

“Confronting Legalism” – Matthew 12:1-14

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[What follows is the transcript of a sermon. It was originally intended to be heard, not read, so the tone is more conversational than academic. It has only been loosely edited, so forgive any grammatical, syntactical, or spelling errors. If you have questions please contact Southern Oaks Baptist Church through their official website, www.welovethegospel.com.]

Take a Bible and meet me in Matthew 12...

It is very easy for people to have a distorted view of laws or rules. We tend to think of such things as restraining our freedom, but in some ways they afford us the freedom to know what action is proper. So if I give my teenage and driving child a curfew—be home by midnight—then I have clarified expectations. She knows what is expected of her. She’s free from uncertainty.

Nevertheless, a curfew is a manmade law. It’s something that a parent assigns or a parent and child negotiate and settle upon, but it’s not an absolute (and I believe in absolutes, trust me). In fact, a curfew can do harm if it becomes an absolute. One of our 3GCs is the “Great Commandments”—Love God and love neighbor. That’s an absolute. But what happens when something like a curfew collides with an absolute? The absolute should win the day.

So let’s say my daughter is driving home, but notices a friend of hers from the neighborhood was in an accident, her car running into the ditch. Should my daughter ignore the critical need of her injured friend in order to make curfew. “Well, I would pull over and call 911, but if I do I will be late for curfew and lose my driving privileges, so maybe next time.” No! I would, in that case, relax the curfew rule so that my daughter could help her friend in the ditch. To do otherwise would be detrimental, perhaps even life-threatening to her friend.

The point of that illustration is not for all the teenagers to begin to cite the 3GCs to excuse their tardiness—“Well, Dad, I would have been home in time, but my friend wanted to go to Taco Bell, and I didn’t think it would be very loving to let him go by himself, and, you know, Jesus ate with sinners, so...” No that’s not the point. The point is to show how certain rules take precedent over others. This requires wisdom. It requires knowledge of biblical absolutes. It requires Scripture to guide us. It requires Scripture to interpret Scripture. It requires, in other words, what we see in Jesus in our text this morning.

These are the same stories we examined last week. But let us read them once more to get the details fresh our minds. I’ll begin reading in verse 1 of Matthew 12. Follow along as I do.

“At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. ² But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, ‘Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.’ ³ He said to them, ‘Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him: ⁴ how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? ⁵ Or have you not read in the Law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? ⁶ I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. ⁷ And 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 of the Sabbath.”

⁹ He went on from there and entered their synagogue. ¹⁰ And a man was there with a withered hand. And they asked him, ‘Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?’—so that they might accuse him. ¹¹ He said to them, ‘Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? ¹² Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the

Sabbath. ¹³ Then he said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ And the man stretched it out, and it was restored, healthy like the other. ¹⁴ But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.” (Matthew 12:1-14)

This is God’s Word. Now last week, when we studied this passage, we focused on the most important aspect of any passage, namely, what it communicates about the Lord. We considered the Biblical passages the Lord Jesus refers to in this text and the things He says or implies about Himself, which allowed us to see that He is superior to David, the Temple, and the Sabbath, all of which the Pharisees held in high esteem. If you were not here this week, you need to get on our website and check out that sermon because we started there for a reason. Today we are going to be focusing on how Jesus confronts the legalism of the Pharisees, but if you fail to learn the Christological lessons of this text, you are missing out on what is most essential.

But for today, since we will be considering legalism, I suppose first we need to understand what we mean by “legalism” because not everyone would define the term in exactly the same way. For example, I don’t think that taking seriously obedience to God’s commands is legalism. That’s godliness. But legalism, at least the way the term is commonly used today, tends to involve either an insistence on things that go beyond what God has actually commanded *or* a reliance on our moral activity (even appropriate activity) to make us (or keep us) right with God. Sometimes both of these elements are involved.

