

Luke 6a: HG Bishop Youssef

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His Grace Bishop Youssef ~ فسوي ابن الالة فاين تاطع • LUKE 6: 1 - 26 ~ Bible Study (English & Arabic - يبرع)

Introduction

00:00

- St Luke is carefully presenting the Lord's authority in interpreting the Law. There was a dispute about one of the 10 Commandments - Sabbath and how to interpret it
- He's also drawing our attention to the growing opposition of the Religious leaders and the Lord
- In Luke 4:31-37, the Lord healed a person on the Sabbath but without opposition. After the news spread to Judea, some Scribes and Pharisees came to Galilee to see
- In this chapter, the Lord heals on the Sabbath but this time the opposition of the Pharisees intensifies. They conspire to present formal charges by the end of these encounters

Outline of the Chapter

03:49

- 1-5: Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath
- 6-11: Healing on the Sabbath
- 12-16: Appointing the 12 Apostles
- 17-19: Jesus heals great multitude
- 20-23: Beatitudes
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Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath

04:55

¹ Now it happened on the second Sabbath after the first that He went through the grainfields. And His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate *them*, rubbing *them* in *their* hands. ² And some of the Pharisees said to them, "Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?"

³ But Jesus answering them said, "Have you not even read this, what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: ⁴ how he went into the house of God, took and ate the showbread, and also gave some to those with him, which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat?" ⁵ And He said to them, "The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."

- In these five verses, we see the response to the Pharisees and Scribes' criticism of His disciples. The Lord asserts His claim of authority over the Sabbath
- Second Sabbath after the First
 - St Luke is a Historian and he is collecting all of the data in a very precise way
 - What is it?
 - Some scholars say that this probably means it was the Sabbath after one of the three major Feasts: Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost
 - Some say it was the second Sabbath in the new year (Nisan)
- Is it considered stealing to pluck the heads of grain and eat them? No!
 - "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." (Deuteronomy 23:25)
- What bothered the Pharisees? That it's on the Sabbath
 - The Pharisees had come up with lists of interpretations of what is okay and not okay on the Sabbath
 - When the disciples did this simple act, they became guilty of reaping, threshing, winnowing, and preparing food... all of which are violations of the Sabbath according to the Pharisees
- The Lord's Response
 - 1 Samuel 21: David and his men came to the city of the priests, and they were hungry, and it was the Sabbath...
 - He ate what was only allowed to the priests to eat
 - He did it on the Sabbath
 - The Lord challenges them: "Have you not read?" as if challenging their knowledge of the Law
 - The Law was not meant to be so rigid as they make it
 - "The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath" - He is claiming Divine Authority to determine what is a Sabbath violation and what is not
- In the Gospel of St Matthew 12, the Lord adds: "⁵ Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? ⁶ Yet I say to you that in this place there is *One* greater than the temple. ⁷ But if you had known what *this* means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. ⁸ For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."
- He is referring to Himself and His mission as "greater than the temple"
- He is not removing the Sabbath, but rather redefining the prohibitions

Healing on the Sabbath

⁶ Now it happened on another Sabbath, also, that He entered the synagogue and taught. And a man was there whose right hand was withered. ⁷ So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against Him. ⁸ But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, "Arise and stand here." And he arose and stood. 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?" ¹⁰ And when He had looked around at them all, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored as whole as the other. ¹¹ But they were filled with rage, and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

- Another Sabbath: not certain when
- St Luke (and all of the evangelist) inserts this scene here because it completes the teaching of the Lord on the ceremonial law that we saw in the story prior
- The Pharisees admitted that Jesus had the power of God to work miracles when they "watched Him closely" - yet they sought to "find an accusation against Him"
- The controversy surrounding Sabbath healing increases
 - The man did not even ask to be healed, but the Lord invited him and asked the Pharisees a question to challenge them
 - Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil?
 - The Lord intends to do good on the Sabbath by healing the man
 - The Pharisees intend to do evil on the Sabbath by lying in wait to try and accuse Him
 - The Pharisees are the ones violating the Sabbath
 - They cannot say that it is lawful to do evil... and if they said it is lawful to do good then they'd be giving Him permission
- St Mark adds in Chapter 2: **But they kept silent.** ⁵ And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched *it* out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other. ⁶ Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.
 - He looks at them with indignation!
- St Matthew adds in Chapter 12: ¹¹ Then He said to them, "What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift *it* out? ¹² Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath."
- When the Lord gives a commandment, He gives power to do it
 - When the Lord told this man to "stretch out your hand" he could have said "My hand is withered and I can't stretch it... why should I even try" - but he tried
 - This applies to spiritual commandments:
 - Love your enemy
 - Pray for those who persecute you
 - Sometimes we say "I can't do it" - but just try!

