

## A Study of Matthew 12

### I. Outline.

1. **Plucking Grain on the Sabbath** (Matthew 12.1-8; cf., Mk 2.23-28; Lk 6.1-5).
2. **The Man with a Withered Hand** (Mt 12.9-14; cf., Mk 3.1-6; Lk 6.6-11).
3. **The Chosen Servant** (Mt 12.15-21; cf., Isa 42.1-4).
4. **Jesus and Beelzebul** (Mt 12.22-32; cf., Mk 3.20-30; Lk 11.14-23; Lk 12.10).
5. **A Tree and its Firstfruits** (Mt 12.33-37; cf., Lk 6.43-45).
6. **Demand for a Sign** (Mt 12.38-42; cf., Mk 8.11-12; Lk 11.29-32).
7. **Return of the Unclean Spirit** (Mt 12.43-45; cf., Lk 11.24-26).
8. **Mother and Brothers of Jesus** (Mt 12.46-50; cf., Mk 3.31-35; Lk 8.19-21).

--UBS4 Headings

### II. Summary.

In this chapter the disciples of Jesus are accused of violating the Sabbath Law. Jesus defends His apostles, denying the charges by calling them **GUILTLESS** (7). Jesus is asked by the Pharisees if it is lawful to heal on the Sabbath, seeing that Jesus was about to do so (10). Jesus used logical reasoning to answer their question and then heals the man with the withered hand (11-13). There was a very **STRONG** reaction by the Pharisees. In verse 14, we see them plotting together to destroy Jesus. The reaction of Jesus to their opposition was simply to withdraw, heal multitudes, and charge them not to make Him known (15-16). Matthew uses a prophecy from Isaiah 42 to explain the reaction of Jesus to His opposition (17-22). The Pharisees accuse Jesus of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub, prince of the devils (v. 24). Jesus knew their thoughts and proceeds to show the foolishness of their charge (24-30). Jesus speaks of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and that such is not subject to forgiveness (31-32). Jesus teaches that conduct and especially speech reveals character. The scribes and Pharisees ask Jesus for a sign. He replies that just one sign will be given, "the sign of the prophet Jonah" (39). Jesus uses two Old Testament figures (Jonah and the Queen of the South) to make a point about the lack of repentance of these religious leaders in contrast to the hearts of those people (41-42). Jesus next gives a parable of a wandering demon (43-45). In the last section (46-50), Jesus describes the people who are part of His family: **WHOSOEVER SHALL DO THE WILL OF MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.**

"It is a well known fact of history that anyone who stands for something will have enemies. The apostle Paul, by inspiration said, 'Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution' (2 Tim 3.12). In Matthew 12 our Lord gave us an excellent example of this point. One does not read very long about the ministry of Christ without understanding very clearly that there are going to be some people who do not like Him because of what He says. The religious leaders of the Jews showed their true colors in this chapter. Their self-serving attitudes are clearly seen. They really do not care about anybody but themselves and their positions. Not only is this sinful from a Biblical standpoint, but it is so very ugly from a simple human viewpoint. Alas, there will always be those who hate the **MOST** truth and anyone who stands for it. To better understand Matthew 12, we need to recognize that the three most sacred things to the Jews of the day were the temple, the ceremonial law, and the Sabbath. Of these three, the Sabbath was, in some respects, the most special. Other religions had temples and sacrifices, but **only the Jews had the Sabbath.** They were very sensitive

about the Sabbath. Although we cannot be sure about the chronological order of some of these events, it is reasonable to assume that these Jewish leaders had already been troubled about Jesus prior to this point. But when an issue came up about the Sabbath, they saw it as a prime opportunity to attack this Jesus of Nazareth” [Lynn Blair, “Jesus Confronts His Enemies, and Works Many Miracles,” in *Studies in Matthew*, 1995, Annual Denton Lectures, Editor: Dub McClish, p. 89].

### III. Chronology.

**BIBLE PERIOD:** The Period of the Christ.

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### IV. Aids in Exposition.

