

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Matthew 12:1-14; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-11

PRINT PASSAGE: Matthew 12:1-8

Are All Days the Same?



adamant about teaching his children the things of God.

During dinnertime, everyone had to recite a Bible verse before eating. This was done every day. The second daughter, Valencia, said this Bible verse: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." This Scripture can be found in Exodus 20:8.



THE ROSS CHILDREN GREW UP IN THE BUSTLING COMMUNITY OF FIFTH WARD IN HOUSTON, TEXAS.

Their parents were Christians who attended Fifth Ward Missionary Baptist Church. Their father was a local businessman who owned a cleaners and laundry business. He was

During dinnertime, their father would explain why everyone's verse had a different meaning. He basically said that God had commanded in the Old Testament for His children to work six days and rest on the seventh day. Keaton, the eldest of the siblings, asked, "Are all days the same?"

His father answered, "No, all days are not the same. God tells us to worship Him and rest on this day."

At this point, their mother picked up the conversation. She started talking about the Sabbath Day (celebrated as the Lord's Day on Sunday) from a historical perspective in the African American community.

Many of their family and friends attended church on Sunday. Some went to church all day. And during football season or any televised sport, the men watched it all day. Everyone took a nap after Sunday dinner.

She said that each family did things differently. However, it was a day to worship God, refresh, and relax.

Keaton's perspective on the Sabbath is that God created the earth and rested on the seventh day. The Sabbath is a high and holy day.

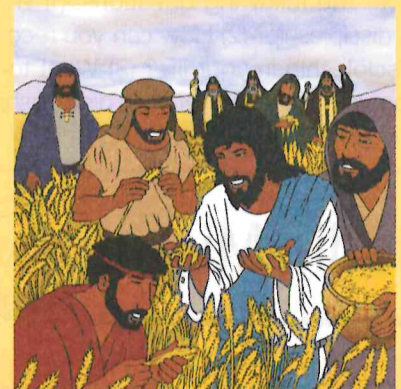
God said that everyone, even the animals, should have rest. We should honor the Sabbath Day and God's Word.



WORD UP

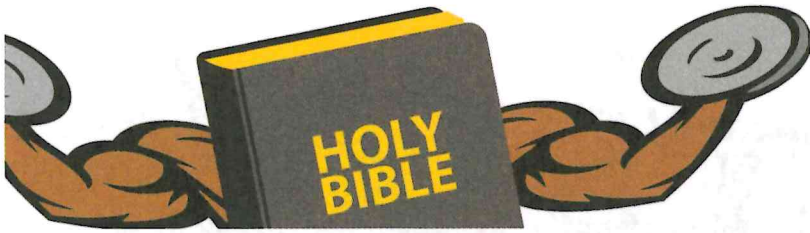
Matthew 12:1-8

1 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. **2** When the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath." **3** He answered, "Haven't you read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? **4** He entered the house of God, and he and his companions ate the consecrated bread—which was not lawful for them to do, but only for the priests. **5** Or haven't you read in the Law that the priests on Sabbath duty in the temple desecrate the Sabbath and yet are innocent? **6** I tell you that something greater than the temple is here. **7** If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent. **8** For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."



KEY VERSE:

[Jesus said,] "I tell you that something greater than the temple is here."
(Matthew 12:6)



WORK OUT

JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES WERE TRAVELING THROUGH THE GRAINFIELDS ON THE SABBATH. They began to pluck and eat the heads of the grain because they were hungry. The Pharisees saw this and confronted Jesus, telling Him that they were breaking the Law by doing this on the Sabbath. The Pharisees considered it work for them to pluck grain on the Sabbath.

In response to their criticism, Jesus reminded the Pharisees about what David and his men did when they were hungry. The second point Jesus made was about the role of the priests and their work in preparation for the Sabbath. The priests also broke the law on the Sabbath. They had to work more on that day to carry out the duties of the Sabbath. Jesus wanted to know if it was okay for them to break the Law. A critical point Jesus made was that He said there was something greater here than the Temple. It is evident that the Pharisees did not understand Jesus' second point. He said, "If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent. For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath" (verses 7-8).

The Pharisees failed to understand that Jesus was valued more than the Temple. He was the Lord of the Sabbath. The question is, "If the law was broken, wouldn't He know this?" The law of our heart should be that human needs should always prevail over the laws of humankind.

INSIDE OUT



In referencing Hosea 6:6, it states, "For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings." Let's look at what Jesus said in verse 7 of today's Bible verses: "If you had known what these words mean, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent."

The question is, are traditions of humanity more pleasing to God, or is God more pleased with a good heart than He is with religious traditions?

THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

Use the following words in a prayer to God: *mercy, traditions, sacrifice, heart, Jesus, religion, and love*; write your prayer on a separate sheet of paper. After completing it, take a picture so that you can access and read it whenever you need to be reminded of God's mercy and love.

This prayer is essential to understanding the mercy that God gives you daily. We do not always get it right. However, God loves and cares for each of us. Let us not be legalistic like the Pharisees were toward Jesus.



Matthew 12:6 teaches us that Jesus was greater than the Temple. The human condition is more important than traditional religious laws or deeds. If a person is hungry, feed him. Who cares if he gets hungry at a particular hour or on the wrong day? God loves those who show mercy to others.





STEPPING OUT!

Sometimes, we may misinterpret a situation, a statement, or an action of others. Jesus came to help the Pharisees interpret the Old Testament in its rightful meaning.

Read Matthew 5:17 and Romans 8:1-4.

Discuss the statements below and write them in your journals:

The Pharisees had created a religion of their own design, not God's.

This ungodly teaching was an invention of their own.

Manmade religion is dangerous, and it damages the souls of others.

Legalism means that what you do by the Law is acceptable to God, which Jesus challenged.

Mercy is meant to triumph over sacrifice.

Media Mission



View the video "The Gospel of Matthew 12:1-21" by visiting <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nd12vjXVU3Q>.



Reflect on the video. Take note of how trivial it must have been to Jesus for the Pharisees to have been in the fields to make an accusation. Jesus defended their actions of eating the grain heads on the Sabbath Day.



View the video "Jesus Heals the Withered Hand (The Chosen Scene)" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWoTGzlefq8>.



In two groups, present the argument the Pharisees were making and the argument that Jesus made. What was at stake in their debate?

Also, answer this question: Is it okay to leave a sheep in the pit if it falls in on the Sabbath Day?

As you call out the answers, your teacher will write the reasons for both sides on the board.