Why is legalism dangerous? I remember reading an article on Colossians in which the author, Eric Raymond, gave four reasons legalism is so dangerous. They are worth repeating here. And I’ll add a fifth in a moment. The first was that legalism promotes unbiblical standards. It requires of a person more than God has commanded. It can confuse things that may have been “biblically true” with things that are not now “biblically applicable,” which then leads to an “attempt to make them binding.” In this way, it tends to elevate the self, not the Scriptures, as the authority and arbiter of morality.

“So it may be what you eat or drink, what you do on Sundays, or it may be what you wear for clothes, what kind of music you listen to, or whether you have piercings or tattoos, wear a suit or don’t on Sunday, or homeschool or not, or whatever. It takes something that cannot bring or keep your favor with God and makes it binding on yourself and others.”¹

Second, legalism is not only dangerous because it promotes unbiblical standards, but also because it does so in order to promote personal performance. I’m not saying that is the conscious goal, but that is often the unconscious explanation and the net result. It pulls us into self-righteousness. So legalism begins by saying “I do or do not do,” whereas the Gospel begins by saying, “I can’t do, but Jesus did.” Do you see the difference? It’s significant. It’s not that the Gospel doesn’t shape what we do and don’t do. It does. But it doesn’t start there. It starts with what Jesus has done in our place that frees us from sin’s bondage and changes the desires and motivations of our actions. As Raymond explains,

“Legalism promotes the earning and keeping of God’s pleasure based upon what I do or do not do. When legalistic thinking is prevalent you are always trying to cut a deal with God or your conscience. You may feel guilty about what you have done and instead of running to Christ you run to Sinai, the Law, and look for something to do. Legalism is a relentless task master that promotes your personal performance as your continuing personal atonement.”²

Third, legalism promotes division. I won’t belabor this point this morning, except to say that you will notice as you read God’s Word that when legalism is encountered in Scripture it tends to be accompanied by strife. If our standing is tied to our performance, we will tend to elevate ourselves by diminishing others. Therefore, grace and mercy will dry up. Humility will evaporate. If the Gospel doesn’t reign among us, strife most certainly will.

Fourth, and most significantly, Raymond adds that legalism by its nature demotes Jesus.

“To maintain that you can merit God’s favor outside of the work of Christ is to say that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus either was not necessary or was not sufficient. To cling to personal merit through doing things (however good or biblical they may seem) is to demote Jesus from his place of supremacy. Legalism thinks that God accepts us because we do this or don’t do this...no, God accepts sinners because Jesus lived an obedient life in our place and died the death penalty that we earned. We must see that fastening your grip upon other things is a loosening of our grip upon Jesus.”³

But to these, I would add, fifth, that legalism is dangerous because legalism can be quite subtle. We can be falling into legalistic tendencies and not even recognize it. It flourishes because of blind spots that are created when we fixate on how others have not followed the patterns of life that we have adopted. In our judgment on others we can be oblivious to the sin in our own life and the sin of our legalism. If we are not careful, we can accidentally become modern Pharisees. And when this happens, “the sheep are hurt, the gospel is veiled, Christ is marginalized, and we are exalted.”⁴

Do we see these tendencies in the text? Absolutely we do. How is legalism evidenced in the encounter we just read? Well, both of these encounters have to do with the Pharisees view of the Sabbath law, the fourth commandment. What is the fourth commandment?

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ 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, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.” (Exodus 20:8-11)

That is the fourth commandment. Is it right for the Pharisees to take seriously the fourth commandment? Absolutely. So what is wrong with the approach of the Pharisees in our text? It has to do with their interpretation of this commandment, their failure to understand God’s intent with this command, and their failure to grasp the place of this command within the broader scope of God’s instructions.

You see, even though the Sabbath is quite important for the people of God, the Old Testament doesn’t have a lot to say about what specifically could be done or not done on the Sabbath or what would be considered “work.” Because of this the Jewish religious leaders—because they didn’t want to get anywhere close to breaking this commandment—established various regulations that would safeguard people against inadvertently “working” on the Sabbath. The Jewish Mishnah, for instance, developed thirty-nine rules regarding appropriate activity on the Sabbath (*m. Šabb. 7:2*). Indeed, the rules laid out were such that a mishnaic tract stated, “The rules of the Sabbath are like mountains hanging by a hair, for Scripture is scanty and the rules are many” (*m. Hag. 1:8*).⁵ These regulations were, no doubt, well intentioned, but they were also extrabiblical and manmade. They imposed heavy burdens on the people. Jesus’ teaching actually relieves those burdens. Remember how the section was introduced? Back up to the end of chapter 11, verse 28 and following. What did Jesus say?