Matthew 12.1... **AT THAT TIME JESUS WENT ON THE SABBATH DAY THROUGH THE CORN; AND HIS DISCIPLES**

**WERE AN HUNGRED, AND BEGAN TO PLUCK THE EARS OF CORN, AND TO EAT**—“In the KJV, ‘corn’ means grain or seed—John 12.24... **Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.** Corn is a New World crop that was not grown in Palestine until after the discovery of America” [Kenneth Chumbley, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 223, footnote]. ||||| What these disciples did was NOT a violation of the Sabbath because Jesus proclaims them to be GUILTLESS in verse 7. However, according to the added-on laws of oral tradition, the Pharisees were charging Jesus’ disciples with working on the Sabbath. The “work” they were doing was to take a little grain into their hands and rub it to separate the husks and grain. Such was the minute added-on-regulations of the first century Pharisee. ||||| “In the Pharisees’ view, the disciples were guilty of threshing wheat! Such pedantry, nit-picking, and magnification of trifles would also have made them guilty of irrigating land, if they had chanced to knock off a few drops of dew while passing through the fields! The Pharisees were out to “get” Jesus; and any charge was better than none” [Burton Coffman, <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/matthew-12.html>, visited 160422].

Matthew 12.3... **HAVE YE NOT READ WHAT DAVID DID, WHEN HE WAS AN HUNGRED**—“Jesus’ first question alludes to 1 Samuel 21:1–6 (cf. Lev 24:8), the account of the sorry incident in which David was famished while fleeing from Saul and lied to the priest Ahimelech, which resulted in Saul’s executing all the priests at Nob. The argument is from lesser to greater, as is explicitly stated in 12:6. Evidently, the Pharisees did not object to David’s technically illegal behavior of eating the sacred bread (cf. Lev 24:5–9) with the permission of the priest Ahimelech, but they objected to Jesus’ hungry disciples doing what was **permitted** by Deuteronomy 23:25” [Turner, D., & Bock, D. L. (2005). *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, Vol 11: Matthew and Mark* (p. 168). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers]. ||||| “Now the real argument of Jesus is this: David, when hungry, ate the show-bread, which it was confessedly unlawful for him to eat, yet you justify him: my disciples pluck grain and eat it on the Sabbath, an act which the law does NOT forbid and yet you condemn them” [J.W. McGarvey, p. 104].

Matthew 12.5... **OR HAVE YE NOT READ IN THE LAW, HOW THAT ON THE SABBATH DAYS THE PRIESTS IN THE TEMPLE PROFANE THE TEMPLE, AND ARE BLAMELESS**—“This reference is to the fact than an exception was made for the priests who served in the temple, and who could, therefore, do work on the sabbath that would otherwise have been unlawful. ...’Profaning’ the sabbath does not refer to

any actual profanation, but means that their actions, if performed otherwise than in temple service, would have profaned it” [Burton Coffman].

**Matthew 12.6... BUT I SAY UNTO YOU THAT IN THIS PLACE IS ONE GREATER THAN THE TEMPLE**—“...the priests were blameless even though they worked in the temple on the Sabbath (changing the showbread, Lev 24.8; offering sacrifices, Num 28.9-10; etc.). If such service superseded the Sabbath law, it follows that the ministry of One greater than the Temple would also take precedence over the Sabbath. By this statement, Jesus claimed to be a greater embodiment of God’s presence than that indicated by the temple” [Kenneth Chumbley, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 225].

**Matthew 12.7... BUT IF YE HAD KNOWN WHAT THIS MEANETH, I WILL HAVE MERCY, AND NOT SACRIFICE, YE WOULD NOT HAVE CONDEMNED THE GUILTLSS**—“The scripture referred to is Hosea 6:6: ‘**For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.**’ The Lord was not trying to justify the disciples on the basis of David’s actions, but cited the Old Testament passage to show that **the Pharisees were being unmerciful** and were thus in violation of God’s will. The real problem was with the attitude of the Pharisees, not with Jesus and his disciples.” [Bob Winton, *Book of Matthew*, p. 144]. |||| “They were cruel in their rigidity, and while they thought they were keeping the Sabbath law, they were destroying themselves by crimes against mercy and truth. God has ever required mercy of men; the sacrifices and ceremonies, when understood, called for mercy and justice” [H. Leo Boles, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to Matthew*, Gospel Advocate, 1952, p. 259].

