

Exodus 14:13, “Then Moses said to the people, ‘Do not fear! Stand fast [in your minds] and watch the deliverance of the Lord [God the Son] which He will accomplish for you today for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever.’” (You will be in heaven; they will spend all eternity in the Lake of Fire.)

Matthew Chapter 12

12:1. At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath, and his disciples were hungry and began to pick the heads of grain and eat. [God never intended for the Jews to go hungry on the Sabbath.]

Ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ ἐπορεύθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοῖς σάββασιν διὰ τῶν σπορίμων· οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ἐπείνασαν, καὶ ἤρξαντο τίλλειν στάχρας καὶ ἐσθίειν.

After God the Holy Spirit had restored the earth in 6 days, he then rested as it were since his work of restoration was complete. So, the seventh day of the week was to commemorate the grace of God. Now regarding the Jews, God blessed them so much in 6 days, they didn't have to work. So, to commemorate that day namely the Sabbath, the Jews were to rest from all unnecessary work that they might be able to spend time for prayer, learning the Word, reflecting upon God's grace plan and provision and enjoy a day of rest, a break from 6 days of hard work.

Resting on the Sabbath did not imply abstaining from all work for obviously farmers had to feed and provide for their livestock on the Sabbath. Mothers had to feed and clothe their children on the Sabbath etc. The Jewish army had to defend itself on the Sabbath if attacked etc. Resting on the Sabbath meant to free up as much time as one could in order to devote as much time as one could on spiritual matters.

So, there was no merit in not working. Avoiding work on the Sabbath or today to avoid work on Sunday does not in itself make you a great believer. The spiritual life has always been the same namely one grows spiritually by growing in grace and in knowledge. These Pharisees were

not even believers and as such had merely distorted the Sabbath into a lot of taboos. The Sabbath could only be observed properly by believers who could use the extra free time for devotion to the Lord.

However, this was all distorted by the legalistic, religious Jewish unbelievers who put forth a lot of nonsensical taboos. In the Mishnah (Talmud) for example one could not boil an egg on the Sabbath neither by putting it in or near a hot kettle, nor by putting it into a hot cloth or hot sand. You were not permitted to light or extinguish a lamp on the Sabbath for that was considered work. It was unlawful to wear an ornament on the Sabbath because it might be construed as a burden and carrying a burden could be construed as labor. The Pharisees would spend many hours arguing whether it was lawful to tie your sandals or not on the Sabbath. It was forbidden to stop a wound from bleeding on the Sabbath for that would require energy and expending energy is a form of work. Mud on the dress could not be cleaned off, but it was suggested that one could let the mud dry and then reach down slowly and crumble that part of the dress once and then release your hand. There was about 2500 taboos for the Sabbath.

Some grain was left in the fields for the poor of the land or for strangers in the area because on the Sabbath one couldn't buy food anywhere. So, it was quite reasonable for the disciples to eat from this grace provision. As we are going to see, eating on Sabbath was a violation not of God's laws, but of the taboos of the religious crowd.

12:2. But when the Pharisees saw this, they said to him, “Look, your disciples do what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.”

οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι ἰδόντες εἶπαν αὐτῷ, Ἴδου οἱ μαθηταί σου ποιοῦσιν ὃ οὐκ ἔξεστιν ποιεῖν ἐν σαββάτῳ.

Nothing has changed! Arrogant unbelievers and believers always distort the grace of God into legalism. You must be good and produce good to be saved. You must be immersed into water to be saved. To be a great

Christian you must be coerced into giving 10% of your income to your local church. If you come to the Wednesday prayer meeting, participate in all the church functions, sing Christian hymns many of which are Biblically incorrect, you are a great Christian.

Since religious people are always arrogant, they consider it their responsibility to interfere into other people's business. Another words, they know what is best for everyone. Furthermore, religious people do not understand the Scripture. If they did, they wouldn't be religious. Just think, these Pharisees had the audacity to criticize the Lord's handling of his own disciples.

The Biblical defense: Verses 3-7.

12:3, 4 But He said to them, have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him [1 Samuel 21], (4). how he entered into the house of God [the tabernacle at Nob] and ate the showbread, which was not lawful for him to eat [under normal circumstances], nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests?

