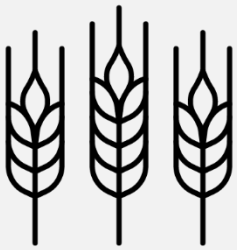
Matthew
Chapter 12



As you prepare for this week's study, begin by praying and asking God to open your heart and mind to understand the truths He has for you this week. Then read this week's chapter, Matthew 12. As you read through the entire chapter, what are your first impressions? What stands out to you?

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Mission 119: Search Matthew and listen to the commentary for Matthew 11-12, if you haven't already done so.

Day 1 – Lord of the Sabbath

By this point in the story, Jesus' growing popularity had begun to draw sharp opposition from the very leaders who were supposed to be watching for the Messiah's arrival. Matthew 12 captured this rising tension, as Jesus' authority over the Sabbath, over unclean spirits, and ultimately over life itself put Him on a collision course with the Pharisees. Yet even as conflict grew, Jesus quietly continued the work Isaiah had foretold centuries earlier - bringing justice with gentleness and hope to a watching world.

Matthew12:1-21

1) Check a reference source and define the word "Sabbath" in the Bible.

   _____

   _____

2) What two examples from the Old Testament did Jesus use to defend His disciples, and what point was He making with each one? (v.3-5)

   _____

   _____

3) What did Jesus mean by quoting, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice"? (v.7)

4) How did Jesus describe Himself? (v.8)

What did this mean?

5) How did the other gospel writers tell this story? Note the similarities and differences.

a) Mark 2:23-28

b) Luke 6:1-5

6) Why did the Pharisees ask Jesus if it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath? (v.10)

7) What illustration did Jesus use to justify healing on the Sabbath? (v.11)

What was His logic? (v.11-12)

8) What happened to the man with the shriveled hand, and how did the Pharisees respond afterward? (v.9–14)

9) Why did Jesus tell the people not to tell others about Him? (v.15-16)

10) According to verses 18–21, an Old Testament prophecy was being fulfilled. What characteristics of God's Servant were emphasized?

11) How did the other gospel writers tell this story? Note the similarities and differences.

a) Mark 3:1-6

b) Luke 6:6-11

12) Read Isaiah 42:1-4. Note the similarities and differences to Matthew 12:18-21.

13) What hope was offered to the nations?

Day 2 – The Master Teacher and the Pharisees

Matthew 12:22-50

1) What miracle did Jesus perform and what reactions did it produce from those who witnessed the miracle? (v.22-24)

2) What title did the crowd use for Jesus in verse 23?

Note: This title was a messianic title from the Old Testament which predicted the Messiah would be a descendant of King David and would establish an eternal kingdom.

3) What accusation did the Pharisees m against Jesus, and how did He respond using the "kingdom divided" argument? (v.25–28)

4) What warning did Jesus give in verses 31-32? What did He mean by sin that “will not be forgiven”?

5) What did Jesus say regarding trees and fruit? (v.33)

6) What did He say about careless words? (v.34-37)

7) What sign did Jesus offer the Pharisees and teachers of the law when they asked for one? (v.38–40)

8) Who did Jesus say will “condemn this generation”? Why? (v.41-42)

9) What happened in the parable of the unclean spirit who returned with seven others? (v.43–45)

10) When told His mother and brothers wanted to see Him, how did Jesus respond, and who did He identify as His true family? (v.46-50)

11) How did the other gospel writers tell the sign/family sections for this story?

a) Luke 11:29-32 (sign of Jonah) _____

b) Luke 6: 43-45 (tree and fruit) _____

c) Mark 3:31-35 (true family) _____

12) **Is there anything in this chapter new to you?

Day 3 - Connecting the Dots…

1) The Sabbath began at creation. Read Genesis 2:1–3. What was God's original purpose for the Sabbath, before it ever became a command?

2) Read Exodus 20:8–11. How did linking the Sabbath command directly back to creation change how we should read the Pharisees' objection found in Matthew 12:1–2?

3) Read Hosea 6:6 in its fuller context (Hosea 6:4–6). What was God originally confronting Israel about when He said, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice"? How did Jesus apply that same principle as the true heart of the Sabbath in Matthew 12:7?

4) Read 2 Samuel 7:12–16 (the Davidic covenant). When the crowd asked, "Could this be the Son of David?" (Matthew 12:23), what specific promise were they recalling, and what kind of deliverer were they expecting?

5) Read Daniel 7:13–14. Jesus called Himself "Lord of the Sabbath" (Matthew 12:8), and elsewhere, identified Himself as "Son of Man." How did Daniel's vision of the Son of Man's authority deepen what Jesus claimed about Himself?

6) Read Jeremiah 31:31–34 (the new covenant). When Jesus redefined family around "whoever does the will of My Father in heaven" (Matthew 12:46-50), how did this anticipate the new covenant community Jeremiah foretold - no longer defined by bloodline, but by a transformed heart?

Day 4 - Walking the Way of Jesus

1) Are there areas where you've prioritized rule-keeping over mercy toward people? What would it look like to choose mercy this week?

2) **Jesus is "Lord of the Sabbath." (Matthew 12:8) Rest belongs to Him, not the other way around. What would it look like for you to actually rest this week as an act of trust in God, rather than something you must earn or fit in around everything else?

3) Jesus didn't avoid controversy to do good (healing the man's hand). Where might you be avoiding a right action because it's inconvenient or unpopular?

4) **Jesus said careless words matter and will be accounted for. What's one area where your speech needs more intentionality this week?

5) The Ninevites repented at Jonah's preaching, even though Jonah was a reluctant, flawed messenger (Matthew 12:41). Is there truth you've already heard clearly you haven't yet responded to with real repentance?

6) The parable of the returned unclean spirit warned that a "swept and put in order" life is not enough if it stays empty. (Matthew 12:43–45) Where have you cleaned up the outside of your life without inviting God to fill the space?

7) **Jesus said a tree is known by its fruit. (Matthew 12:33) If someone looked honestly at the fruit of your life this year - your words, choices, and relationships - what would they conclude about what's rooted in you?

8) **What key point did you learn this week about walking the way of Jesus?

Day 5 - What Do You Think?

"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (Matthew 6:33, NIV)

Today, read chapter 12 with a seeking posture, and be attentive to where God is forming your heart, reordering your priorities, and inviting you into His kingdom life. As you do, take time to reflect on how God's living Word is at work in your life.

Use the questions below to notice where you sense His invitation, conviction, or encouragement. You do not need to answer every question each week. Instead, choose two or three that stand out and spend time with them. Pay attention to where God is leading you toward deeper trust, understanding, and transformation.

1) **What part of God's redemptive story became larger, stranger, or more beautiful after studying this chapter?

2) What assumptions from this passage quietly challenge in your life? (ideas about identity, comfort, control, security, significance, etc.)

3) Where do you see yourself in this story? Are you the hero, someone in the crowd, or someone in need of the grace being revealed?

4) **What part of God's kingdom seemed upside-down in this passage compared to the kingdom of this world?

5) Did any mystery remain unresolved after reading this chapter? Rather than solving it, how might living with that mystery deepen your trust in God?

6) What invitation did Jesus extend here to experience transformation in your life?

7) If we lived out the truths we've read about in this chapter in our families, workplaces, churches, and neighborhood - what might become more beautiful about our community? What might become uncomfortable?