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By Dan Maines

## Matthew 12

### Matthew 12:1-2

At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath, and His disciples became hungry and began picking the heads of grain and eating them. Now when the Pharisees saw this, they said to Him, "Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on a Sabbath!"

† The Pharisees interpreted Sabbath laws rigidly. Yet the law allowed gleaning (Deuteronomy 23:25). They added burdens

beyond Scripture.

† The Mishnah adds layers of Sabbath restrictions (Shabbat 7:2). Jesus confronts this distortion.

† To us today, it shows that man-made traditions cannot bind where God has given freedom.

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

But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he became hungry, he and his companions-how he entered the house of God, and they ate the consecrated bread, which was not lawful for him to eat nor for those with him, but for the priests alone?"

† Jesus cites 1 Samuel 21. David, the anointed one, was not condemned when necessity arose. Christ, greater than David, has authority over the Sabbath.

† Josephus notes that David was honored as God's chosen, even when breaking custom (Antiquities 6.239).

† To us today, it shows that mercy and purpose outweigh rigid ritual.

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

"Or have you not read in the Law, that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple violate the Sabbath, and yet are innocent? But I say to you that something greater than the temple is here. But if you had known what this means: 'I desire compassion, rather than sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent. For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

† Jesus claims authority above the temple itself, fulfilling Hosea 6:6. He is Lord of the Sabbath, greater than the temple system.

† Tacitus describes the Jews as devoted to the temple rites (Histories 5.4). Jesus declares His supremacy over them.

† To us today, it shows Christ is our Sabbath rest.

### **Matthew 12:9-13**

Departing from there, He went into their synagogue. And a man was there with a withered hand. And they questioned Jesus, asking, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"-so that they might bring charges against Him. And He said to them, "What man is there among you who has a sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not take hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable then is a person than a sheep! So then, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." Then He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand!" He stretched it out, and it was restored to health, like the other.

† Jesus proves the Sabbath was made for doing good. Human need outweighs ritual regulation.

† Philo wrote that the Sabbath should promote human well-being, not misery (On the Decalogue 96). Jesus fulfills that truth.

† To us today, it shows love fulfills the law.

### **Matthew 12:14**

But the Pharisees went out and conspired against Him, as to how they might destroy Him.

† Their hardness of heart turned healing into a reason for murder.

† Josephus noted how Jewish leaders often sought to eliminate rivals out of envy (Antiquities 20.200).

† To us today, it shows religious pride resists truth even in the face of undeniable good.

### **Matthew 12:15-17**

But Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. Many followed Him, and He healed them all, and warned them not to tell who He was. This happened so that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled: "Behold, My Servant whom I have chosen; My Beloved in whom My soul delights; I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He will proclaim justice to the Gentiles."

† Isaiah 42:1 is fulfilled. The Servant brings justice to Israel and the nations.

† To us today, it shows Christ's mission was not nationalistic but universal.

### **Matthew 12:18-21**

"He will not quarrel, nor cry out; nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A bent reed He will not break off, and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish, until He leads justice to victory. And in His name the Gentiles will hope."

† Christ fulfills the Servant Song, gentle, merciful, yet victorious. Gentiles put their hope in Him.

† The Dead Sea Scrolls hoped for a Messiah of war, but Jesus fulfills Isaiah's picture of mercy (1QM 9.5).

† To us today, it shows Christ's power is expressed in mercy, not violence.

### **Matthew 12:22-24**

Then a demon-possessed man who was blind and unable to speak was brought to Jesus, and He healed him so that the man who was unable to speak talked and could see. And all the crowds were amazed, and were saying, "This man cannot be

the Son of David, can he?" But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons."

† The miracle proves messianic power, but the Pharisees attribute it to Satan. Their hardness fulfills covenant judgment.

† Tacitus said rulers often slandered their opponents with false accusations (Annals 4.34). The Pharisees do the same.

† To us today, it shows unbelief twists truth to resist Christ.

### **Matthew 12:25-28**

And knowing their thoughts Jesus said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and no city or house divided against itself will stand. And if Satan is casting out Satan, he has become divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebul cast out the demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore, they will be your judges. But if I cast out the demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you."

† Jesus proves His authority is from God. The kingdom had come, shown in His power over demons.

† Origen taught that this proved the binding of Satan had begun in Christ (Against Celsus 1.6).

† To us today, it shows the kingdom is here and Satan's defeat is real.

### **Matthew 12:29-30**

"Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first ties up the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. The one who is not with Me is against Me; and the one who does not gather with Me scatters."

† Jesus is binding Satan, the strong man. The kingdom mission plunders his house.

† To us today, it shows Christ's victory is decisive. Neutrality is impossible.

### **Matthew 12:31-32**

"Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come."

† The unforgivable sin is attributing God's work to Satan, rejecting the Spirit's testimony.

† To us today, it shows that hardened unbelief against God's Spirit leaves no hope.

### **Matthew 12:33-37**

"Either assume the tree to be good as well as its fruit good, or assume the tree to be bad as well as its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. You offspring of vipers, how can you, being evil, express anything good? For the mouth speaks from that which fills the heart. The good person brings out of his good treasure good things; and the evil person brings out of his evil treasure evil things. But I tell you that for every careless word that people speak, they will give an account of it on the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

† Jesus exposes the Pharisees as corrupt trees with corrupt fruit. Judgment would reveal their hearts.

† The Mishnah warned that words reveal the heart (Avot 1:17). Jesus expands this into covenant judgment.

† To us today, it shows our words matter, for they reveal the heart.

† **This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies** †

### Source Index

† Mishnah, Shabbat 7:2; Niddah 7:1; Avot 1:17

† Josephus, Antiquities 6.239; 18.85; 20.200

† Tacitus, Histories 5.4; Annals 4.34

† Philo, On the Decalogue 96

† Dead Sea Scrolls: 1QM 9.5

† Origen, Against Celsus 1.6

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