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Οὐκ ἀνέγνωτε τί ἐποίησεν Δαυὶδ ὅτε ἐπείνασεν καὶ οἱ μετὰ αὐτοῦ; (4) πῶς εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοὺς ἄρτους τῆς προθέσεως ἔφαγον, ὃ οὐκ ἐξὸν ἦν αὐτῷ φαγεῖν οὐδὲ τοῖς μετὰ αὐτοῦ, εἰ μὴ τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν μόνοις;

To answer this criticism, Jesus goes to 1 Samuel 21:1-6. According to this passage David apparently on the Sabbath went to Ahimelech, the High Priest at Nob as he was fleeing Saul. He and those with him were very hungry and so David asked for five loaves of ordinary bread. However, Ahimelech only had consecrated bread (Shewbread) which was strictly regulated. A portion was to be used as a memorial and to be offered with incense by fire to the Lord and the rest of the 12 loaves were be eaten only by the Levitical priests in the Tabernacle according to Leviticus 24:5-9, "Take the finest [unleavened] flour [representing the

perfection of the humanity of Jesus] and bake twelve loaves of bread [for the twelve tribes of Israel], using two-tenths of an ephah for each loaf [about 5 pounds]. ⁶ Arrange them in two stacks, six in each stack, on the table of pure gold before the Lord. ⁷ By each stack put some pure incense as a memorial portion to represent the bread and to be a food offering presented to the Lord [God the Father]. ⁸ This bread is to be set out before the Lord regularly, Sabbath after Sabbath, on behalf of the Israelites, as a lasting covenant. ⁹ It belongs to Aaron and his sons, who are to eat it in the sanctuary area [in the Holy Place], because it is a most holy [set apart] part of their perpetual share of the food offerings presented to the Lord.” All the same, Ahimelech gave David the five loaves of Shewbread, he requested. Another words, the Levitical priests shared their food with David. Obviously, there was a law of expediency which allowed starving individuals to eat of this bread. Reality took precedence over ritual.

Leviticus 2:11, “Every grain offering you bring to the Lord must be made without yeast, for you are not to burn any yeast or honey in a food offering [representing the impeccability of Jesus] presented to the Lord [God the Father].”

Ahimelech paid a big price for helping David. 1Samuel 22:16-19, “But the king said, ‘You will surely die, Ahimelech, you and your whole family.’ (17) Then the king ordered the guards at his side: ‘Turn and kill the priests of the Lord, because they too have sided with David. They knew he was fleeing, yet they did not tell me.’ But the king’s officials were unwilling to raise a hand to strike the priests of the Lord. (18) The king then ordered Doeg, ‘You turn and strike down the priests.’ So, Doeg the Edomite turned and struck them down. That day he killed eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod. (19) He also put to the sword Nob, the town of the priests, with its men and women, its children and infants, and its cattle, donkeys and sheep.”

12:5. Or have you not read in the Law [Mosaic Law] that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath [by working on the Sabbath] and are blameless [Numbers 28:9, 10]?

ἢ οὐκ ἀνέγνωτε ἐν τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι τοῖς σάββασιν οἱ ἱερεῖς ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ τὸ σάββατον βεβηλοῦσιν καὶ ἀναίτιοί εἰσιν;

The Levitical priests were commanded to work on the Sabbath as per Numbers 28:9, 10, "On the Sabbath day, make an offering of two lambs a year old without defect, together with its drink offering and a grain offering of two-tenths of an ephah of the finest flour mixed with olive oil. ¹⁰This is the burnt offering for every Sabbath, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its drink offering." The priests ate and worked on the Sabbath.

12:6. But I say to you that One [the Lord Jesus] greater than the temple is in this place.

λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι τοῦ ἱεροῦ μεῖζόν ἐστιν ὧδε.

If the priests were allowed to eat and perform certain activities in the tabernacle and later the temple on the Sabbath and yet were blameless in this matter, then how much more the Lord and His disciples for before them is the Lord Jesus Christ about whom everything in the temple represented.

12:7. But if you had known what this means, "I desire mercy [Grace in action in the sense of unbelievers responding to God's grace] and not sacrifice [meaningless ritual which the unbelieving Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees were performing quite regularly]," you would not have condemned those [Jesus and His disciples] who are not guilty [the Lord's disciples].

εἰ δὲ ἐγνώκετε τί ἐστιν, Ἐλεος θέλω καὶ οὐ θυσίαν, οὐκ ἂν κατεδικάσατε τοὺς ἀναιτίους.

Matthew 9:13 a similar passage, “But go and learn what this means [quoted from Hosea 6:6], I desire mercy [unbelievers interested in God’s grace solution to their sin problem] and not sacrifice [that day the scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees had offered meaningless sacrifices] For I have not come [to Capernaum] to call the righteous [self-righteous unbelievers who are not interested in the gospel], but the sinners [those who know that they were sinners namely the tax collectors and prostitutes].”