**Matthew 12.8... FOR THE SON OF MAN IS LORD EVEN OF THE SABBATH DAY**—“That he was Lord of the Sabbath—a fact which his previous works had demonstrated—placed his conduct in regard to the Sabbath above criticism, and made it really a guide as to the proper way to observe the Sabbath. This remark takes the question outside the range of argument, and brings it within the range of authority. It should be observed that, in this discussion, Jesus sought chiefly to expose the inconsistency of his assailants, and to assert his own divine authority.” [J.W. McGarvey, p. 105]. |||| “This place has been cited as proof that Christians should keep the sabbath day, but the opposite is taught. The Sabbath should be ignored and rejected utterly, unless Christ commanded it (which he did not); for Paul said, ‘**He took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross**’ (Colossians 2:14).” [Burton Coffman].

**Matthew 12.10... THERE WAS A MAN WHICH HAD HIS HAND WITHERED**—“This man had trouble with atrophied muscles in one of his hands (Luke tells us that it was his right hand). Besides the discomfort and unsightliness, this would have made it difficult for the man to earn his living. Matthew pictures the enemies of Jesus as taking the initiative: the man who was in trouble was right there in the synagogue with an obvious need. The man himself apparently did not begin proceedings (none of the three Synoptists says that he asked for healing), but Jesus’ opponents were watching him closely to see whether he would heal and so that they might accuse him of healing on the Sabbath (Mark and Luke both say this). The rabbis permitted healing on the Sabbath if life was in danger, and they were fairly liberal in their interpretation: ‘*Whenever there is doubt whether life is in danger this overrides the Sabbath*’ (Yoma 8:6). But if there was no danger there was to be no healing. In this case, of course, there was no danger; the man could well have waited until the next day” [Morris, L. (1992). *The Gospel according to Matthew* (p. 305). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press]. |||| “Following so closely on the preceding, this question amounted to a continuation of the conflict

regarding the sabbath day: Their question, Matthew declared, sprang not from a desire to learn, but from hope of a chance to accuse” [Burton Coffman].

**Matthew 12.14... THEN THE PHARISEES WENT OUT, AND HELD A COUNCIL AGAINST HIM, HOW THEY MIGHT DESTROY HIM**—“When men refuse to agree with the truth and cannot answer with logic or authority, they often resort to personal attacks, sometimes involving physical violence. So it was with these Pharisees. They left the synagogue and had a meeting about how to DESTROY Jesus. They were not just talking about destroying His teaching or His influence. They wanted to kill Him. Oh, what a vicious, hateful, ugly attitude” [Lynn Blair, p. 91].

**Matthew 12.17-21... THAT IT MIGHT BE FULFILLED WHICH WAS SPOKEN BY ESAIAS THE PROPHET, SAYING, BEHOLD MY SERVANT, WHOM I HAVE CHOSEN; MY BELOVED**—Here Matthew records a quote from Isaiah 42.1-4. ||||| “God described Jesus as ‘**my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased**’ (Mt 12:18) The Pharisees, through their blindness and prejudice, rejected Jesus -- their only hope. The blindness of the Pharisee led to disobedience to the Lord's commands. ‘**And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment**’” (1 Jn 3:23)” [Charles Box, *Charles Box Commentaries*, An e-Sword Module].

