

**1153 Withered hand, preaching, apostles, blasphemy, and relatives - Mark(3)1-35  
(Verses refer to those in NASB95 unless otherwise specified, and by Whirlwind.)**

First, we quoted the previous detailed discussion of Jesus healing the man with a withered hand. Second, we discussed Jesus' preaching and the religious leaders' premeditated plan to kill Him, and also quoted the previous discussion of Jesus' spiritual authority. Third, we quoted the matter of Jesus appointing the twelve apostles when on earth. He chose Judas, the traitor, after praying all night to God and knowing that it was the Father's will to choose him. After His resurrection, He chose Paul to replace Judas. Fourth, we discussed Jesus' words that anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven and mentioned the reason why Jesus said so. Although anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man can be forgiven, we quoted the text that says that we must not knowingly blaspheme Jesus. Finally, we saw that those who do God's will are relatives and what this truly means.

**1. Healing the man with a withered hand**

"He entered again into a synagogue; and a man was there whose hand was withered. They were watching Him to see if He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. He said to the man with the withered hand, "Get up and come forward!" And He said to them, "Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to kill?" But they kept silent. After looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored."(Mark 3:1-5)

The same thing is recorded in Luke 6:6-10 and Matthew 12:10-13. We have discussed these verses in detail in "1050 The call of Matthew, fasting, and Sabbath -The image of Jesus (5)" under "4. The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath". Please go to the website "<https://a-christian-voice.com/>" and click on "On spiritual understanding about life" to find this article. I hope that you can read it when you have time.

Please note that here only one hand has problems, not both hands, thus there is at least one hand available. God is a merciful and gracious God. In the face of unavoidable suffering, He normally still allows something available. For example, in the growth of a family's life, if depression must be experienced, it will take turns between the husband and wife, rather than both of them at the same time. Of course, this is not always the case, and if the person is not married, it is naturally impossible. But if you still look to God even in your depression, God will take it away Himself when necessary.

**2. Jesus' preaching and religious leaders plotted to kill Him**

"The Pharisees went out and immediately began conspiring with the Herodians against Him, as to how they might destroy Him. Jesus withdrew to the sea with His disciples; and a great multitude from Galilee followed; and also from Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and beyond the Jordan, and the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon, a great number of people heard of all that He was doing and came to Him. And He told His disciples that a

boat should stand ready for Him because of the crowd, so that they would not crowd Him; for He had healed many, with the result that all those who had afflictions pressed around Him in order to touch Him. Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they would fall down before Him and shout, "You are the Son of God!" And He earnestly warned (G2008) them not to tell who He was."(Mark 3:6-12)

The Pharisees and Sadducees were both religious leaders of the time, as indicated by this verse "But the high priest rose up, along with all his associates (that is the sect of the Sadducees), ..." (Acts 5:17). However, there were still differences between them. For example, "...the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor an angel, nor a spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all." (Acts 23:8). Jesus bluntly stated, "...beware ...of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees." (Matthew 16:12). No wonder, "The chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they might put Him to death; ..." (Luke 22:2). This suggests that they had planned this long ago, and ultimately, through Judas Iscariot, they put it into action, crucifying Jesus.

Regarding the religious leaders' plot to kill Him, Luke only mentions one sentence: "But they themselves were filled with rage, and discussed together what they might do to Jesus." (Luke 6:11) This adds details about Jesus' preaching, just as Jesus Himself said, "...I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matthew 15:24) The purpose of performing miracles (signs) was to prove His grace, as the verse says, "Therefore they (Paul and Barnabas) spent a long time there speaking boldly with reliance upon the Lord, who was testifying to the word of His grace, granting that signs and wonders be done by their hands." (Acts 14:3)

However, Jesus understood the importance of miracles. Therefore, "So Jesus said to him (the official from Capernaum), "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe."" (John 4:48) Furthermore, "Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."" (John 6:14) But He clearly understood that the focus was on preaching. The purpose of performing miracles was to convince people, to show them that the message He was preaching was not just empty words. The text clearly states that after the miracle of the five loaves and two fishes, "Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world." So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone." (John 6:14-15) And Jesus also said, "...Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled." (John 6:26) Not everyone will become a believer even seeing miracles.

Here also adds what happened after He and His disciples retreated to the seashore. In this final paragraph, it is stated that the demons knew more about spiritual matters than the people of His time, who did not know Jesus was the Son of God at that time. His spiritual authority is also evident in the use of the word G2008, which appears 29 times, nine times in the Book of Mark. The true meaning of this word can be seen in this passage: "And Jesus rebuked (G2008) him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" Throwing him into

convulsions, the unclean spirit cried out with a loud voice and came out of him."(Mark 1:25-26) We have previously discussed this in detail in "2. Jesus has the authority to cast out demons and to see things from God's perspective" of "1150 Exorcism, Authority, Healing, and Leprosy – Mark(1)21-45". Those who are interested can find this article in the same way as before.

