

Hope of Nations

Matthew 12:18-21

Good morning,

After instigating and losing WW I and WW II, Germany was split into four sectors: the British, French, American, and Russian sectors. These countries oversaw and ruled the different parts of Germany and debated dissolving Germany altogether; however, this never came to fruition.

In 1961, the communist government of East Germany began building a Wall through the country's center. The Berlin Wall also split the capital in half. Barb wire was installed, followed by massive concrete walls, as families and friends were separated.

Traveling from east to west was not permitted. Anyone who tried to cross from the east to the west was either captured or shot on sight.

Over two decades later, in 1987, US President Ronald Reagan gave a speech on the wall in free West Germany. President Reagan told the communist government these famous words: “Mr. Gorbatschov, tear down that wall.”

The borders opened through a clerical error, and the wall was torn down in 1989. Friends and families were reunited for the first time in many

years, and the East Germans could once again live and travel wherever they pleased.

Soon after, the Soviet Union fell, and many East European countries became independent because they were finally free.

Please keep that in the back of your mind and please open up your bible to *Matthew chapter 12*

I. Lord of the Sabbath.

In the chapters leading up to *Matthew 12*, Jesus performed many miracles. He picked the twelve disciples and predicted that persecution would happen to those who followed him.

In *Matthew 12*, Jesus encountered the Pharisees. The religious leaders accused Jesus' disciples of breaking the Sabbath law. Jesus' disciples were hungry and picked grain kernels for food on the Sabbath day.

Breaking the law of the Sabbath was punishable by death.

Exodus 32:2 Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death. (NKJV)

Jesus responded to the Pharisees by telling the story of David and his men eating the showbread in the Tabernacle. He then concluded his response with these verses.

Matthew 12:6 - Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple.

Matthew 12:7 But if you had known what this means, 'I DESIRE MERCY AND NOT SACRIFICE,' you would not have condemned the guiltless.

***Matthew 12:8 For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”
(NKJV)***

Here, Jesus proclaimed His deity—that He is God. The teachers of the Law considered this blasphemy, greatly upsetting them. Jesus left there and went directly into **their** synagogue.

In the synagogue, the Pharisees saw a man with a withered hand and asked Jesus in *Matthew 12:10b*, ***”Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath”, that they might accuse Him. (NKJV)***

Jesus responded in *Matthew 12:11* ***“What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out?***

Matthew 12:12 Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on a Sabbath.”

Then Jesus healed the man's hand, and the Pharisees were furious and plotted to kill Him. Jesus and His disciples left the area with a massive crowd that followed Him.

This is awesome: In *Matthew 12:15*, it says *All of them were healed by Him*. Remember, all of that happened on the Sabbath day.

Jesus proved once again that **He Is** the Lord of the Sabbath and that there is nothing wrong with doing good on the **Holy Day**.

Read *Matthew 12:16* and ordered them not to make him known.

Mat 12:17 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah:

Jesus told the crowd to keep quiet about being healed by Him, so that the prophecy of Isaiah would be fulfilled.

II. Behold! My Servant.

Read *Matthew 12:18*, “*Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen, My Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased! I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He will declare justice to the Gentiles.* (NKJV)

Again in this passage Jesus quoted from *Isaiah 42:1-4*.

Interestingly, the Hebrew version of the name **Isaiah** means *Yesha Yahu*, which translates into “**Yahweh is Salvation.**”

Yahweh is God's name. God used with Moses in the story of the burning bush. It means "I Am Who I Am" or "I Will Be Who I Will Be."

Here is what *Merriam-webster.com* says about the word Salvation:

1. *Deliverance from the power and effects of sin*
2. *Liberation from ignorance or illusion*
3. *Preservation from destruction or failure*

God speaking through **Isaiah**, whose name literally means **Yahweh is Salvation**, prophecies about the coming **Messiah**, the *Anointed One*, the *Chosen One*, who will bring **salvation** to the whole world.

Behold, means watch this; pay attention to this; check it out.

F. Duane Lindsey says this about the word servant: *The word ebed (eh-wett) (servant) can refer to a slave or a vassal king, an individual subject or a tributary nation. In all those cases, the term refers to a person or group characterized by dependence and servitude.*”

God called the prophet Daniel “O man, greatly beloved,” but only to Jesus, does the Father call “My Beloved in Whom My soul is well pleased.”

The first time this happened in the New Testament was in **Matthew 3:16-17** *When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from*

the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.

Matthew 3:17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (NKJV)

Two prophecies were fulfilled in one event. God the Father acknowledged Jesus His Son, the beloved servant from *Isaiah 42*, and He put His Spirit on Him.

The second time the Father acknowledged Jesus was on the Mount of Transfiguration. Jesus took Peter, James, and John up to a high mountain and was transfigured before them. Moses and Elijah appeared and spoke with Jesus. Peter got excited and wanted to set up three tents for them.

It continues like this in *Matthew 17:5-8 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"*

Matthew 17:6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid.

Matthew 17:7 But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid."

Matthew 17:8 When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only." (NKJV)

Just as the disciples lifted their eyes and saw only Jesus, fix your eyes, heart, and mind on Jesus only!

Read *Matthew 12:18b* “...and he will declare justice to the Gentiles.”
(NKJV)

Justice has two implications. It can be good or bad. It depends on which side you are on.

We read in *John 3:14-18* *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, John 3:15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

John 3:17 *For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.*

John 3:18 *"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (NKJV)*

Jesus Christ, the Son, the Creator God, paid our wages of sin by dying on the cross in our stead. Those who believe in Him are justified, receive forgiveness for all their sin, and inherit eternal life.

