


Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

¹ Another time he went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. ² Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath.

Q1. The phrase “Some of them” refers to who?

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Q2. Why were the Jewish religious leaders concerned about Jesus healing people on the Sabbath?

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Exodus 20:9-11 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Exodus 31:14-16 “ ‘Observe the Sabbath, because it is holy to you. Anyone who desecrates it must be put to death; whoever does any work on that day must be cut off from his people. ¹⁵ For six days, work is to be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day must be put to death. ¹⁶ The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant.’ ”

Q3. Were the Jewish leaders jealous of Jesus? How do you think Jesus’ popularity compared to that of the Jewish leaders? Were they concerned about other factors in Jesus’ life and ministry (that they did not understand or were not willing to understand)?

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John 12:37-41 Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. ³⁸ This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet: "Lord, who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" ³⁹ For this reason they could not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere: ⁴⁰ "He has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn -- and I would heal them." ⁴¹ Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him.

³ Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Stand up in front of everyone."

⁴ Then Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent.

Q4. Why do you think Jesus asked the “shriveled hand” man to stand up?

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Q5. “But they remained silent”; who is “they”? And why did they remain silent?

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Continued

Q6. What was Jesus trying to emphasize/elicit with His question?

Day 2

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⁵ He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored.

Q7. Why was Jesus angry and distressed?

Q8. If their hearts had not been "stubborn", what do you think they would have really seen or felt?

Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Jeremiah 23:5 "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land."

Micah 5:2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

Q9. Traditionally, the Jews were expecting a military leader. What do words and phrases like "government will be on His shoulders" or "King" or "ruler over Israel" mean to you?

John 14:9-14 Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. ¹² I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

Q10. Why didn't Jesus just explain to them who He really was?

Continued


Q11. If the Pharisees had “stubborn hearts” (verse 5), what kind of heart did the disciples have? What kind of heart do you have?

Matthew 16:13-17 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.

Q12. How did Simon Peter know who Jesus really was (from the passage Matthew 16:13-17)?

⁶ Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.


Q13. Who are the Herodians?

 NOTE: Herodians: A party twice mentioned in the Gospels (Matt 22.16 parallel Mark 12.13; Mark 3.6) as acting with the Pharisees in opposition to Jesus. They were not a religious sect, but, as the name implies, a court or political party, supporters of the dynasty of Herod. Nothing is known of them beyond what the Gospels state. Whatever their political aims, they early perceived that Christ's pure and spiritual teaching on the kingdom of God was irreconcilable with these, and that Christ's influence with the people was antagonistic to their interests. [Source: International Standard Bible Encyclopedia]

Q14. Was it normal (or strange) for the Jewish religious leaders (Pharisees) to enter into an alliance with a party aligned with the Roman government? Why?

Continued

Day 3

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Crowds Follow Jesus

⁷ Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed.

Q15. Why do you think Jesus was searching for an isolated place (assumed from the use of the word "withdrew")?

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⁸ When they heard all he was doing, many people came to him from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and the regions across the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon.

Q16. Why were people seeking Jesus? Were they seeking His Gospel message? Were they seeking the power and purity of the man Jesus? Were they seeking what He could do for them?

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⁹ Because of the crowd he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from crowding him.

Q17. Why did Jesus want a small boat ready?

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¹⁰ For he had healed many, so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch him. ¹¹ Whenever the evil spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." ¹² But he gave them strict orders not to tell who he was.

Q18. As you read verse 11, did anything remarkable or surprising occur?

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Q19. Why did Jesus command the evil spirits to be silent about who He was? Wasn't it a good thing to have His divine nature revealed?

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The Appointing of the Twelve Apostles

¹³ Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him.


Q20. Why did Jesus select a “mountainside” for his meeting location?

¹⁴ He appointed twelve — designating them apostles — that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach ¹⁵ and to have authority to drive out demons.

Q21. What is the significance of “twelve”? Why not 7? Or 50?

Exodus 39:14 There were twelve stones, one for each of the names of the sons of Israel, each engraved like a seal with the name of one of the twelve tribes.

Revelation 21:10-14 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. ¹¹ It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. ¹² It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. ¹³ There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west. ¹⁴ The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

 NOTE: “Apostle” means authorized representative or messenger. These people represented diverse backgrounds. These men obeyed Jesus. We are to see the lack of religious education in these twelve ordinary workmen. If God can use their obedience to start a flame that has grown over 2,000 years and has never been extinguished, what can He do with our added obedience? (Of the twelve, we know that four were common fishermen and one was an accountant or tax collector.)


