
THE CONTROVERSY: PICKING GRAIN | MATTHEW 12:1-2

- The hungry disciples, picking grain from a field, were within the rights of economic hospitality under the Jewish economic system, as designed by God Himself. See Deuteronomy 23:25.
- If the accusation of breaking the Sabbath Law holds, the punishment is severe: Exodus 31:13-14.
- While the disciples were not breaking the Law in taking another man's grain, they were breaking a Rabbinical law which had been developed after the close of the Old Testament. Over time, Rabbinical Law interpreted Mosaic Law, and the interpretation became a law in its own right.
- There is a danger even today in the interpretation becoming the standard rather than the Scripture becoming the standard. Our sole source of authority is Scripture.

THE CONFRONTATION: TEMPLE ACTIVITY | MATTHEW 12:3-5

- Jesus gives two illustrations in order to defend His disciples:
 - In 1 Samuel 21:6, David was given the Showbread for his men. This bread was only for use by the priests. Eating the bread clearly broke the rules of Leviticus 22:10.
 - The Priest could not possibly fulfill his Sabbath duties without breaking the Sabbath Law.
- The first illustration shows the duplicity of the Rabbi's (who, in their tradition, had said David was innocent).
- The second illustration shows that service to God trumps service to the Sabbath.

- If Jesus is, as He claims, greater than “the temple,” then any service to Him would justify breaking the Rabbinical tradition.
- The Hebrew Scriptures had always taught the same thing: Mercy is God's heart. Hosea 6:6 (1 Samuel 15:21-22, Proverbs 21:3, Ecclesiastes 5:1, Isaiah 1:11, and others).
- When Jesus declares that “the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath,” He is not ending the Sabbath Law (that would not come until Paul). Rather, He is claiming to be the Messiah, the One greater than the Temple.

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE SABBATH

- There is no such thing as a Christian Sabbath. Sunday is not a Christian substitute for Saturday.
- Because we are free from the Law, we are free from Sabbath regulations. Christians should avoid Sabbath-like legalism.
- Christians should not apply Exodus 31:13-17 (and other similar Scriptures) to the church age.