**Matthew 12.23-24... AND ALL THE PEOPLE WERE AMAZED, AND SAID, IS NOT THIS THE SON OF DAVID? BUT WHEN THE PHARISEES HEARD IT, THEY SAID, THIS FELLOW DOTHT NOT CAST OUT DEVILS, BUT BY BEELZEBUB THE PRINCE OF THE DEVILS**—“Charges of the Pharisees were not honest. They would have denied the miracles if possible; but, unable to do that, they spoke maliciously about the source of his power. ‘Beelzebub’ was a combination of two ancient words, ‘Baal,’ the name of the old god of the Canaanites, and [-zebul], meaning ‘dunghill.’ In the lore of the Pharisees, ‘Baal-zebul,’ or Beelzebub, as he came to be called, was said to be the prince of devils, or demons. How shameful it was that they linked the name of the Saviour with that false god. In spite of those vile charges having been initiated in deceit and malice on the part of their progenitors, the widening river of sin carried those slanders far from their source; and thus it is found that Celsus repeated them, with embellishments of his own, more than a century later, in 170 A.D., as did also the later Jewish Talmudists” [Burton Coffman].

**Matthew 12.26... IF SATAN CAST OUT SATAN, HE IS DIVIDED AGAINST HIMSELF, HOW SHALL THEN HIS KINGDOM STAND?**—“The first point Jesus made is that a kingdom or house divided against itself cannot stand. If the charge of the Pharisees were true, then Satan was defeating himself by casting himself out, which is the way the Greek reads! Jesus knew that the Pharisees believed (and rightly so) that there were only two possible kingdoms under consideration -- one of righteousness and one of evil. They could not answer His question of Matthew 12:26 -- “**And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?**” Even if this could be the case, the self-proclaimed righteous Pharisees should be happy at Satan's self-destruction. But obviously, they were not happy” [Lynn Blair, p. 92].

**Matthew 12.27-28... AND IF I BY BEELZEBUB CAST OUT DEVILS, BY WHOM DO YOUR CHILDREN CAST THEM OUT? THEREFORE THEY SHALL BE YOUR JUDGES**—“Jesus next points out another hypocrisy. Some within the Pharisees’ own ranks (‘children,’ disciples, 23.15) claimed the ability to exorcise demons (Mt 7.22, Acts 19.14ff, Josephus, *Wars*, VII.vi.3). Without pausing to evaluate their claim, Christ asks why He has been singled out; how did His exorcisms differ from those performed by some of their own disciples? ‘**They shall be your judges**’ means that which proved the Pharisees’ charge proved too much. If they were going to condemn Jesus they must

condemn their own, which, of course, they would not do. Hypocrites tend to criticize those outside their circle, while ignoring similar behavior and practices within their clique. For a Pharisee, exoneration or condemnation of another often hinges on ‘who your friends are.’” [Kenneth Chumbley, p. 232].

**Matthew 12.31... ALL MANNER OF SIN AND BLASPHEMY SHALL BE FORGIVEN UNTO MEN: BUT THE BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST SHALL NOT BE FORIVEN UNTO MEN**—“Blasphemy is pictured as a horrible sin, but what is it? Many are frightened that they might be guilty of some form of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. The word “blasphemy” means to injure by speaking against. In this text Jesus said that those that blasphemed or spoke against the Spirit could not be forgiven. To deny the personality of the Spirit is to blaspheme Him. When these Jews said miracles that were done by His power were done by the power of the Devil they blasphemed Him. To be hardened against the gospel plan of salvation is likewise to blaspheme the Holy Ghost. With the crucifixion of the Messiah and the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost the age of redemption came. If men rejected that which was verified by the Spirit what else could God offer them? They had hardened themselves against the gospel plan and therefore, blasphemed Holy Ghost. Those that continue with such a spiritual disposition have no means of obtaining forgiveness of sins” [Charles Box].

**Matthew 12.34... O GENERATION OF VIPERS, HOW CAN YE, BEING EVIL, SPEAK GOOD THINGS? FOR OUT OF THE ABUNDANCE OF THE HEART THE MOUTH SPEAKETH**—“As teachable believers and pious persons are likened to doves and lambs, which are innocent and harmless animals, so the malicious and unbelieving are compared to goats, dogs, and vipers, according as they are sensual, foul, or malicious. These Pharisees had shown the hatred and venom of serpents and deserved the epithet. ... Their hearts were not right and the principles of their lives were wrong. Therefore the exhibitions of character were only such as could have been suspected” [H. Leo Boles, p. 272].

