

## Stage IV. The Great Galilean Ministry

### D. Crucial Sabbath Controversies Continue As Jesus Returns to Galilee

#### 2. The Healing of Man With a Shriveled Hand on the Sabbath

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #065

Base Text: MK 3:1-6 (Parallel Texts: MT 12:9-14; LK 6:6-11)

<sup>1</sup> <sup>MT</sup>Going on from that place, <sup>L</sup>on another Sabbath <sup>M</sup>he went into their synagogue <sup>L</sup>and was teaching, <sup>M</sup>and a man with a shriveled right hand was there. <sup>2</sup> <sup>L</sup>The scribes and the Pharisees <sup>M</sup>were watching him like hawks, to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. Looking for a reason <sup>MT</sup>to bring charges against Jesus, they asked him,

"Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"

Jesus answered: *"If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out? Any person is so much more valuable than sheep!"*

<sup>L</sup>But he knew their thoughts perfectly. <sup>3</sup> <sup>M</sup>So he commanded the man with the shriveled hand:

*<sup>L</sup>"Rise up for good, and take your stand in the midst of everybody."*

And the man rose up and stood there.

<sup>4</sup> Then Jesus said to them all: *<sup>L</sup>"I ask you, <sup>M</sup>which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good, or to do evil? To save life, or to destroy it?"*

<sup>5</sup> But they continued to maintain their silence. And having looked around at all of them with anger, because he was deeply grieved by the stubbornness of their hearts, he commanded the man,

*"Stretch out your hand."*

So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, <sup>MT</sup>just as whole as the other. Jesus said: *"Therefore, doing good on the Sabbath is always lawful."*

<sup>6</sup> <sup>L</sup>But the Pharisees were filled with anger, <sup>M</sup>and went out and were plotting together with the Herodians how they might utterly destroy Jesus.

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = <sup>MT</sup>, Mark = <sup>M</sup>, Luke = <sup>L</sup>, John = <sup>J</sup>, Acts = <sup>A</sup>. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *the words of Jesus are italicized in red*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

CONTEXT DIGEST	
Location	A Synagogue in Galilee
Timeline	April, 31 AD (Month Fifteen)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage IV: The Great Galilean Ministry
	D. Crucial Sabbath Controversies Continue as Jesus Returns to Galilee
Title	2. Jesus Heals a Man With a Shriveled Hand on a Sabbath (Miracle #9)

COMMENT:

## Stage IV. The Great Galilean Ministry

Today's reading shows us the third consecutive Saturday in which Jesus chose to ignore the human traditions of the Pharisees regarding what constituted "work" on the Sabbath. The results were instant, and vicious.

This reading also reminds us of how much comprehensive insight we can gain by blending three parallel gospel passages together into one account. Matthew, Mark and Luke each added key perspectives to this disturbing event in Jesus' life. Pay attention to the "Superscript ID" letters to trace each writer's contribution to this narrative.

While the common people continued to flock to Jesus in this early part of his Galilean ministry, the local Pharisees and other leaders sealed their judgement against Jesus as a dangerous, rabble-rousing blasphemer because of this 9th miracle. Note that the healing ended with the decision to actively destroy Jesus...to kill him. The degree of hatred against Jesus was further indicated by the way they "**plotted together with the Herodians**"--their avowed political and spiritual enemies.

This same fixed position against Jesus had already been reached in Jerusalem during the second Passover; now it was unanimous throughout the entire nation among the Pharisees. Their hatred would only grow in intensity from here forward.

Three consecutive Sabbath controversy incidents were too much for the Pharisees to handle. The healing in Jerusalem on the Sabbath, with Jesus' attending Divine claims was the first. The Sabbath incident in the grain fields, with Jesus' claim to be "**Lord of the Sabbath**," was the second. Now, a week later, Jesus' courageous decision to "do good" by healing again on the sabbath-- in the very presence of his enemies-- sealed his fate. The "three strikes and you're out" rule was applied to Jesus.

Against the backdrop of the vitriolic hatred he faced, consider the glory of your Lord shining like the sun in this scene. First, see his courage. He bravely ministered the Word and healed in a setting where many of his listeners were gathered around like buzzards, ready to eat him alive. Jesus did not allow their hatred, and rock-hard hearts deter him from ministering to a man in deep need of healing, in spite of the fact that he knew that it would be the cause of his own destruction.

Jesus valued the life of the man he healed more than his own. This was that same love and grace that would take him to the cross two years later. See it here.

See the way Jesus' choice of words in the commands he gave the man sparkle with his compassion. The first command was to "**rise up for good**." It is very difficult to translate the full sense of this command as it applied to this particular man. Jesus knew that the shriveled right hand had destroyed this man's self confidence. He needed to "**rise up for good**" from low self esteem, and have a permanent change in his self-perception--to see himself as whole, blessed, and precious to God.

A change in the man's right hand without an accompanying transformation in his mind and heart would not have made a significant difference in his life. Jesus knew that very well. He commanded him to "**rise up for good**" in mind and heart, as well as physically.

Jesus also commanded the man to come out into the very center of the synagogue--in the midst of everybody. This was a difficult directive to obey. The man needed to "rise up for good" in the full view of everybody, even as he did so in his own mind and heart. Jesus was about to empower him to live in wholeness, but the man needed to receive that wholeness and live it out with boldness--in front of everybody. That is what he did.

Jesus then commanded the man to do the impossible--to stretch out his hand as if it were whole. This required faith. Jesus commanded it, but the man had to decide to act on what Jesus said. He had not tried to use that hand for a very long time. He had assumed it was impossible. Now, believing Jesus would require him to try to use it. When he did so, he found that Jesus supplied the power to finish what his faith had begun. He was enabled to stretch out his hand in the full view of everyone, and in the process, he was instantly made whole, from the inside out.

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Jesus spoke words affirming the man's intrinsic value, as an object of God's love and care. He declared God's purpose for the Sabbath was to do good, and honor God's creation—not to simply refrain from moving one's body in the 36 specific ways the Pharisees had deified through their traditions. The greatness of Jesus' love, compassion, and grace stand out against the emptiness and smallness of the Pharisee's attitudes in this scene.

Jesus completely transformed this man's life by performing the healing miracle in this way. Jesus **"did good."** He **"saved a life"** on the Sabbath. He did so under the faith-shriveling condemnation, and hateful eyes of his enemies. Jesus was magnificent in this healing event. His revealed his glory and grace, as **"Jesus...the LORD who saves!"**

### APPLICATION:

We too, are called like Jesus to live out God's love and grace in the presence of our enemies, who do not understand what we are doing, and actively resist us as well. We have to **"rise up for good"** above our own pettiness, and natural tendency to pay pack evil for evil.

Jesus never let his enemies deter him from loving them, and every one else, too. He rose above them all. He calls us to do the same.

*Is there some way your lack of confidence has kept you "shriveled up" in doing good...including doing good to your enemies?*

*What do you need to "rise up for good" from, and leave behind you forever so you can follow Jesus in loving others in a way that constantly does good to them, in spite of how they treat you?*

*How will you do that today?*