The Twelve Apostles

21:47

¹² Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. ¹³ And when it was day, He called His disciples to *Himself*; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles: ¹⁴ Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; ¹⁵ Matthew and Thomas; James the *son* of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot; ¹⁶ Judas *the son* of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.

- St Luke says "in those days" because he is shifting the subject away from the Sabbath discussions
- St Luke stresses throughout his gospel that the Lord would go and pray
 - He would have his readers NEVER lose sight of the PERFECT Humanity of Christ
- In response to what is happening in all this political and religious controversy, and in preparation for choosing and appointing His twelve disciples, He went to pray all night to the Father
 - This is one of the most important parts in His ministry
 - Disciples are followers - and from them, He chose twelve who were called apostles (i.e. "ambassadors")
 - Through them, and their preaching, the whole world would know the Gospel Truth and be led to salvation
- Jesus is God, but did not simply use His infinite knowledge to choose disciples... but rather, He emptied Himself and then prayed all night as God-Man, seeking the will of His Father and relying on the power of the Holy Spirit like us.
- Why Twelve?
 - This is the foundation of the new Chosen People... and Israel, the Chosen People of the Old Testament had twelve tribes
- Why Judas?
 - Jesus chose Judas knowing how he would turn out to be a traitor
 - This was not a surprise for Him: **"Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?"** (John 6:70)

Jesus Heals a Great Multitude

27:30

¹⁷ And He came down with them and stood on a level place with a crowd of His disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, ¹⁸ as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed. ¹⁹ And the whole multitude sought to touch Him, for power went out from Him and healed *them* all.

- Level Place
 - In verse 12 they went up the mountain, and He taught His disciples... but now they are coming down to a level ground to teach the disciples and all the crowds

- The teaching that He gives to them is very similar to the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-6-7
 - In Matthew 5-6-7 it is a sermon "on the mount", but here it takes place "on a level place"
 - Some say these are two separate sermons... one from the mountain and another one from a level place
 - Scholars have three theories about the relationship between the two accounts:
 - Both gospels are giving a different account of the same sermon (Luke summarizes, but Matthew details)
 - The gospels reflect two different homilies spoken at different times during the ministry of Christ
 - These two homilies were delivered in close succession - when the Lord was on the mountain, He told the disciples the long sermon and when He descended to the plains, He gave the shorter one to the multitude
 - The area around the Sea of Galilee, which includes the traditional Mount of Beatitudes, is like a mountain when looking from the Sea of Galilee... but it is like a level place when one stands on or above it
- People came from great distances to be healed and delivered from demonic spirits by the Lord Jesus Christ
 - Judea and Jerusalem: Israel
 - Tyre and Sidon: Gentiles

The Beatitudes

33:30

²⁰ Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said:

"Blessed *are you* poor,
For yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ Blessed *are you* who hunger now,
For you shall be filled.

Blessed *are you* who weep now,
For you shall laugh.

²² Blessed are you when men hate you,
And when they exclude you,
And revile *you*, and cast out your name as evil,
For the Son of Man's sake.