Self-righteous legalist always distort. Jesus is saying that His disciples have a right on the Sabbath to eat and that the whole purpose of the Sabbath has been misunderstood and distorted by these self-righteous religious unbelievers. The Sabbath was not to be a period of fasting necessarily though one could fast on the Sabbath if he should desire to free up more time for concentrating on the Lord. The Pharisees as unbelievers had no relationship with God and so no true knowledge of God. Furthermore, without truth and grace in their souls, they were merciless and vicious. They emphasized taboos and rituals but did not understand the reality of salvation much less the spiritual life.

12:8. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the sabbath.

κύριος γάρ ἐστιν τοῦ σαββάτου ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

The Sabbath was made for the Lord, not the other way around. In other words, the Lord establishes the rules regarding the Sabbath. He is the Lord over the Sabbath and so the Sabbath does not Lord it over the Lord! The word for “Lord” is deity. Jesus Christ is God, and the Sabbath was made to point out His grace.

12:9. And when He had departed from there, He went into their synagogue.

Καὶ μεταβὰς ἐκεῖθεν ἦλθεν εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν αὐτῶν·

12:10. And behold, there was a man having a withered hand. And they [the Pharisees] asked Him, saying, is it lawful to heal on the Sabbaths [Arrogant people have no concern or compassion for people.]? This [they asked] in order that they might accuse Him.

καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνθρωπος χεῖρα ἔχων ξηράν. καὶ ἐπηρώτησαν αὐτὸν λέγοντες, Εἰ ἔξεστιν τοῖς σάββασιν θεραπεῦσαι; ἵνα κατηγορήσωσιν αὐτοῦ.

Arrogance always distorts and religion as a substitute for Christianity is a system of distortion with concentrated arrogance. So, it is not surprising that in the Talmud, one was prohibited from stopping bleeding on the Sabbath. Just let the person bleed to death. Our taboos must be kept! At the same time, religion pretends to be concerned about its paying members, but this is only a façade for terrible cruelty. Religion is always a source of oppression as grace is always a source of freedom from oppression.

Since this was their synagogue, they probably had this man with the withered hand brought in to trap the humanity of Christ, but He is too well prepared in doctrine, in Scripture and in their customs and habits.

12:11. And He said to them, what man will there be among you who will have one sheep, and if it should fall into a pit on the Sabbaths, will he not lay hold on it and lift it out?

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Τίς ἔσται ἐξ ὑμῶν ἄνθρωπος ὃς ἔξει πρόβατον ἓν, καὶ ἐὰν ἐμπέσῃ τοῦτο τοῖς σάββασιν εἰς βόθυνον, οὐχὶ κρατήσῃ αὐτὸ καὶ ἐγερεῖ;

Though religious people have no concern for people and truth, they always place maximum importance on money, and its source. So, when a sheep would fall into a hole or crevice on the Sabbath, the Pharisees would turn their eyes the other way that the shepherd might retrieve his sheep on the Sabbath, a violation of one of their taboos. Obviously, they must protect the source of their revenue. Their hypocrisy is astounding!

We see this same type of hypocrisy today among politicians. You must be locked down, but they are free to go about. You are not permitted to travel, but they travel. They criticize wealthy people and yet they are constantly taking bribes of hundreds of thousands of dollars. You do not need police, but they are surrounded by security guards.

12:12. Then, how much more valuable is a man than a sheep? Therefore, it is lawful to do good [like healing] on the Sabbath days.

πόσῳ οὖν διαφέρει ἄνθρωπος προβάτου. ὥστε ἔξεστιν τοῖς σάββασιν καλῶς ποιεῖν.

Logically, if one is willing to help a sheep in distress on the Sabbath, how much more a person in distress on the Sabbath. Religion always claims that they are agents to help people, but really, they have no concern for people. So, since they must maintain this pretense that they are for the people and since there are people present, they decided not to argue with Jesus.

12:13. Then, He said to the man, Stretch out your hand. And he stretched it out, and it was restored whole like the other.

τότε λέγει τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ, Ἔκτεινόν σου τὴν χεῖρα. καὶ ἐξέτεινεν, καὶ ἀπεκατεστάθη ὑγιής ὡς ἡ ἄλλη.

Jesus Christ presents his credentials as Messiah by healing this man.

12:14. Then the Pharisees went out and held council against Him, as to how they might destroy Him [kill him].

ἐξελθόντες δὲ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι συμβούλιον ἔλαβον κατὰ αὐτοῦ ὅπως αὐτὸν ἀπολέσωσιν.

Since they couldn't refute his arguments, they want to destroy him through violence. First, the Pharisees were irritated by Jesus for revealing

that their taboo of not being able to eat on the Sabbath had no basis in Scripture. Next, they laid a trap for Him in the synagogue, but that backfired. So, now they want to kill him. Even so, Jesus continues to send them a message through all those he heals.