**Matthew 12.36-37... EVERY IDLE WORD THAT MEN SHALL SPEAK, THEY SHALL GIVE ACCOUNT THEREOF IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT. FOR BY THY WORDS THOU SHALT BE JUSTIFIED, AND BY THY WORDS THOU SHALT BE CONDEMNED**—“This is a strong admonition to guard what is spoken. ‘IDLE’ words are not necessarily those casual and insignificant sayings indulged in the course of social fellowship, nor such words as may be calculated to bring a smile to care-worn faces, but rather, they are the words that betray a bias of the soul against God and expose the evil heart of the sinner” [Burton Coffman].

**Matthew 12.39... AN EVIL AND ADULTEROUS GENERATION SEEKETH AFTER A SIGN; AND THERE SHALL NO SIGN BE GIVEN TO IT, BUT THE SIGN OF THE PROPHET JONAS**—“‘Three days and three nights’ has sparked a great deal of discussion, since the chronology of Christ’s death and resurrection (by everyone’s admission) involves less than seventy-two hours. This phrase was a Hebraism that used inclusive reckoning to cover any portion of three calendar days. The Jews regarded a part of a day as a whole day (see Mk 8.31). They ‘did not reckon as we do: they counted the day on which any period began as one day, and they did the same with the day on which the period ended. Thus we have Friday, Saturday, Sunday, three days; it does not matter that neither the Friday nor the Sunday was complete’ (Leon Morris, p. 326)” [Chumbley, p. 238].

**Matthew 12.40... THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS IN THE WHALE’S BELLY**—“Was Jonah swallowed by a fish or a whale? Traditionally *dag gadol* has been translated ‘a whale’ (e.g., Mt 12:40 KJV). Ancient taxonomy of the animal kingdom did not follow the modern Linnaean system, so perhaps any

swimming sea creature might be considered a 'fish.' The author of Jonah was not concerned with phylogenetic distinctions but with the Lord's involvement in Jonah's life. When Jesus speaks of the 'great fish' (Mt 12:40), the text uses the same word found in the Greek OT at Jonah 1:17. ... Whether it was a fish or a whale in which Jonah was kept alive is less important than the fact that **God provided a miraculous means to redirect the wayward prophet to his original task**, preaching repentance to Nineveh. God's plans will not be thwarted by the schemes disobedient people devise to get around them" [Cabal, T., Brand, C. O., Clendenen, E. R., Copan, P., Moreland, J. P., & Powell, D. (2007). *The Apologetics Study Bible: Real Questions, Straight Answers, Stronger Faith* (p. 1341). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers]. ||||| Some want to argue that the whale's throat is not large enough to swallow a man. The important words to remember here are those found in Jonah 1.17, which tell us plainly: "Now **the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah.**" It does not matter what kind of creature it was, if the Lord prepared it to swallow up Jonah, it would have been well able to do the swallowing: whale, shark, catfish, bass, or whatever.

Matthew 12.44... **GARNISHED**—"This is the perfect passive participle of *cosmeo*, from which we get 'cosmetics.' It means 'put in order' (NASB, NIV), or perhaps 'decorate' (AG, p.444)" [Ralph Earle, *Word Meanings in the New Testament*, p. 12].

Matthew 12.49... **HE STRETCHED FORTH HIS HAND TOWARD HIS DISCIPLES, AND SAID, BEHOLD MY MOTHER AND MY BRETHREN!**—What a wonderful blessing it is to be a part of the FAMILY of Jesus Christ! The only way to do so is to ENTER CHRIST. Every spiritual blessing is IN CHRIST (Eph 1.3). The way to enter Christ is to: (1) Hear the word (Rom 10.17). (2) Believe in Jesus (John 8.24). (3) Repent of past sins (Acts 17.30-31; Luke 13.3). (4) Confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (Rom 10.10). (5) Be baptized for the remission of all sins (Acts 2.38; Mark 16.16). To do so is to be considered by Jesus as part of His family! And (6) Remain faithful unto death (Rev 2.10).

