

**(Matt. 12:9)** - *“AND WHEN HE WAS DEPARTED THENCE, HE WENT INTO THEIR SYNAGOGUE:”* - The Lord placed great importance on public worship. The synagogue was the place where the Jews gathered to worship the Lord. Though He had nothing to gain from going to one of the many synagogues or to the temple in Jerusalem, yet by example He taught the necessity of meeting with others to worship God (John 4:23-24). It is sad that the synagogues of the Jews generally had been turned into places of idolatry as they failed to worship the true and living God according to His Word. The people had been taught wrongly by the religious leaders to search for salvation and righteousness by their obedience to (works of) the law (Rom. 9:31–10:3). When Christ returned to Galilee, *“He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all”* (Luke 4:15), meaning that many of them were astonished at His doctrine and praised Him as a preacher and a worker of miracles. But when He returned to Nazareth, where He had been brought up, He went to the synagogue and read from Isaiah 53 claiming rightly that He Himself was the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy of the Messiah. It is recorded, *“And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, And rose up, and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong”* (Luke 4:28-29). The Lord told His disciples that the synagogues would eventually become so set against the truth that when they would go into there to preach the truth of salvation by God’s grace in and by Him, *“They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me”* (John 16:2-3).

**(Matt. 12:10)** - *“AND, BEHOLD, THERE WAS A MAN WHICH HAD HIS HAND WITHERED. AND THEY ASKED HIM, SAYING, IS IT LAWFUL TO HEAL ON THE SABBATH DAYS? THAT THEY MIGHT ACCUSE HIM”* - Christ had already taught clearly that acts of necessity and mercy were lawful even on the Sabbath. But the Pharisees were intent on proving Him to be a law-breaker. Here, they brought a man who had a paralyzed hand and asked if it were lawful to heal him on the Sabbath? Because it was not an act of necessity for Christ to heal the man immediately, if the Lord would heal him, they would accuse Him of breaking the Sabbath. If Christ would not heal the man, they would accuse Him of being unkind or uncompassionate. No matter what Jesus did, they thought they could discredit Him.

**(Matt. 12:11-12)** - Behold the wisdom of our Lord! He posed a question to them concerning a man who had only one sheep that fell *“INTO A PIT ON THE SABBATH DAY.”* Would not this man be expected to rescue his fallen sheep even though it was on the Sabbath day? The answer is obviously, “Yes.” Then the Lord asked them a question that they could only answer in the positive - *“HOW MUCH THEN IS A MAN BETTER THAN A SHEEP?”* The Lord then makes His point - *“WHEREFORE IT IS LAWFUL TO DO WELL ON THE SABBATH DAYS.”* There is no time or day in which is not lawful to do well!

**(Matt. 12:13-14)** - The Lord healed the man’s hand. The Pharisees were so enraged, both at His wisdom and His power, both which supported His message of truth that exposed them as hypocrites, that they *“HELD A COUNCIL AGAINST HIM, HOW THEY MIGHT DESTROY HIM.”* Their anger arose from their hatred of the Gospel of salvation by God’s grace based on the blood (righteousness) of the Lord Jesus Christ alone and which exposes the best deeds and efforts of sinners as being dead works, evil deeds, works of iniquity, and fruit unto death (Matt. 7:21-23; Luke 16:15; John 3:19-20; Php. 3:4-7). They spent their lives seeking to establish a righteousness before God and men and found Christ and His Gospel highly

offensive. Their whole way of life and making a living depended upon the people trusting them and following their counsel. From this time forward, their minds and hearts were set on killing Jesus of Nazareth. They refused to believe Him to be the one true Messiah, the Lord of Glory and the Savior of sinners. From here on they would plot and scheme to accomplish this goal.

**(Matt. 12:15)** - Our Savior knew of the Pharisees' plot to destroy Him. As God, He is omniscient. It was not yet time for Him to die as the sacrificial Lamb in the place of His people (John 7:30; 8:20; 17:1), He withdrew Himself from their grasp. Many people followed Him, **"AND HE HEALED THEM ALL."** Behold the Great Physician and His mercy and compassion for the people. There was no doubt that the people Christ healed were truly restored to health.

**(Matt. 12:16)** - **"AND CHARGED THEM THAT THEY SHOULD NOT MAKE HIM KNOWN"** - This may seem to be a strange command considering that Christ had come to declare Himself as the King/Messiah. Why would He want to conceal His identity proven through His miracles. The truth is this - He did not conceal His identity, but He did everything in His earthly ministry according to the time appointed by God for Him to be arrested and taken to the cross. His fame and popularity would spread because of His miracles. But He did not come to be a great healer. He came to save His people from their sins, and this work was the main issue of His sojourn on earth. As His fame began to spread, it would come to its full measure at the appointed time, and then He would give Himself over to suffer unto death.

**(Matt. 12:17-21)** - All that Christ did was according to God's plan and prophecy in the Old Testament. Matthew quotes here from Isaiah 42:1-4, one of the many prophecies of the Messiah as God manifest in the flesh, Jehovah's Servant Who would be obedient unto death in order to save His people from their sins. In these verses we are told several things about the Messiah:

- (1) In order to save His people, the Son of God had to become the perfect and obedient Servant of Jehovah Who is able to establish righteousness for His people (Isa. 52:13; 53:11).
- (2) He was chosen of God to be the Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer of His people (Isa. 42:1).
- (3) He was beloved of the Lord (John 10:16-18; 15:9; 17:23,26).
- (4) He was well-pleasing to the Father for righteousness' sake (Isa. 42:21; Matt. 3:17; 17:5).
- (5) He had the Spirit of God without measure (John 3:34).
- (6) He came to proclaim judgment, i.e. righteousness, to the Gentiles (Psa. 40:9-10).
- (7) His servitude was voluntary (Heb. 10:9), therefore, He said, *"No man taketh My life from Me ..."* (John 10:18).
- (8) His voice would be heard, but not in a contentious, arrogant way (Isa. 42:19).
- (9) He would be compassionate to those who were ignorant and out of the way (Heb. 5:2).
- (10) He would not fail to accomplish His mission. He would be victorious over Satan, sin, the world, and death. He would be merciful to those who were poor and downtrodden. All for whom He lived, died, and arose shall be saved as His righteousness insures and demands their salvation (John 6:37-45; 10:11-30).