²³ Rejoice in that day and leap for joy!
For indeed your reward *is* great in heaven,
For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

- Blessed are you poor
 - Poverty in Spirit
 - Recognizing that I don't have any spiritual resources or assets - my righteousness is

- This cannot be artificially obtained by self-hatred... that's not what the Lord means
- As the Holy Spirit works in our heart and we respond to Him, we obtain the poverty in Spirit.
 - A candle in a dark room will seem to light up the whole room, but once the sun shines, the candle will not provide 0 light
 - Acknowledging that my righteousness away from God is like the light of a candle... but the righteousness of Christ is the light of the Sun
- "But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word." (Isaiah 66:2)
- Poverty in Spirit is an absolute prerequisite for receiving the Kingdom of God. As long as we keep illusions about our own righteousness and our own spiritual resources, we will never receive from God what we absolutely need.
- The blessing to the poor is first because it puts the other blessings in perspective... no one can love their enemies without relying on God's power
- Blessed are you who hunger now
 - Those who hunger and thirst in a spiritual sense - who hunger and thirst for righteousness.
 - When I discover my spiritual poverty, I will hunger and thirst for righteousness
 - As the body has a natural appetite in hunger and thirst for food and drink, so the soul has a natural appetite for righteousness
 - As the body depends on its nourishment for strength on earth, so the soul depends on righteousness for heaven
- Blessed are you who weep now
 - "No blessing from heaven is attached to the world's sorrow" - St Augustine
 - Weeping for our sins and sins of others
 - "It befits you to weep over the world but to rejoice in the Lord. Be sorrowful for repentance and rejoice for grace." - St Ambrose
 - "Godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death." (2 Cor 7:10)
- Blessed are you when men hate you...
 - When I discover my poverty, and I am hungry for the righteousness of Christ, I will be sorrowful in a Godly way... sorrowful for my condition because this sorrow produces repentance leading to fulfillment and receiving the righteousness of Christ
 - When I attain the righteousness of Christ, Satan will start to attack me and make people hate me and persecute me
 - Hate you, exclude you, revile you, cast out your name as evil
 - It did not take long for this to come true
 - The followers of Jesus were called Nazarene or Christians... and these names carried reproach with them in the early centuries.
 - "Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?" (James 2:7)
 - "For we have found this man a plague, a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes." (Acts 24:5)
 - They were excommunicated from the Synagogue (i.e. excluded)
 - Why rejoice?
 - The persecuted one will receive a greater reward in heaven

- By being persecuted and hated and excluded, you are in good company: the Prophets!
- Prophets who were persecuted:
 - Elijah mourned the general massacre of his brothers the prophets during Ahab and Jezebel's reign, saying: "the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword." (1 Kings 19:10)
 - Urijah was brought to Jehoiakim the king and was killed with the sword (Jeremiah 26:23)
 - Jeremiah was cast into a pit (Jeremiah 38)
 - Amos was accused and banished and beaten to death
 - Etc.
- Until today, the followers of Christ are persecuted

The Woes

45:50

²⁴ "But woe to you who are rich,
 For you have received your consolation.
²⁵ Woe to you who are full,
 For you shall hunger.
 Woe to you who laugh now,
 For you shall mourn and weep.
²⁶ Woe to you when all men speak well of you,
 For so did their fathers to the false prophets.

- Woe
 - The tone of the Lord is of pity... expression of regret and compassion, rather than denunciation
 - The woes here balance the beatitudes and are their direct opposites
 - The Lord is turning upside down their perception of the Kingdom of God
- Woe to you who are rich
 - Opposite of Blessed are you who are poor
 - St Luke, as a physician of the soul and not just of the body, is recording for us all the warnings against the temptations that wealth and richness bring with it
 - This is a clear example
 - The story of the rich man and Lazarus is also in the Gospel of St Luke
 - The love of money is the root of all evil
 - Rich is those who TRUST in riches... who have riches and instead of serving God with it, serve their own lusts
- Woe to you who are full
 - Opposite of Blessed are you who hunger
 - Those who used their wealth for their own indulgence and found themselves full
- Woe to you who laugh now
 - Opposite of Blessed are you who weep
 - The Lord is not against laughing, but this is understood as those who are sinfully merry, and have no true cause of spiritual joy

- Woe to you when all men speak well of you
 - The true prophets were persecuted, but the false prophets were praised by men
 - Woe to those who make it their great and only care to gain the grace and applause of men, who value themselves upon that more than upon the favor of God and His acceptance
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