Matthew 12.50... **WHOSOEVER SHALL DO THE WILL OF MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN, THE SAME IS MY BROTHER, AND SISTER, AND MOTHER**—"In the context Jesus was teaching a vast crowd. His mother and brethren desired to speak with Him. The opportunity allowed Jesus to determine who really constituted His spiritual kinsmen—fleshly kin or spiritual kin. He asked who His mother and brethren were. He did not point to Mary, James, Joses, Judas, and Simon. He pointed to His disciples and said '**Behold, my mother and my brethren**' (Matthew 12.49). Those who do the heavenly Father's will constitute Jesus' brother, sister, and mother. This was the only way Mary and her four sons could qualify. Jesus established brotherhood to Him upon the basis of faith—not flesh or human reasoning. The application is easy to grasp. If He considers as brethren only those who do the Father's will, then we must do that will to be in that category, and we must consider as spiritual brethren only those who do that same will. That will demands that we become children of God by Gospel obedience and that we remain faithful as God's children by a persistent walk in truth. This verse helps in determining fellowship" [Robert R. Taylor, Jr., *Companion*, 1991-1992, p. 251].

## V. Lessons & Applications.

Matthew 12.1-8... It is a gross misuse of, and a dangerous twisting of the Scriptures (2 Pet 3.16), to appeal to these verses as support for "situation ethics." However, many make the attempt. Situation Ethics basically says that we make our ethical decisions by always doing the most loving thing in every situation. That means one course of action would be RIGHT in a certain

situation; but, in another setting, that would not be the right thing to do. To say that whether something is right or wrong has to be judged by the particular situation is false doctrine. Moreover, such a system of ethics requires of men an ability to know what they have no ability to know. There is objective truth (the Bible) and there is objective right and wrong. Very clearly and unmistakably Jesus points to the fact that His disciples are **GUILTLESS** (v. 7). What the disciples did in rubbing a little grain together and eating it on the Sabbath was NOT a violation of the Law of Moses! It was misjudged to be a violation by the religious leaders because they had independently, and by their own authority, added their traditions to the Law and had caused Sabbath observance to become a **HEAVY BURDEN**. Notice what Jesus says about these same religious leaders a little later on in Matthew 23.4... **For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders....** Jesus powerfully refutes their charges. First, Jesus reminds the Pharisees about what David did when he was hungry (1 Sam 21). He points out that what David did was **NOT LAWFUL** (v. 4). But these Pharisees were not consistent because they praised David and considered him a great man of God, but they accused the guiltless apostles of doing that which it was not lawful to do upon the Sabbath (v. 2). Second, Jesus proves the prohibition of work on the Sabbath was not nearly as comprehensive as the Pharisees considered it to be because the priests were rather active on the Sabbath Days and yet did no wrong. Third, Jesus called them back to the Bible by referring them to Hosea 6.6. He tells them they were not operating according to the principle of that text because allowing the hungry to eat on the Sabbath was actually compassionate and was consistent with God's will. In using the word **GUILTLESS**, to describe the ones the Pharisees were accusing, Jesus makes it indisputable that **their interpretation of Sabbath regulations needed a revision**. According to the Pharisees, Jesus' disciples were guilty; according to Jesus, they were **GUILTLESS**! Fourth, besides all that, Jesus, Himself, was LORD of the Sabbath (v. 8). No Pharisee, scribe, no doctor of the Law, no rabbi or series of rabbis down through the ages, could know the Law of Moses better than did He! His authoritative conclusion was: MY DISCIPLES ARE **GUILTLESS** of violating the Sabbath (v. 7).