Q22. What were the apostles to do and what power were they to have?

¹⁶ These are the twelve he appointed: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter ¹⁷ James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means Sons of Thunder, ¹⁸ Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

Q23. If Jesus was “the Son of God”, why did He select Judas Iscariot as one of His apostles?

Continued

Day 4

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Jesus and Beelzebub

²⁰ Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat.

Q24. The crush of people was so great, that they could not even eat. Do you think the crowd was well-behaved? Was it noisy? Were people were shouting for the Lord's attention?

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Q25. If you had an urgent health concern and swarms of people were between you and the medical specialist, how would get the attention of the one person who could heal you?

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²¹ When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."

Q26. Whose "family" does "his family" reference?


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Q27. Why do you think the family thought that he was "out of his mind"?

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Q28. If your brother thought that he was THE "Son of God", how would you react?

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 FYI: The Gospel author Mark continues to describe this event with Jesus' immediate family in verse 31.

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²² And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebub! By the prince of demons he is driving out demons."

Q29. Who / what does "Beelzebub" reference?

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Q30. The learned, Jewish teachers were accusing Jesus of being evil and of performing evil acts. Does it make logical sense that Satan would drive his evil demonic spirits out of host-people? Or does it make more sense that Satan would want to find suitable, hospitable host-people for his followers?

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Q31. Why do you think "teachers of the law" accused Jesus of being evil and driving out evil?

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Day 5

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^{23a} So Jesus called them and spoke to them in parables:

Q32. Why did Jesus speak to them in parables? Why didn't he just tell it like it is?

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Q33. Do you find parables hard to understand?

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Q34. How can we improve our understanding of Jesus' truths?

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^{23b} "How can Satan drive out Satan? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. ²⁶ And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come.

Q35. What might this mean, "If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand"? What are the implications?

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Q36. What generally happens to a family when it is wrenched by “civil war” and sister fights sister, a brother cannot stand another brother’s ‘arrogance’, a son cannot forgive his father, or a daughter-in-law is slighted by her husband’s mother? Is the family as strong as it was when whole?

²⁷ In fact, no one can enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can rob his house.


Q37. How would you explain Jesus’ statement?

²⁸ I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them.

Q38. This is a marvelous promise. How are “all the sins and blasphemies” forgiven?


Q39. Is this free? Do we have to tithe? Do we have to do some special deed? Or say something special? (I am a sinner, is this promise for me?)

Day 6

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²⁹ But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin."

Q40. Define the word “blasphemy”?

 NOTE: Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost (Matt. 12:31, 32; Mark 3:28, 29; Luke 12:10) is regarded by some as a continued and obstinate rejection of the gospel, and hence is an unpardonable sin, simply because as long as a sinner remains in unbelief he voluntarily excludes himself from pardon. Others regard the expression as designating the sin of attributing to the power of Satan those miracles, which Christ performed, or generally those works which are the result of the Spirit's [work]. (Source: The Bible Library and The Bible Library CD-ROM © Copyright 1988,1998 by Ellis Enterprises, Inc.)

Continued

Q41. Will God eventually turn away from an unbeliever? Or do you think that His arms are always open?

Romans 1:18-23 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, ¹⁹ since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰ For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities -- his eternal power and divine nature -- have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴ The god of this age [Satan] has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Q42. Does it make a difference to God, if we continually pray for someone's salvation?

Luke 18:1-7 Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. ² He said: "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared about men. ³ And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.' ⁴ "For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care about men, ⁵ yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually wear me out with her coming!' " ⁶ And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. ⁷ And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?

³⁰ He said this because they were saying, "He has an evil spirit."

Q43. Why do you think the "teachers" continued repeating this accusation, "He has an evil spirit"?

Q44. If they repeated it often enough, would the people finally begin to believe the evil accusation as truth?

Jesus' Mother and Brothers

³¹ Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. ³² A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, "Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you."

Q45. Why do you think His mother Mary came, too? Traditionally, who would be leading the family?

Continued

Q46. What do you think His mother Mary was thinking / wondering?

Q47. What stories / accusations do you think the family heard?

Luke 2:15-19 When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷ And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. [ESV]

³³ "Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked. ³⁴ Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵ Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother."

Q48. Jesus called those sitting around Him His "brother and sister and mother". What was He implying?

Ephesians 1:5-6 In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will — ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. (ESV)

Q49. If you were one of Jesus' immediate family members, what would you think when you heard Him address the members of the crowd as "brother and sister and mother"?

Romans 8:14-17 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. (ESV)

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