 12:25-30***

***25 "And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:"***

***26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?"***

***27 "And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast [them] out? therefore they shall be your judges."***

***28 "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."***

***29 "Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house."***

***30 "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."***

This was really a ridiculous statement. Jesus observed how illogical their accusation was: If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. Satan may be thoroughly evil, but he’s more clever than that. The devil would not cast himself out. He does not want us to be free. He doesn’t work against his own plan, and the Pharisees knew it. The only alternative was the truth: Jesus had driven out demons by the Spirit of God. To illustrate, he spoke about tying up a strong man in order to steal from him. Jesus was saying that he could plunder Satan because he’s stronger than Satan. His kingdom power over the forces of darkness had been displayed before their eyes. He was warning them, here, that they were speaking out against God. This Scripture, above, was telling us how to cast out evil spirits. First bind them, and then cast them out. You cannot straddle the fence. You are either the friend of Christ, helping win souls to Him, or you are His enemy, driving people away from God. There is no middle road. We cannot go uncommitted. Jesus’s power over the devil was evident, and he told the Pharisees that every sin and blasphemy could be forgiven. That’s why he came. But the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be. God revealed the reality of who Jesus is through his mighty words and works. If anyone rejects this demonstration of the Holy Spirit’s power and attributes it to the devil, he is rejecting salvation. To say from your heart that the clear manifestation of Jesus Christ is the work of Satan reveals a hardened heart. If a person is worried that he has committed the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, then he clearly has not done so yet. He must show repentance and come to Jesus by faith for forgiveness and the free gift of eternal life. Jesus even gave this opportunity to the leaders who were accusing him and invited them to take their stand with him.”

**QUESTIONS**

1. What day was it when Jesus went through the corn field?
2. What did the disciples do?
3. The Pharisees are caught up in what?
4. What did David do when he was hungry?
5. What is Jesus trying to get them to do pertaining to the law?
6. In V-6, Jesus is greater than what?
7. What did Jesus, restore in the synagogue?
8. Why did they ask Jesus if it was lawful to heal on the sabbath?
9. Jesus is our \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
10. What brings restoration?
11. Jesus was tired of the stiff-necked church and turned to whom?
12. The people were amazed when Jesus healed the dumb man, why?
13. What was the Pharisees' statement about healing the dumb?
14. If this was the Spirit of God, what had happened?
15. What we do first, before we cast out the demon?
16. If you are not for Jesus, you are\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,
17. You are either the friend of Jesus are you are His \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.