

Jesus has demonstrated His divinity. He publically declared a man's sins forgiven then proved His authority to do so by healing the man's paralysis. This ordinary looking common Man among them indeed was God. Yet the religious authorities refused to acknowledge Him as God. So He has gone **from them** to the sea shore to teach those who come out to Him. This is the call for believers today desiring blessing, come out from among them, 2Corinthians 6:17, purge himself from these, 2Timothy 2:19-22. From whom? The religious profession of the day. Go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach, Hebrews 13: 13-14.

Yet in His love for lost sinners He goes **to them**. He calls Levi (who is Matthew) who hosts a banquet for his new Lord and Savior, Jesus. He invites his lost colleagues to hear The Messiah and they come. Jesus comes but not simply to casually dine with them. He had a reason. His evangelical outreach involved going among the lost to call them to repentance. The fastidious Pharisees and scribes were appalled. They esteemed outward appearances above inward reality. They weren't invited and would not have lowered themselves to come anyway. But Jesus characterizes His activity among "sinners" as that of a physician visiting and treating the sick. Sin sickness! The hypocritical religious sects prided themselves as more righteous than the ordinary souls, whom they classed as publicans and sinners. They were calling others "sinners," as though they themselves were not. How offensive were such before the Lord of glory! He was the only truly sinless Man to walk on earth. Yet, blinded by personal and national pride, they did not recognize Him.

The disciples of John fasted as did the Pharisees. John's disciples and the Pharisees outwardly had something in common. Possibly there were men of the Pharisees among the disciples of John for he had called for fasting and condemned unrighteousness, as did they. But here was One that was different from John. Jesus' disciple didn't participate in the called religious fasts as did the Pharisees, and John's disciples. (These had no basis in Mosaic Law.) When asked why, Jesus introduces Himself as the bridegroom feasting with the children of the bride chamber. Huh? This is something unheard of. Something new! What does He mean? He doesn't leave them guessing. He gives them two graphic illustrations that vividly contrast the current conditions, the OLD, with the NEW He is now introducing. In these two comparisons He outlines the events coming about.

1.The Bridegroom has come. It is the time to feast. But on a more ominous note the Bridegroom be taken from them, and that will be the time for fasting again. They knew the customs of a wedding celebration. Nothing happened until the bridegroom arrived. Until then, the

bride and her young companions waited. In Jesus' illustration here the bride is not mentioned, only those assembled for the feast. Since they did not recognize and receive the Bridegroom when He came He will seek and call a Bride from the Gentiles, the Church. The marriage supper of the Lamb still awaits us. Are we ready? Are we watching for Him?

2.The new wine is here. No one would put new wine in old wineskins for fermentation would increase pressure within bursting skins with any weaknesses. Old skins become stiff and unadaptable. Traditions and hardness of heart dominated the religious of Judea. And there were secular elements such as the Priesthood and Sadducees who would not yield to anything that threatened to upset their established power structure and convenient arrangements with the occupying Romans. New wine was definitely not welcome. And the Lord was not about to bless the existing establishment, the old skins, with the new wine of His arrival and presence. They would but burst and the blessing would be lost to the nation. Yet the Spirit was poured out from heaven by the ascended Lord and received by those of the Jews who had received Jesus as Lord. This New Wine indwells each born again believer since.

Israel nationally lost the blessing by crucifying it's Christ and then persecuting and stoning His apostles and witnesses sent after His rising and ascension. The Bridegroom has been taken from them. It is a time for fasting for the children of the bride chamber. The Jewish temple was destroyed and the people scattered world wide forty years after crucifixion of Messiah. While some returned in the twentieth century they are self-reliant, secularist or unbelieving orthodox religious (read Pharisaic) groups. These last are ostensibly still awaiting the promised Messiah to restore their fortunes according to the promises of national glory found in the Old Testament. Won't they be surprised when HE appears, unpleasantly for most, I'm afraid. But we read of a remnant which mourns when they realize they had pierced Him, Zechariah.12:10.

But while Jesus and His disciples didn't participate in ceremonial fasting they unintentionally did find themselves hungry. So hungry they rolled the grain from the wheat or barley ears they noticed ripe in a field as they were passing. Just a few grains. A few grains from a field owned and planted by another. There was nothing illegal about that! The Law of Moses provided for just such an occasion. The only limitation was they could only take what they could eat right there. But the Pharisees, right there, jumped on them, complaining to the Lord they were working on the Sabbath. Why hadn't they seen their hunger and invited them home to share what they had prepared on the day before to eat on Sabbath? Where was their compassion for their countrymen?