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

Then Matthew takes the reader right into these confrontations with the Pharisees. That’s not a coincidence. He is showing us people whose yoke is not easy and whose imposed burdens are not light, those whose legalism keeps them from the rest that Jesus offers.

What kind of burdens did men like the Pharisees heap upon the shoulders of the Jewish people in regard to the Sabbath? Here’s an example: God’s Law stated that you shouldn’t travel on the Sabbath (Exod 16:29), so the religious leaders took it upon themselves to define what counted as “travel” so that someone wouldn’t violate

the Sabbath. So the Pharisees taught that a person could venture a little over 3,500 feet (2,000 cubits/ approx. 1,100 meters) from their home, which is probably what is meant in Acts 1:12 when it refers to “a Sabbath day’s journey.” Anything beyond that would be considered “traveling” on the Sabbath and, therefore, sin.⁶

Here’s another example: Jeremiah talks about the people not carrying a load to or from their house on the Sabbath (Jer 17:21-22), so that led religious leaders to contemplate just what is rightly considered a “load”? Is the clothing on your back a load? The Pharisees said no. However, if you were carrying clothing that wasn’t being worn at the moment (like, say, to clean it), then you were guilty of carrying a “load” and breaking the Sabbath. You could wear a tunic, but not carry a tunic.⁷ John MacArthur gives further illustrations of the absurdity of such distinctions:

“Tailors did not carry a needle with them on the Sabbath for fear they might be tempted to mend a garment and thereby perform work. Nothing could be bought or sold, and clothing could not be dyed or washed. A letter could not be dispatched, even if by the hand of a Gentile. No fire could be lit or extinguished—including fire for a lamp—although a fire already lit could be used with certain limits. For that reason, some orthodox Jews today use automatic timers to turn on lights in their homes well before the Sabbath begins. Otherwise they might forget to turn them on in time and have to spend the night in the dark. Baths could not be taken for fear some of the water might spill out onto the floor and ‘wash’ it. Chairs could not be moved because dragging them might make a furrow in the ground, and a woman was not to look in a mirror lest she see a gray hair and be tempted to pull it out.”⁸

The Pharisees were nothing, if not super serious about the Sabbath. Proper observance of the Sabbath was critical to Jewish piety of the day. In fact, they took this sort of stuff so seriously that in 63 BC the Jewish people, because of their Sabbath-keeping, refused to take up arms against Pompey, a Roman general, who sieged Jerusalem, executed thousands, essentially ending Jewish independence.⁹ A hundred years before that (175-164 BC), Antiochus IV slaughtered many Jews for violating a royal edict that would have required them to violate the Sabbath (1 Macc. 1:41-64).

With such standards, is it really any surprise that these Pharisees would come to Jesus, in verse 2, and say, “*Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?*” Now you may wonder, what could these Pharisees have possibly found wrong with Jesus’ disciples plucking grain in a field and eating it when they were hungry? It’s not, as many modern readers assume, that the grain was from a field that did not belong to them or they are trespassing, which I’ll explain later. It is instead that they considered this action unlawful to do *on the Sabbath*. Why? Because they would have considered it working. As Leon Morris explains, “[T]hey understood it, plucking the grain was reaping, rubbing it to separate the grain from the husks (Luke tells us that they did this) was threshing, blowing away the husks may well have been interpreted as winnowing, and for good measure they may have seen the whole as preparation of food, which they also regarded as prohibited (all food eaten on the Sabbath had to be preprepared on the previous day).”¹⁰ Allowing for certain exceptions in the case of starvation, what the disciples do in the scene appears to violate the Sabbath Law (or at least the Pharisees interpretation of what constitutes as “working” on the Sabbath). Yet, because of this insistence on their manmade applications of the Law, the Pharisees have, ironically, destroyed the goal of the Sabbath: “If sabbatical observances prevented men from satisfying hunger, the Sabbath was no longer a blessing but an injury to man.”¹¹ It was no longer providing rest, but preventing it.