Verses 15-23: miracles.

12:15. But when Jesus knew it [their plans to kill him], He withdrew Himself from there. And great crowds followed Him, and He healed them all.

Ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς γνοὺς ἀνεχώρησεν ἐκεῖθεν. καὶ ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ πολλοί, καὶ ἐθεράπευσεν αὐτοὺς πάντα,

At some point when Jesus was moving out, He just turned around and healed everyone that was sick in the crowd, and that was the message He sent back to the Pharisees. The one who is before you, this one is the God-Man, the unique person of the universe, undiminished deity and true humanity in one person forever, the only saviour, the only way of salvation. His miracles were a message to the Pharisees, scribes, and Sadducees that He was the Messiah. If there had been lepers in the crowd, their healing would be a specific message to the priesthood. So, the Lord not only had sent a message to the Pharisees, but to the priesthood as well.

12:16. And He warned them [those in the crowd] that they should not make Him known,

καὶ ἐπετίμησεν αὐτοῖς ἵνα μὴ φανερὸν αὐτὸν ποιήσωσιν·

The word “charge” means to give a strong command not to make Him known since Jesus Christ Himself had to present His credit cards first as Messiah. This was the protocol set up by God the Father as the author of the plan. Then, those who had seen the miracles and had believed would have the opportunity of presenting Him as Messiah and Savior at a later time.

12:17. that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, [Isaiah 42:1-3]

ἵνα πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ Ἡσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος,

12:18. "Behold My servant [the humanity of Christ fulfills the Father's plan in both the 1st and 2nd Advents] **whom I have chosen; My Beloved, in whom My soul is well pleased** [the Father is speaking]. **I will put My Spirit** [the Holy Spirit] **upon Him** [a reference to the Filling of the Spirit at the 1st Advent], **and He shall declare judgment to the gentiles** [as individuals at the 2nd Advent; quoted from Isaiah 42:1 and fulfilled in Matthew 25:31ff].

Ἴδου ὁ παῖς μου ὃν ἠρέτισα, ὁ ἀγαπητός μου εἰς ὃν εὐδόκησεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου· θήσω τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπὶ αὐτόν, καὶ κρίσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἀπαγγελεῖ.

Isaiah 42:1-4, "Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations. ² He will not shout or cry out or raise his voice in the streets. ³ A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he [the Lord Jesus Christ] will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching, the islands [When the Jews looked west, they saw Cyprus, Crete, Rhodes etc.; so, a reference to gentile nations], will put their hope."

"I will put my spirit upon him." This is the first point of introduction to the so-called 'unpardonable sin' as it exists in this passage. "My Spirit" is a reference to God the third person; "upon him." God the Holy Spirit provided His power for the spiritual life of the humanity of Christ. At the end of this chapter the Pharisees are going to express their rejection by saying that He doesn't perform the casting out of demons by the power of the Holy Spirit, but by the power of Beelzebul [the god of dung, a title for Satan]. And in this way, they express their total rejection of the gospel

message which rejection is called the unpardonable sin namely the rejection of Christ as Savior in the 1st Advent.

Jesus filled with the Spirit as prophesized in Isaiah 11:2.

The seven spirits are titles related to the teaching ministry of God the Holy Spirit first to the humanity of Christ and then to the Church Age believers. These 7 titles are found in Isaiah 11:2 and are as follows:

1. The Spirit of the Lord [God the Spirit] will rest on Him (The Holy Spirit provides the power for His spiritual life)
2. The Spirit of wisdom (wisdom extrapolated from truth and applied to people, circumstances, sufferings etc.)
3. The Spirit of understanding (provides understanding of God's plan)
4. The Spirit of counsel (the Spirit counsels through metabolized doctrine)
5. The Spirit of strength (the Spirit produces strength through virtue in the soul)
6. The Spirit of knowledge (the Spirit, the teacher of divine knowledge),
7. And respect for the Lord.

12:19. He shall not strive [when He was mocked and ridiculed; did not argue], **nor cry** [from the slugging, the scourging, from the separation of his bones on the cross], **nor shall anyone hear His voice in the streets** [He didn't cry out on the way to the crucifixion].

οὐκ ἐρίσει οὐδὲ κραυγᾷσει, οὐδὲ ἀκούσει τις ἐν ταῖς πλατείαις τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ.

12:20. He will not break, a bruised reed [though our sins bruised and crushed him, Jesus did not break] **and He will not quench a smoking wick** [Jesus survived the last three hours on the cross], **until He brings forth judgment** [the judgment of all sins] **to victory** [every sin will be successfully judged on the cross].