The Lord rebukes them, daring to question their

knowledge of the scriptures. That should get their attention. Had they forgotten David, the great king whom they held in great esteem, who was hungry once? Fleeing from Saul he came to the house of God and asked Abiathar the high priest for some food. But he didn't have any. The high priest of Israel didn't have food to spare. This was the highest religious position Jehovah had established in Moses' day. Yet here was Israel's high priest in want, apparently totally neglected by the people, and their king. Where were the sin offerings that the priests were to eat? Were no sin offerings being brought by the people for their sins? Where were the peace offerings the priest shared, the bounty of blessings God granted the people? The nation in David's day was spiritually dry and suffering a famine of the word of God. And so it was also in Jesus' day. Yet, here He was, the Word Himself. The parallel between David's plight and Jesus' situation was obvious to all but the oblivious. What irony. But this lowly Servant did not act in righteous judgement at this time for He did not come to condemn the world but that the world though Him might be saved, John 3:16-18. They are like old wineskins, once strong and flexible in their prime, but now dry and hardened. He seeks to soften their hardened hearts. Yet it is He who will in the future condemn and dispatch into everlasting fire those who have not fed "the least of these my brethren" in the last days of the great Tribulation, Matthew 25:\_\_\_\_\_.

He further appeals to them by making a startling claim, declaring He is the Son of Man and, as that, Lord of the Sabbath. The Lord of the Sabbath can make and uphold the law of the Sabbath. The scribes and Pharisees weren't that but they had added regulations and their interpretations of the Law. Probably this began innocently enough in an attempt to clarify parts of the Law about which they had received earnest questions. But as time passed what began as simply answers to questions became established as regulations (traditions) in themselves and later even surpassed the authority of the original scriptures given Moses. Sadly, Christendom has seen the same thing occur. History repeats because the nature of man has not changed since Adam 's sin.

Abiathar did not rigorously keep the law when he let David and his men partake of the holy show bread. He apparently acted in support of David whom he saw to be God's anointed soon replacing the ungodly King Saul. He feeds him and his men, probably not enough to satisfy their hunger but to alleviate it some. Compassion preempts Law? Yes in David's story it did. The needs of the anointed king preempts the Law? Yes in David's time. And then again when the Lord of the Sabbath was there.

As Lord of the Sabbath He declares that the Sabbath was made for man. It was to benefit mankind by enforcing a rest once a week. Without this, man would work or be forced to work 24/7. In this country many are working 7 days a week nowadays despite the heritage of a seven day

calendar. God rested after creating man in His image. Ideally, thoughtful, thankful men and women would rest on every seventh day in reverent respect and acknowledgment of their Creator's work. By Moses' day this concept, if ever practiced, had been lost and God commanded Israel to keep the Sabbath. They needed that rest and they should remember their Creator at least once a week. All men should. Start young.

*Ecclesiastes 12:1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;*

Instead of keeping the Sabbath in the present age (after the bodily ascension of Jesus to glory) we remember the Lord in his death. **He** is our Creator, not only as flesh and blood but as a New Creation born of the Spirit. That creative act involved His death and resurrection.

*2Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. {he is: or, let him be}*

*Galatians 6:15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature*

*Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

*Ephesians 4:24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

*Colossians 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.*

*John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

*1Peter 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*

The Sabbath was made for man. Therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath. Wherefore the therefore? **HE** is the Son of Man. It was made for Him above all others. And He shall rest, when His people rest. Adam sinned after God rested from His work so God resumed to work dealing with mankind as a race and as individual souls to bring them to repentance, and ultimately to glory. His work establishing the basis for our perfect eternal rest was completed on the cross, "It is finished!" But "my Father worketh hitherto (up to now) and I work," John 5:17.

*Philippians 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out** your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which **worketh** in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

Jesus again brings them face to face with the Lord of the Sabbath in chapter 3. His "violations" of their concept of the Sabbath were very grievous to them but He persists for they must come to grips with the fact the Son of Man was indeed among them, in Person!