

vs. 1-14:
While in Galilee, Jesus and His disciples are passing through a grain field on the Sabbath. His disciples picked some grain and ate as they went (allowed by Jewish law). The only problem was that it happened on the Sabbath and violated the teachings of the Pharisees concerning the Sabbath. The Pharisees protested. Jesus responded by citing examples from Jewish history of how David and even the priests have violated the Law, yet because of the circumstances were not held accountable. Jesus declares that He is greater than the temple and He is Lord of the Sabbath. God desires people to be compassionate and act in a loving way rather than becoming legalistic and judgemental.

Jesus then healed a man in the synagogue on the Sabbath to show that God wanted them to do good to one another. He shows how unfair and ungodly their ways are by citing how they would help a sheep on the Sabbath (and not feel wrong about it) and yet would not help their fellow man (even though he is of greater value). The Pharisees had, had enough and left to devise a way to kill Him.

vs. 15-21:
Jesus knew what the Pharisees were planning and left the area so He could continue His ministry until the appointed time. As he healed the people, He told them not to tell anyone who He was. This fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy (Isaiah 42:1-4). Isaiah had spoken of God's servant who would proclaim justice to all, not seek to injure or harm people until His victory for justice is done. In the servant, all people will put their hope. (Jesus has won the victory by His resurrection and all people (all nationalities) are welcome to put their trust in Him.

vs. 22-37:
When Jesus healed the demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, many people began to wonder if He was the Messiah. The Pharisees, wanting to put an end to such speculation, accused Jesus of being a servant of Satan (Beelzebub). Jesus refutes their accusation, explaining that if that were the case, then Satan's kingdom would fall because of its division. No, He was driving out the demons by the Holy Spirit. He then explains His power over Satan and that this has to be true, otherwise Satan would not allow Him the victory.

He then declares that anyone who does not serve Him, is His enemy. Anyone may speak against Him and be forgiven, but if they speak against the Holy Spirit, they will not be forgiven.

Because of the Pharisees blaspheming and denying the work of the Holy Spirit, they will not be forgiven. Nothing good can come from them for they are evil. Jesus then says that on the day of Judgment they will have to face the consequences of what they have said.

vs. 38-45:
Some of the religious leaders asked for a sign, but Jesus denied their request (except for the sign of His resurrection). The Gentiles of the past who repented, will condemn the Jewish people of Jesus' day because of their unbelief. When a person has been rid of the evil in their lives, it will return in greater force; unless that person fills the void with good.

vs. 46-50:
Jesus finally instructs the people that if they want to be part of His family, they must do God's will. They are the only ones that He will recognize.

STUDY GUIDE

MATTHEW 12:

1. What did the Pharisees say about Jesus' disciples picking some heads of grain on the Sabbath?
2. Who is Lord of the Sabbath?
3. What did Jesus say it was lawful to do on the Sabbath?
4. What did the Pharisees do when Jesus healed on the Sabbath?
5. What, according to Isaiah, will the one with Gods' Spirit, proclaim?
6. What did the Pharisees say, when Jesus healed a blind and mute person?
7. What did Jesus say had happened, if He cast out demons by the Spirit of God?
8. Who is against Jesus and who scatters?
9. What will not be forgiven?
10. Where will the Son of Man be for 3 days and nights?
11. What 2 people will rise up in judgement and condemn that generation?
12. Who is Jesus' brother, sister and mother?

BONUS:

1. Is Sunday, the "Christian Sabbath"? Explain.
2. What does Jesus' ability to cast out demons, demonstrate? Explain.
3. Do evil spirits live in people today? Explain.