Those who reject the gift of salvation will receive the justice of God and have to pay the wages of sin for themselves. They will die and spend eternity apart from the presence of God instead of eternity with Him.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Jesus' life and words were a declaration of fulfilled justice to the Jews and also to the Gentiles.

III. He will not quarrel nor cry out.

Matthew 12:19 He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets.

We read in *Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.*

Jesus never responded to any of the religious leaders when they listed all the fabricated accusations against Him.

Matthew 27:12 And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing. (NKJV)

He was not seeking to save His life, but He willingly laid it down for us.

John 10:11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. (NKJV)

John 10:15-18 As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

John 10:16 And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

John 10:17 “Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.

John 10:18 No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.

This command I have received from My Father.” (NKJV)

C.H. Spurgeon wrote, "When any ordinary man dies he only pays 'the **debt of nature**.' If he were even to die for his friend, he would simply pay a little earlier that debt which he must pay ultimately, but the Christ was immortal, and he needed not to die except that he had put himself under covenant bonds to suffer for his sheep."

IV. A bruised reed He will not break.

Read ***Matthew 12:20 A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory;***

David Guzik writes: *“This is another reference to the gentle character of Jesus. A reed is a fairly fragile plant, yet if a reed is bruised the Servant will handle it so gently that He will not break it. And if flax, used as a wick for an oil lamp, does not flame but only smokes, He will not quench it into extinguishing. Instead, the Servant will gently nourish the smoking flax, fanning it into flame again.*

Often we feel that God deals roughly with our weaknesses and failures. Just the opposite is true. He deals with them gently, tenderly, helping them along until the bruised reed is strong and the smoking flax is in proper flame.”

Chuck Smith had this to say about the bruised reed and the smoking flax: *“So here was the prophecy of Isaiah who was proclaiming, actually, that the Gospel is gonna be declared ultimately to the Gentiles, and Israel, the bruised reed, the smoking flax.”*

We are victorious over sin and death because of what Jesus has done for us. Jesus justified us, and now, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we can live victoriously in this life and have received heaven.

1 Corinthians 15:57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

V. The Hope of Nations is our Hope

Matthew 12:21 And in His name Gentiles will trust. (NKJV)

Let us get something out of the way before we continue.

I encountered an apparent contradiction when reading the prophecy about the coming Messiah in *Isaiah 42:1-4* and Jesus quoting the prophecy in *Matthew 12:18-21*.

There are a few subtle differences. One factor is translating the prophecy from Hebrew to Greek to English; another is that language changes over time.

The last verse, though, is significantly different in the New Testament from the verse in the Old Testament.

Isaiah 42:4* reads *He will not fail nor be discouraged, Till He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands shall wait for His law. (NKJV)

Now look at *Matthew 12:21* “***and in His name Gentiles will trust.***”
(NKJV)

After researching and talking to Rich, I concluded that Matthew wrote it to show that the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy happened in Christ at that time and place.

Through his death on the cross, Jesus established justice in the earth for all who sinned against God and believed in Him. We are now justified because of the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Romans 5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. (NKJV)

Act 13:38 Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins;

Act 13:39 and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. (NKJV)

Matthew 12:21 "and in His name the Gentiles will trust." (NKJV)

The English Standard Version writes Matthew 12:21 this way:

Matthew 12:21 And in his name the Gentiles will hope. (ESV)

The Greek word for **Gentiles** is called **ethnos**.

This is where we get the word ethnicity from. The Greek word *ethnos* in the Bible is usually used for all non-Jewish nations, the whole Gentile world. This is consistent with Isaiah's use for the word "coastlands."

The last Greek word is **elpis**. It can be used interchangeably for **hope** or **trust**.

Strongs Concordance describes the word **elpis** this way:

1. to hope
2. hopefully to trust in
3. in a religious sense, **to wait for salvation with joy and full confidence**

The plan of God was always to save the whole world to Himself.

Joel 2:32 And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant whom the LORD calls.

This prophecy is quoted in *Acts 2:21* and also in *Romans 10:13*.

Read Romans 15:12 THERE SHALL COME THE ROOT OF JESSE, AND HE WHO ARISES TO RULE OVER THE GENTILES, IN HIM WILL THE GENTILES HOPE.

Read *John 10:16* ***And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.***

If you follow Jesus and are not of Jewish descent, you are those other sheep. You were not of this fold. You heard His voice. And are taking part in the same inheritance that the Son of God has with the Father.

Paul wrote to the Colossians in *Colossians 1:12* ***giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.***

Colossians 1:13 ***He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,***

Colossians 1:14 ***in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.***

In this season, share the hope that lives within you with someone. Your neighbor, your colleague, your friend, your family member. Be the light in a dark and cold world. Point them to Jesus.

If you are not a follower of Jesus, God is reaching out His hand to you.

It says this in *Isaiah 45:22* ***Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other.***

And in 1 Timothy 2:3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

1 Timothy 2:4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God and Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,

1 Timothy 2:6 who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, (NKJV)

On Christmas, we always remember that Jesus was born as a baby and lived a perfect and sinless life. Jesus became the Hope of Nations and brought justice to all nations by dying for us on the cross.

All of us broke God's law. We were supposed to pay for our sins, but Jesus did it for us. The perfect God-Man took our place.

Don't just look at the biggest present under the Christmas tree; open it. It contains the fullness of life and joy here on earth, the adoption into God's family, the freedom from the power of Sin and death, and finally, eternal friendship and life with God the Father.

Come to Jesus and give your life to him. He is a good shepherd and loves you so much!