



## LESSON 50 – Mark 2:23-28

**Mark 2:23-28** Now it happened that He went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; and as they went His disciples began to pluck the heads of grain. **24**And the Pharisees said to Him, "Look, why do they do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" **25**But He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and hungry, he and those with him: **26**"how he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the showbread, which is not lawful to eat, except for the priests, and also gave some to those who were with him?" **27**And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. **28**"Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."

To understand the context of this passage, let me give you some background about the sabbath. First, God created the heavens and the earth, and all that is on it, in 6 days and then the record states He rested on the 7th day. (**Genesis 2:2** **1**Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. **2**And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. **3**Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.)

2500 years later, when God gave Moses the law, including the ten commandments, He said that the Jewish people were to keep a sabbath day every week. The seventh day of the week (6:30pm Friday to 6:30pm Saturday-Jewish days start in the evening) was to be set aside to rest, as God had done in His creation work. It was not a day of worship or sacrifice. It was simply a rest day for all, even servants and animals. No work was to be done, not even building a fire. Cooking for the sabbath was to be done the day before, so that the women could rest on the sabbath as well.

Principle: Everyone needs a day to rest from work. No one should work 7 days a week, if possible.

The sabbath of the Old Testament is not only representative of physical rest, but also it represents the spiritual rest that a person enters when he puts his faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. He ceases from trying to work for his salvation. He realizes that he could never work enough to become acceptable to a holy God. He believes that the work Jesus did on the cross is all that needs to be done for him to be saved. From then on, the work he does is not to earn salvation, but to join with the Lord in His work to bring others into His kingdom. As far as working for salvation, he is at "sabbath rest." (Hebrews 4)

The sabbath rest also represents the 1000 year reign of Jesus on the earth, which will occur sometime in the future, after 7 years of tribulation on the earth. It is referred to as a rest because there will be peace on the earth and no wars for that whole 1000 years. This period of time is called the millennium, which is a Latin derived word meaning a thousand years.

Reading the account from Matt 12:1-8 we learn that the disciples were hungry. As they went through a cornfield on the sabbath, they began pulling corn from the stalks and eating it. The Pharisees who were watching them thought what they were doing constituted work on the sabbath and so they criticized and condemned the disciples for breaking the law. Jesus responded with a

question about an event in the life of King David, one of the most famous and revered kings in Israel's history. Jesus said that when David and his men were very hungry with no other means of getting any food, David asked the priest to give them the holy bread (showbread) from the tabernacle, which was only supposed to be eaten by priests.

Then Jesus also reminded the Pharisees that the priests of their own day worked on the sabbath by their ministry in the temple and were blameless. (Matt. 12:5) What was Jesus teaching them by these two examples?

First, Jesus was teaching them that life must be valued and protected. In the case of David and his men, it was more important to preserve their lives than to preserve a ritual. Life is more sacred than any "thing."

Second, Jesus was indicating that sometimes there are exceptions to the rule, as in the case of the priests serving in the temple on the sabbath.

Third, Jesus showed that the Pharisees, who wouldn't think of condemning David or the priests for their actions, were incorrect in criticizing His disciples. His disciples took corn from a field; David took from the house of God. In another passage (Luke 14 :5) Jesus pointed out that the Pharisees would have rescued one of their animals if it had fallen in a ditch on the sabbath, yet they criticized those who took care of their lives' needs on that day. They were more merciful to an animal than to a human being.

Notice the response of Jesus to the Pharisees' question. He didn't react with an angry defense, but He pointed them to what the scriptures say. The Holy Spirit told Him which passages to choose. Jesus knew the scriptures very well, having studied them and memorized many verses. This is the same technique that Jesus used in Matthew 4:1-10, when He was fasting for 40 days in the wilderness and Satan tried to tempt Him to sin. When you need to answer someone carefully, ask the Holy Spirit to give you the right words to say. In the meantime, study the Word in preparation for that time.

## LESSON 51

**Mark 2:23 Now it happened that He went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; and as they went His disciples began to pluck the heads of grain.**

Perhaps in the disciples helping themselves to the corn (wheat), you might think they were stealing. Stealing was against the law that God had established to govern the behavior of people. **Exodus 20:15 "Thou shalt not steal."** There were many penalties that would be applied to those who stole what was not theirs.

However, in Deuteronomy 23:24-25, provision was made for those who might be hungry and unable to buy food. (They didn't have supermarkets on every corner back then.) **24" When you come into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes at your pleasure, but you shall not put any in your container. 25" When you come into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the heads with your hand, but you shall not use a sickle on your neighbor's standing grain.** Even in this, we can see that God provided for the needy and the poor. So the disciples were not stealing when they were hungry and ate corn in the field.

Principle: Stealing is wrong. If you have been taking things that are not yours, go to the one(s) you

have stolen from and confess your sin. Return the items or give money to them to replace what you stole. Ask their forgiveness. You must make this right or your worship of God will be unacceptable to Him (**Matt 5:23-24** **23 Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, 24 leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift.**) Then confess your sin to God and ask His forgiveness as well. **1John 1:9 If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing. (ASV)**

**Luke 6:9** Then Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy?"

Look back at Mark 2:27; Jesus' conclusion is that the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath. **In Matt 12:12 Jesus said, "It is lawful to do well on the sabbath days."**

The final point is that He is Lord of the sabbath. He decides who is out of order and guilty of wrong doing on the sabbath. He concluded the disciples were blameless. (Matt 12:7)

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