So how does Jesus respond to their legalism and the judgmental spirit that it calls forth? The same way we should. He takes them back to Scripture. He calls on them to consider the biblical precedents, which provided biblical principles, that can inform biblical practices, when we encounter biblical problems—like what does God intend when He tells His people not to work on the Sabbath. Another way of saying that is that Jesus is modeling for us what it looks like to allow Scripture to interpret Scripture.

We considered the biblical precedents last week. Jesus reminds the Pharisees, first, of the time David and his men ate sacred bread when they were hungry and yet were not indicted as lawbreakers given the circumstances

(see 1 Sam 21:1-6) and, second, of the fact that the priests labor on the Sabbath at the command of God and are not guilty of breaking God's Law. These historical precedents show that there are exceptions that don't fit the manmade expectations the Pharisees have imposed on themselves and others. In trying to uphold the Old Testament, they were ignoring the precedents of the Old Testament itself. In trying to uphold the Law, they were antagonizing the One who gave it in the first place. In other words, as is usually the case with legalism, they had invertedly become the very thing they hated—people who neglect God's Word. Meanwhile, Jesus is building His case from God's Word. And (did you notice?) from all of Scripture. He appeals "to all three divisions of the Hebrew Bible—Torah (12:5-6), the Prophets (both Former, 12:3-4, and Latter 12:7) and the Writings (12:8)."¹²

And from the biblical precedents Jesus teases out some key principles that should guide our practice when we encounter such ambiguous questions—like what counts as "work" on the Sabbath. The first He conveys in verse 7, through the words of the Lord spoken in Hosea 6:6, "*I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.*" If these Pharisees understood the prophet's words, they "*would not have condemned the guiltless*" (Matt 12:7).

The word that is translated "mercy" in Hosea is the Hebrew word *hesed*. We've considered this word before. It's notoriously difficult to translate because it seems to include a variety of other ideas. But these concepts all seem to orbit around the notion of covenant faithfulness. Hosea's point then, it would seem, "is better to be faithful than to offer sacrifices for unfaithfulness."¹³ The disciples' actions in the first encounter and Jesus' actions in the second are not violations of the Mosaic covenant (the Law), they are instead part a parcel with the purpose of the Law. They are faithful acts because they reflect a love for God and neighbor, mercy and goodness to those in need.

Jesus wasn't saying that the sacrificial system didn't matter. He was, however, showing that there is "a hierarchy of values." God was communicating to Israel through Hosea, "Yes, I want sacrifices. Yes, it's important to offer the sacrifices as part of your religious obligations. But mercy is much more important than ritual. When there is conflict between ritual and mercy, always default to mercy."¹⁴ That is to say, when the "conflict" arises because the Bible has not explicitly or directly spoken to an issue, and we are left to wrestle with apparently (though not truly) competing biblical principles. Default to mercy. "According to Jesus, the proper lens for clearly understanding God's requirements is the lens of mercy. In this way, mercy toward others should guide our attitudes, behaviors, and dispositions."¹⁵ The yoke of Jesus is merciful (11:29). Mercy is an interpretive key that Scripture itself provides.¹⁶ Remember what the Lord said, "*I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.*" Keep the priorities in the proper sequence.

