

In this man Jesus discerns a deeper need than the physical cure; so He relieves his pain of heart by pardoning his sin. The Pharisees call it blasphemy, but Jesus proves by healing the man that He has divine power, and therefore the right to forgive sins. For the first time in Mark Jesus uses the term "Son of Man" (ch. 2:10), which was His favorite title for Himself.

The expression "Son of Man" occurs in the Old Testament (see especially Dan. 7:13). But it seems not to have been current in the time of Jesus as a Messianic title. Jesus used it partly as a parable, to denote, not only the peculiar worth of His manhood, but also to claim that He was the Son of Man foretold by Daniel, the Head of the eternal kingdom of humanity. It was in this sense that He was Messiah.

THE CALL OF MATTHEW (Mark 2:13-17 and parallel passages, Matt. 9:9-13; Luke 5:27-35)—Capernaum had a large through trade, and the "publicans," or collectors of customs would be numerous. Though often wealthy, they were despised by the Jews. Jesus, however, adopted a practice which set the social prejudices of the Pharisees at defiance, by calling Matthew to be one of His friends, Matt. 9:11-13.

A NEW DOCTRINE AS TO FASTING (Mark 2:18-22)—His followers cannot fast, because their hearts are full of joy at having found the Bridegroom. They will fast when grief comes at the removal of the Bridegroom. The Pharisees' rules as to fasting do not suit Jesus' disciples; the old wine-skins of Pharisaism will not hold the new wine of His kingdom.

CHRIST'S VIEW OF THE SABBATH (Mark 2:23-28; 3:1-6, and parallel passages, Matt. 12:1-8; Luke 6:1-5)—In opposition to the Pharisees, who had made the Sabbath a burden, Jesus taught that God created it for the service of man, a day for mercy and man's highest welfare. As Son of Man, Jesus claimed control of this Divine institution, Matt. 12:6-8.

LESSON VII.

THE APPOINTMENT OF THE TWELVE AND THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Jesus grew rapidly in popularity with the multitudes, who so thronged Him as even to impede His work (Mark 3:9); but this

only intensified the hatred of the Pharisees, against whom, as wilful sinners, Jesus pronounced doom in Mark 3:28-30.

THE APPOINTMENT OF THE TWELVE (Mark 3:13-19)—With the growing enthusiasm of the multitudes, it became evident that Jesus must direct His attention more to a select circle, who would be able to understand His gospel and preach it after His death to a wider world. That Jesus regarded the choice as very important, is seen from Luke 6:12, 13.

Simon is always put first in each of the lists of the apostles, and Judas comes last. Simon, the Cananean, or adherent of the sect of the Zealots, was drawn from the extreme type of the Jews, Matthew the publican stood at the other extreme.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT (Matt. chs. 5 to 7; Luke 6:20-49)—Matthew places this discourse at the opening of Christ's ministry, apparently as a parallel to the words which Moses gave to Israel on Sinai. It is the legislation of the new Israel, the kingdom of God. According to his practice, Matthew groups together many sayings, some of which find a different setting in Luke; but the substance of the two discourses is the same.

The Sermon on the Mount may be analyzed as follows:

1. *Introduction* (Matt. 5:1-16)—The quality of the citizens who are to form the Kingdom of God. They are the downtrodden, but true, Israelites, who cherished the ideal of the prophets. Their character is just the opposite of the worldly Pharisee, who claimed that he was by birth a member of the kingdom, vs. 1-12. The members of the kingdom have a world-wide mission, vs. 13-16.

2. *The Righteousness of the Kingdom*—The great theme of the sermon. First, in opposition to the righteousness of the Pharisee, it is the true fulfilment of the law of God as given by Moses, 5:17-20.

- (a) Vs. 21-48 contain illustrations of the fulfilment of the spirit of the law in the domain of practical conduct. The Pharisee was content with a superficial observance of outward enactment. The disciple of Jesus must fulfil his whole duty towards man, for example, in respect to murder, adultery, divorce, oaths, retaliation, treatment of the stranger. His ideal is found in 5:48.

- (b) In ch. 6:1-8 we have illustrations of the fulfilment of the law as regards worship, or our duty to God. Alms-giving, prayer,