Matthew 12.15-20... After the Pharisees plotted together to destroy Jesus (v. 14), Jesus withdrew Himself (v. 15), and told the many that He healed not to make Him known (v. 16). Matthew makes use of a quote from the great Messianic Prophet, Isaiah (Isa 42.1-4) to explain Jesus' response of withdrawing. William Wilder writes—"As Isaiah lifts up these verses, he shows why Jesus makes the hard choice of withdrawing himself. First, Jesus made the hard choice so that we might see his **IDENTITY**. He is identified with mercy, goodness and justice, and acceptability with God. Secondly, Jesus made the hard choice so that we could see His **RESTRAINT**. He will not quarrel, nor cry out; neither will He cause strife and confusion. His voice will not be heard in the street. He will be restrained. His purpose is not to intimidate. God is patient and is longsuffering to all of us (2 Pet 3.9). Thirdly, Christ made a hard choice so that we might see His **GENTLENESS**. Verse twenty strongly suggests the kindness and gentleness of the Lord. '**A battered reed He will not break off...**' What is the Bible saying? It is saying though we be weak and sometimes disappoint our Lord, He will not push us farther down, but rather, will lift us up and help us; because, He is gentle and good. When the Messiah comes, says Isaiah, He will not take a dimly burning wick and snuff it out, but, He will help for He is lowly in heart. Finally, Jesus made a hard choice so that we might see His **UNIVERSALITY**. This point is suggested in the latter part of Matthew 12.18: '**He shall proclaim justice to the Gentiles.**' And, in verse 21: '**And in His**

name will the Gentiles hope (trust).’ This thought is also re-enforced when our Lord stated, ‘**And, other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and, there shall be one fold, and one shepherd**’ (John 10.16). Christ came to be the Savior to all men” [William Wilder, *A Homiletic Commentary on the Book of Matthew*, Edited by Garland Elkins and Thomas B. Warren, 1988, p. 355]

**Matthew 12.41... THE MEN OF NINEVEH SHALL RISE IN JUDGMENT WITH THIS GENERATION ... BECAUSE THEY REPENTED AT THE PREACHING OF JONAH**—“**The people of Nineveh repented.** (1) From this clear statement of fact we get a good idea of what is meant by repentance. Jesus says they repented. When we turn back to the record of Jonah, we find him saying, ‘**And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way**’ (Jonah 3.10). So we learn that repentance is turning from evil ways. Sorrow for sin is not repentance, for we are told that godly sorrow worketh repentance (2 Cor 7.10). We should notice, too, that there are two kinds of sorrow. Godly sorrow works a repentance unto salvation, or life (Acts 11.18). But the sorrow of the world works a repentance that issues in death. Judas had such sorrow, regret, or remorse, which caused him to repent; but his repentance was not unto salvation, but unto death (Mt 27.3-10). Next, repentance is not reformation of life; it produces reformation. Hence we have this order: sorrow for sin, turning from sin, and reformation. Repentance is turning from sin. (2) We learn that repentance is a work. Jonah 3.10 says, ‘**God saw their works, that they turned...**’ The turning is repentance. Hence repentance is a work. Those who oppose the idea of baptism for the remission of sins, do so because they say baptism is a work, and no work can be essential to salvation. Nobody ever denied that repentance is essential to salvation, and yet repentance is a work. There are two types of works mentioned in the Bible; one is of God and the other is of man. **Anything commanded by God is a work of God**; that which is commanded of man, all human tradition, is a work of man. Peter says we must work righteousness to be accepted of God (Acts 10.35). Paul says a faith that works by love avails (Gal 5.6). And James says ye are justified by works like Abraham was justified by works when he obeyed God in offering Isaac (James 2.20ff). Hence we must perform those works commanded of God in order to be saved. But the works of man have no power to save, but they have power to condemn. Many people make the mistake of thinking that anything a man does is, in scripture language, a work of man. Repentance is something a man does, but it is not a work of man; it is a work of God” [Roy H. Lanier, Sr., *Teacher’s Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1951, p. 112].