In fact, you might remember that in Leviticus 19, the Lord encouraged certain practices among farmers so that people like the disciples could have their hunger satisfied when passing through. The Lord instructed,

"When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. ¹⁰ And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the Lord your God." (Leviticus 19:9-10)

Similarly, in Deuteronomy the Lord commands,

"If you go into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat your fill of grapes, as many as you wish, but you shall not put any in your bag. ²⁵ If you go into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the ears with your hand, but you shall not put a sickle to your neighbor's standing grain." (Deuteronomy 23:24-25)

Aren't these such beautiful laws? God told the "haves" to not reap all they have so that the "have-nots" could be cared for. If you were working your field, you were not supposed to harvest the edges where people would pass through so that people could eat and be sustained on their journey. If you were harvesting and you dropped

something, you were supposed to leave it there and trust that it was God's way of providing for the poor. Such a beautiful picture of the heart of God. His care for the poor and needy. The foreigner among them. What a picture of God's *mercy*. And the Sabbath rest was not an excuse to neglect needed mercy. The Sabbath itself was a mercy. So the standard the Pharisees have adopted in Jesus' day really misses the heart of the Law, the intention of the Lord. Legalism does that.

And even if, under normal circumstances, this passing through the field and eating would not have been appropriate, the ministry of Jesus is not normal circumstance. The Pharisees failed to see, as we considered last time, that Jesus is God's anointed, not unlike King David, and the ministry in which He engages in is uniquely significant: the arrival of God's Kingdom. They failed to recognize that the One they are criticizing is the Lord of the Sabbath. If David was excused in his actions, how much more David's Lord? If the priests were excused for their work on the Sabbath, how much more these disciples who serve the One to whom the temple pointed, God Himself tabernacled among us?

In addition to this mercy principle—or perhaps the corollary to this principle—Jesus states in the second encounter, “*it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath*” (Matt 12:12). They may have considered it “work” to heal a man who didn't have a life-threatening illness on the Sabbath, but Jesus considered it “*good*” and, therefore, fitting to do on the Sabbath. It fits with the precedents Jesus already referenced. It was good for Ahimelech to care for David and his men in their hunger. It is good for the priests to do their work on the Sabbath for the sake of the people. And it was no less good for Jesus to have compassion on this man with a withered hand.

In fact, instinctively the Pharisees know this. They are quibbling about the letter of the Law when in fact that is not a standard they would hold themselves to. As Jesus asks in verses 11 and 12, “*Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value is a man than a sheep?*” These Pharisees who exert more effort to relieve the burden of a clumsy sheep than a suffering man, they're the righteous ones? Only in their own eyes. Furthermore, Jesus doesn't even have to exert Himself to heal the man. If saying to the man, “*Stretch out your hand*” is work, then the Pharisees have done more work than Jesus when they brought their accusation against Him.

Don't miss the implication: The Pharisees, in their legalism, became the thing they hated—lawbreakers. And the same will happen with you when you embrace your own legalism. You'll grow critical and unmerciful with others for not conforming to your manmade rules, when in fact you are guilty of the same things. When the older man criticizes the young man for not wearing his Sunday best when he comes to church, he's not all that different from the one he is criticizing who is likewise critical of him for his stuffy music and lack of obvious emotion in worship. They're guilty of the same sin, they've just changed the dress code and soundtrack. But when they conflated tradition with God's revelation,¹⁷ they encouraged blind spots that make them each feel right in their own eyes. And there's the rub. There's the strife that accompanies legalism.

And if ever a verse proved this tendency, then it is the last verse of our text. How did the Pharisees respond to Jesus' words and miracle? Look again at verse 14. “*But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.*” These men who have adopted a critical spirit in the name of religious piety are now plotting the destruction of another human being. Murder is the idea. The same word is used early for Herod's designs to have the infant Jesus killed (2:13). What does it tell you that they can walk away plotting murder? It tells you that legalism is subtle and encourages blind spots. They are so focused on the sins of others (even the imaginary sins) that they cannot see the sin of their own ways. They exert more effort into maintaining their possessions than they do in caring for those who are created in God's image. They love their customs, more than a healthy spiritual life. They love their traditions more than the people who are burdened by them. You and I are not immune to these tendencies.

This calls for self-examination. Are you angry with others, perhaps in the church? Is it biblically warranted or does it have more to do with your personal preferences and traditions? Do you value the trellis of the church (practices and structures once intended to stimulate growth and health, though not biblically mandated) more

than the vine (the people) of the church? Do you fellowship enough and in such a way with God's people to allow for the opportunity to have your own blind spots revealed? When they are pointed out, do you dig in your heels and scheme or repent and reform as needed? Does your insistence on things that the Word of God does speak of reflect the appropriate balance and measure that the whole of Scripture requires? Does your interpretation of the Word lead you to love God and neighbor more fully and meaningfully?

