

## **Lord of the Sabbath**

Matthew 12:1-21

by Don Falkos

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One Sabbath Jesus was walking through a grain field. His disciples started picking and eating heads of grain. Some Pharisees complained, "Why are you harvesting grain on the Sabbath?"

Jesus replied, "Don't you know what David and his men did when they were hungry? They broke the Law by going to the House of God and eating the bread from the altar – bread that only the priests were supposed to eat. And don't you know that the priests in the Temple break the Law by working on the Sabbath? Yet they are innocent. One greater than the Temple is here. My disciples are innocent, which you would understand if you knew what God meant by 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

Then Jesus went to the synagogue, where there was a man whose hand was shriveled. The Pharisees, hoping to catch Jesus breaking some Sabbath regulation, asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"

Jesus replied, "If you had a sheep that fell into a well on the Sabbath, of course you would lift it out. Well a human being is far more valuable than a sheep! So yes, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."

He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And his hand became whole.

The Pharisees went out and started plotting how they might kill Jesus.

Jesus knew what they were planning, so he left that place. Many went with him. He healed all their sick and warned them not to tell anyone who he was. In this way Jesus fulfilled the words of the prophet Isaiah, "I will put my Spirit on him. He will proclaim justice and demonstrate peace. He will care for the weak, and all the world will place its hope in him."