**Matthew 12.41... A GREATER THAN JONAH IS HERE**—“**Greater opportunities make greater responsibilities.** Jesus peached to the people of his day and they did not repent. He was GREATER than Jonah. He was a greater preacher than Jonah. So the opportunities of the people were greater than were the opportunities of the Ninevites. The people of Nineveh under inferior circumstances and opportunities did better than the Scribes and Pharisees under superior conditions, circumstances, and opportunities. Therefore the condemnation of the Pharisees would be greater. We today have fearful responsibilities on account of our great opportunities. The circumstances under which we live in America multiply our responsibilities over that of the people of other lands. America is the richest nation on earth. Is it using its wealth? America is now the intellectual center of the world. Is it using its superior intelligence so as to discharge its responsibilities? The church of our Lord is bigger, richer, and better informed at this time than at any other time in its history. Will it use these blessings, or suffer the curse of unused talents?” [Roy H. Lanier, Sr., p. 112].

**VI. Questions.**

**True or False**

- 01. \_\_\_\_ Jesus’ mother and His brothers came to Him, wanting to speak to Him.
- 02. \_\_\_\_ Jesus’ disciples actually did break the Sabbath Law.
- 03. \_\_\_\_ Matthew quoted from Isaiah the prophet in this chapter.
- 04. \_\_\_\_ The Pharisees said: **IS NOT THIS THE SON OF DAVID?**
- 05. \_\_\_\_ Jesus called His opponents VIPERS.

**I Found it in Verse(s)**

- 06. \_\_\_\_ The queen of the South.
- 07. \_\_\_\_ The work the priests did on the Sabbath was OK.
- 08. \_\_\_\_ A man is better than a sheep.
- 09. \_\_\_\_ A kingdom brought to desolation.
- 10. \_\_\_\_ Scribes joining with the Pharisees seeking a sign of Jesus.

**Short Answer**

- 11. Two groups that Jesus said would rise in judgment with that generation:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 12. The charges raised against Jesus’ disciples by the Pharisees:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 13. What the Pharisees discussed together in their council:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 14. Results of Satan casts out Satan:  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 15. What Jesus says (in this chapter) we will give account for on Judgment Day:  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Each Question is worth 7 Points*

**My Score is: \_\_\_\_\_**

*Answers will be found on next week’s handout*

**ANSWERS to Matthew 11 Questions...** **01**—False (21); **02**—True (30); **03**—True (5); **04**—True (9); **05**—False (14); **06**—23; **07**—28; **08**—2; **09**—8; **10**—18; **11**—gluttonous and winebibber (19); **12**—O Father, Lord of heaven and earth (25); **13**— Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another (3); **14**— Malachi 3.1; **15**—let him hear (15).

**VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle.** The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. -DRL

S T H E N T E R M C N A  
 V L J V P L A C E A E W  
 M S O I G O O D H S M O  
 U I N L E B F O R T H R  
 W G A M N E O D J N O D  
 H N S O E H R C U K U S  
 E E A T R O G O D G S A  
 N I B H A L I N G S E I  
 S T B E T D V D E P D D  
 P H A R I S E E S I E H  
 E E T D O K N M J R V E  
 A R H R N K I N B I I A  
 K N S T R E T C H T L L

BEHOLD	CAST	CONDEMN	DEVIL	ENTER
EVIL	FORGIVEN	FORTH	GENERATION	GOOD
HEAL	HOUSE	JONAS	JUDGES	MOTHER
NEITHER	PHARISEES	PLACE	SABBATH	SAID
SIGN	SPEAK	SPIRIT	STRETCH	THEN
WHEN	WORD			



**IX. EXTRA CREDIT FOR “SUPER” Bible Students...**

*Will you please consider answering these three SIMPLE questions based on the Bible text of this chapter? I will try to make use of your answers. Bring them with you next week. Tear out this last sheet from the Study Guide and be prepared to put it in a basket. I think it will be a great help to all of those in the class if you will do so. Thank you in advance for your marvelous cooperation!*

**W O R D: What word would you like to know more about in this chapter?**

**W O N D E R: I wonder what this phrase, verse, or series of verses means...**

**W I S H: I wish myself—or others whom I know or even don’t know—would understand this fact, principle, or concept from this chapter...**