I think we have to be careful with all of this though because, again, there may not always be as much distance between us and these Pharisees as we think. We are all born with little legalistic hearts. We grow up thinking intrinsically—because of our inherited and sinful depravity—that we have to work really hard to merit God's favor and to do something to get right with God. Pick any other religion in the world and that is what you will find. You'll find people paying homage to Hindu gods to earn good karma, bowing to Allah in an Islamic mosque to ensure a better afterlife, meditating in a temple to achieve Buddhist enlightenment, etc...all exposing this impulse in fallen humanity to approach God or religion through rules and regulations. And if Christians are not careful, we too can begin to see that kind of thing seep into our thinking. As Platt states, "[W]e begin to think that if we pray enough, if we study the Bible enough, if we avoid certain sins, if we come to worship, if we help other people, if we go overseas on missions, if we do any number of things, we will become more acceptable to God." That's the way of the Pharisees on our text. That's not the way of the Gospel.

The Gospel is good news because it communicates to us truth—the truth that though we are sinful and can do nothing to remove that since, God will forgive the sins of those who trust in Christ alone for salvation. The death of Jesus on the cross atones for the sins of all who believe. The resurrection proved the victory of Christ over death and judgement. We share in that victory—not because we earned it, but because He did on our behalf. Turning from sin and self-reliance, trusting in Christ and His work instead brings us into a right relationship with God. Our rule following didn't get us there. Christ did. And our faithfulness to the Lord Jesus is not about earning approval. It's about gratitude. It's worship. It's fruit that grows out of salvation. And any sinner who seeks salvation from Jesus is free from condemnation and free now to walk in the good deeds that God prepared for them. We take obedience seriously precisely because we take the sufficiency of Christ's saving work seriously. We know we contributed nothing to merit our salvation and standing with God, but in contemplating the enormity of the grace and mercy we have been shown, we find a desire welling up inside of us to follow Jesus, to be a people of grace and mercy, to have the mind of Christ.

So as always I commend Jesus to you. If you've never trusted Him for salvation, rest your faith in Him for alone can save. He has done the work needed. Trust in Him. And if you have already, then don't go back to the chains of legalism. Relish the grace you have been shown. Because as Paul wrote to Titus:

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹² training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³ waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.” (Titus 2:11-14)

Let's pray...

¹ Eric Raymond, “What Is Legalism and Why Is It So Bad?,” published on December 18, 2008, and accessed at: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/erik-raymond/what-is-legalism-and-why-is-it-so-bad/>. The first four points above are adopted and adapted from this article.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Grant Osborne, *Matthew*, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 451.

⁶ See *m. Sotah* 5:3; *y. Ber.* 5.9a; Osborne, *Matthew*, 451; cf. David Platt, *Exalting Jesus in Matthew*, CCE (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2018), 158.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ John MacArthur, *Matthew 8-15* (Chicago: Moody, 1987), 282.

⁹ R. C. Sproul, *Matthew*, SAEC (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), 362.

¹⁰ Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 300-301. Cf. *Shab.* 70b.

¹¹ A. Carr, *The Gospel according to St Matthew: Cambridge Greek Testament* (Cambridge, 1892), cited in Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 301.

¹² Knox Chamblin, *Matthew: A Mentor Commentary* (Mentor, 2010), 1:639.

¹³ Daniel M. Doriani, “Matthew” in *Matthew-Luke*, ESVEC (Wheaton: Crossway, 2021), 188.

¹⁴ Sproul, *Matthew*, 354-365.

¹⁵ Jeannine K. Brown, *Matthew*, TTCS (Grand Rapids: Baker Books), 135.

¹⁶ Doriani, “Matthew,” 187.

¹⁷ Cf. Mishnah, Avot 1:1.