

Introduction:

- Last week we looked Mt 11:25-30: Jesus prayer, Jesus declaration, and Jesus' invitation. We saw what it meant to enter into Jesus rest.
- In chapter 12 we will see Matthews presentation once again of the authority of Jesus as it is challenged by the Pharisees and religious leaders. Chapter 11 showed us the tragedy of not trusting in Messiah. Chapter 12 reveals the depths of those who not only do not receive who Jesus is but who oppose Him.
- There are three areas of opposition to Jesus in chapter 12. One, His attitude toward the Sabbath. Two, exorcisms, and, three the demands for a sign. To the Pharisee Jesus is a:
 - law breaker
 - agent of Satan
 - and a self appointed teacher.
- All three are challenges to Jesus authority. Again, this is the message of Matthew. Jesus has all authority. He is Messiah!
- One other key phrase to keep in mind in this chapter is: "One greater than...is here!" Again, it is the reiteration of the authority of Jesus.

I. Lord of the Sabbath

- A. In chapter 12 there are 2 challenges to Jesus regarding the Sabbath. We must keep in mind as we look at them that it is the desire of Jesus that we enter into 'rest' and stay free of burdensome heavy yokes.
 1. The controversy is not whether the Sabbath should be observed but rather "is it permissible, or lawful" on the Sabbath.
 2. The OT was clear that no work was to be done on the Sabbath. The question that was left was: "What is work?" This is where the Pharisees become quite meticulous. This is where the Pharisees come up with their questions on eating and healing.
- B. Eating on Sunday
 1. vs 3-6, 8 actually ask the question: Who has the right to declare what is and isn't forbidden on the Sabbath? Jesus makes the claim that He does! One greater!
 2. Secondly, Jesus wanted to answer the question: Is it permissible to do good on the Sabbath? Jesus wanted to get behind the original principle of why the law was given in the first place.
 3. So the Pharisee faced with these two question are made quite uncomfortable and begin to want to get rid of Jesus.
 4. The disciples hunger gives Jesus a basis to which to tie in the story of David. He does not justify their actions based on need but on His own authority.
 - a) Note verse 3 and verse 5, "Haven't you read...?" This literally says, "It is obvious to anyone who is familiar with OT text.
 - b) 1 Sam 21:1-6, "It is David's authority to override a legal prescription, not his attitude to the sabbath as such, which is at issue in Jesus' argument. The point is *who* it was who was, exceptionally, allowed to break it." France, R. T. (2007). *The Gospel of Matthew* (p. 459). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co.
 - c) That is why Jesus could say, "There is One who is greater (than David here).

5. Think of the shock it would have been for the Pharisees to hear "There is one greater than the Temple here."
6. Next Jesus hits them with the prophetic utterance, "I want you to show mercy not offer sacrifices." Therefore this passage become the prelude to vs. 12 "the law permits a person to do good on the Sabbath."
7. Son of man is powerful language from Dan 7:13-14. Son of Man is Lord.

C. Healing on Sunday

1. Second sabbath story. This time the Pharisees take the initiative and ask, "It is permissible to heal on the Sabbath?" It is clearly a challenge to see how Jesus will handle this.
2. In this passage Jesus does not appeal to authority but to common sense.
3. He meets their challenge and throws it right back at them.
4. They now start plotting to kill him.

D. Vs. 15-21 The Suffering Servant is once again introduced. Is 42:1-4 Lamb the slaughter begins to be His reality.

II. Lord Over Demons

A. The accusation vs. 24: He gets his power from demons. The point of the accusation is to destroy Jesus credibility in the eyes of the people. Also, sorcery was punishable by death according to the Mishna - the rules from the law. This was the 'set up' to be able to kill Jesus, so it was very serious accusation. This reveals the true character of the Pharisees and The accusation brings fire down upon the Pharisees.

1. It puts them into the sin against the Holy Spirit.
2. It brings the fire of by your words you will be acquitted or condemned.

B. Vs. 23 "The crowd is amazed" again the motif of Jesus authority stands out. It is the first time that Messiah language appears. Super natural power demands a supernatural source.

1. Is 49:24-25 is the passage Jesus is alluding to. God delivers Israel from her oppressors.
2. In that passage Israel is loosed. In this passage the strong man is tied up.
3. The result, either way, is that the things of value are obtained by God.

C. Jesus is accused of blasphemy in 12:1-2. Now Jesus accuses the Pharisees of the same.

1. It is intended to be a wake up call to the prideful and arrogant.
2. Know that when you call evil good and good evil you are on very dangerous grounds.
3. Why can you blaspheme Jesus and not the Holy Spirit? Biblically speaking Jesus has not been fully revealed yet therefore it is possible to speak against Him. But this is obvious that it is the work of the Holy Spirit there can be no excuse for misinterpreting the work of the Holy Spirit.
 - a) Mt 7:16-20 Make a tree good and its fruit will be good.
 - b) The words that Jesus is referring to here are not the casual joking words but the condemning accusative words directed at the Son of Man.

III. I Am Lord! Here's Your Sign!

A. Another challenge to Jesus authority is brought to Him. Show us a sign to prove your authority. If you are from God give us a sign to authenticate who you are.

1. Their demand for a sign further show their refusal of Jesus in all of the signs so far given.
 - a) The three day and three nights tie the two signs together

- b) But the point of divine intervention is seen in the supernatural deliverance!
- 2. Jesus answers them but is very 'cryptic' and even worse it is a sign that will come in the future.
- 3. We also need to note the "this generation" language. vs 39, 41,42, 45. And this is linked to 11:16-19 and will climax in 23:36-39.
- B. "Someone greater" vs 41 is spoken by Matthew a second time. Jesus has already spoken about those pagan of past who refused to repent and said that they are better of than this generation.
 - 1. Now attention is turned to Gentiles who will be better off than this generation of Jews because they did repent at the preaching of Jonah and the Jews did not when someone greater was here.
 - 2. Now someone greater is preaching repent!
- C. 43-45 serves to be a call to complete repentance. If you are not with me you are against me.
 - 1. This passage serves as a call to discipleship for a generation who is receiving and enjoying the ministry of Jesus. They are being refreshed and cleaned out. But the discipleship must continue.
 - 2. Demons who come back and find a clean house find it uninhabitable so they recruit 7 others to defile it so that is habitable by demons.

IV. The True Family of God

- A. This section is concluded in picture of hope! Chapter 11 and 12 display the wide variety of response to Jesus. It sets up chapter 13 that explain the wideness of divide between the people.
- B. The focus here is the true family of God.
 - 1. Those who follow Jesus have committed themselves to do the will of God.
 - 2. Therefore they have entered into a new relationship with God as their heavenly Father.
 - 3. Having God as heavenly Father makes all disciples brothers and sisters of each other. This makes chapter 5-7 so powerful here in the eyes of Matthew.
- C. This family view of the disciple of Christ, shows the nature of the new community being formed.

Conclusion:

- The point of the concluding verses of 46-50 is to clarify Jesus real family. It is why He has come. It originally can appear hard but it is living out 10:37 if you love father or mother, sister or brother more than me then you have not part with me.
- Take my yoke upon you for it is easy and my burden light. And here is your new family.