Regarding Jesus' preaching, the Book of Matthew simply narrates, "But the Pharisees went out and conspired against Him, as to how they might destroy Him. But Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. Many followed Him, and He healed them all."(Matthew 12:14-15)

### **3. The establishment of the twelve Apostles and the Apostles of the Lamb**

"And He went up on the mountain and summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him. And He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that He could send them out to preach, and to have authority to cast out the demons. And He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom He gave the name Peter), and James, the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James (to them He gave the name Boanerges, which means, "Sons of Thunder"); and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot; and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him."(Mark 3:13-19)

We have previously briefly discussed these verses in "1. The call of the twelve disciples" under "1051 The call of twelve disciples, and the Gospel of Luke and the Beatitudes -The image of Jesus (6)". Although Jesus called people according to what He wanted, "...He spent the whole night in prayer to God." (Luke 6:12) Thus, He knew that God the Father wanted Him to choose Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him. Some people think that Judas was cooperating with Jesus. It is not true at all. In fact, although He knew that He would be betrayed, He still chose to obey God. The book of Acts records the fate of Judas: "At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said, "Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was counted among us and received his share in this ministry." (Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out. And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own language that field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)"(Acts 1:15-19)

After Jesus' resurrection, He personally chose Paul (see Acts 22:1-16). Therefore, the wall of the New Jerusalem "...had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."(Revelation 21:14). These twelve apostles of the Lamb refer to the twelve people personally chosen by Jesus. Paul's name is obviously among them, while Matthias was chosen by lot (see Acts 1:23-26).

Note that these same twelve people are also listed in Matthew 10:2-4. A comparison clearly indicates that Matthew is referring to the tax collector Matthew. These twelve people are

also mentioned in Luke 6:14-16, and a comparison clearly indicates that Judas, the son of James, is Thaddeus.

**4. Anyone who blasphemes the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, and those who knowingly blaspheme Jesus must not do so**

**"And He came home, and the crowd gathered again, to such an extent that they could not even eat a meal. When His own people heard of this, they went out to take custody of Him; for they were saying, "He has lost His senses." The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons." And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished! But no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house. "Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"— because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit.""(Mark 3:20-30).**

**Regarding His relatives who thought He was out of His mind simply because they saw Him not even bothering to eat, wouldn't they have been even more convinced if they had known in this verse that "Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.""(Matthew 8:20)? Jesus simply knew that "...the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, ..." (Mark 2:20). Before that day came, He was so diligently doing God's work that "...the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?""(John 8:57). He was only in his thirties at the time!**

**In these verses, they were clearly blaspheming Jesus, but He called it blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. This is because the Holy Spirit of the Triune God is always with Him. This is what the verse says, "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure." (John 3:34). This is direct evidence that the Holy Spirit intended Him to speak.**

**Regarding the eternal unforgiveness of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, the book of Matthew explains, "Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come." (Matthew 12:31-32). The book of Luke also says, "And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him." (Luke 12:10). Only here is the reason clarified: "because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit.""(Mark 3:30)**

His parables are so clear that no further explanation is necessary. Some people might see, "...all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter."(Mark 3:28; ref. Matthew 12:31) "And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; ..." (Luke 12:10) and secretly rejoice, thinking that knowingly blaspheming Jesus is okay. This is completely wrong. The Jews were blaspheming Jesus, but how could they know they were blaspheming the Holy Spirit? Therefore, they were not knowingly committing this offense.

The Bible clearly states, "For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame. For ground that drinks the rain which often falls on it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned."(Hebrews 6:4-8). Clearly, do not knowingly blaspheme Jesus.

#### **5. Those who do God's will are relatives**

"Then His mother and His brothers arrived, and standing outside they sent word to Him and called Him. A crowd was sitting around Him, and they said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are outside looking for You." Answering them, He said, "Who are My mother and My brothers?" Looking about at those who were sitting around Him, He said, "Behold My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother.""(Mark 3:31-35)

Please note that Jesus mentioned sister in addition to My mother and brother. This means that anyone who does God's will is Jesus' relative. This is also recorded in Luke 8:19-21 and Matthew 12:46-50. Some people see these verses and think that Jesus disowns his relatives, especially when he says, "Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be the members of his household."(Matthew 10:34-36)

This line of reasoning seems reasonable, but it is not. It depends on the context in which these words were spoken. "Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven."(Matthew 10:32-33) In real life, some unbelieving parents even forbid their children from believing in the Lord. Doesn't this mean that even their enemies are members of their own household? Of course, this is just one example. There are other situations, such as parents being replaced by spouses in the example. This is essentially what happened when Peter and John said, "...Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge."(Acts 4:19)