κάλαμον συντετριμμένον οὐ κατεάξει καὶ λίνον τυφόμενον οὐ σβέσει, ἕως ἂν ἐκβάλῃ εἰς νίκος τὴν κρίσιν.

When God the Father judged Jesus for the penalty of all the sins of humanity, that penalty though it bruised Jesus like a bruised reed, Jesus did not break, did not fail like a reed which is flexible. So even though you may step on it and crush it, you will not break it for it will bounce right back after the pressure is off. Like a crushed reed, after the pressure of the cross has finished, He bounced back like a reed analogous to His resurrection.

The second analogy namely “a smoking wick,” a candle about to go out; “he shall not quench.” Even though the candle burns and flickers faintly analogous to the three hours in which Jesus would bear the penalty for all sins, the candle wick would not be put-out, quenched analogous to Christ remaining on the cross until His work would be complete. In other words, Jesus will stick it out on the cross until He will have born every sin that the human race would ever commit. And when He is taken off that cross the penalty for the sins of the world will have been paid for.

12:21. And by agency of His person, the gentiles shall trust.

καὶ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ ἔθνη ἐλπιούσιν.

Even though the religious Jews of Christ’s generation rejected him, thousands of gentiles will believe in him and obtain the gift of salvation. The religious Jews wanted salvation through their works, but many gentiles accepted salvation through the non-meritorious system of perception called faith.

Why are we told to believe in Jesus Christ for our salvation? You see, faith is a system of perception which requires no merit, not like rationalism or empiricism. By putting your faith in the person and work of Christ for your heavenly ticket, you are recognizing that you can do

nothing for this free ticket into heaven. God the Father honors this non-meritorious faith since all the work was already done on the cross.

Faith always has an object. When you were a small child attending a math class, your teacher taught you that 2 plus 2 equals 4, and you believed her. Now, when you believed your teacher, you didn't do any work. Your teacher had all the ability regarding math. The same is true with the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Jesus Christ did all the work. We merely believe in him; we put our trust in him for our salvation. "He saved us not on the basis of deeds which we have done in (human) righteousness, but according to his loving kindness. . ." (Titus 3:5a).

When we believe in Jesus Christ, we are making a decision which excludes human work. You are making a decision which does not require any effort on your part. It is as simple as: 'Father, 'I believe in Jesus Christ as my Savior.' After praying that simple prayer, you will become a child of God forever.

Now, after John [the Baptizer] had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; change your mind [about Jesus Christ] and believe in the good news [salvation is a free gift requiring only faith] (Mark 1:14, 15).

He who believes in the Son has eternal life [will go to heaven and live with God], but he who does not believe the Son will not see life [with God], but the wrath of God remains on him (John 3:36).

12:22. Then, one who had been demon-possessed was brought to Him, blind and dumb [caused by demon possession]. And He healed him, so much so that the blind and dumb one both kept on talking and kept on seeing.

Τότε προσηνέχθη αὐτῷ δαιμονιζόμενος τυφλὸς καὶ κωφός· καὶ ἐθεράπευσεν αὐτόν, ὥστε τὸν κωφὸν λαλεῖν καὶ βλέπειν.

The demon possession caused this man to be blind and dumb. There are three causes for illness: physiological, psychosomatic, and demon induced illness through demon possession. Jesus healed this man by casting out his demon. Though Jesus gave this sign to the Pharisees even so in verse 38, they will ask for a sign. Asking for a sign was a sign of their negative volition. Since they already rejected the sign of his miracles, he will give them the sign of Jonah, his resurrection. This conforms with 1 Corinthians 1:22, “For indeed the Jews ask for a sign and the Greeks search for wisdom.” The Jews ask for a sign, yet they have rejected the greatest sign of grace namely the Sabbath which they destroyed through legalism. Now, they are rejecting the sign of the Miracles of Messiahship.

12:23. And all the people were amazed [but did not believe] **and said, this person is not the son of David is he** [they are having a hard time believing that he could be the Messiah via the line of David]?

καὶ ἐξίσταντο πάντες οἱ ὄχλοι καὶ ἔλεγον, Μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς Δαυίδ;

The Greek word *meti* (Μήτι) used to introduce this question either expects a negative answer or that the question is in doubt. This person cannot be the Son of David and therefore the Messiah, can He?

The miracles nearly convinced the Jews that he was the Messiah, but their blindness was too great to believe in Him for salvation.

12:24. But when the Pharisees heard [about the healing of a demon possessed man], **they said** [to those inquiring about Jesus], **this man** [the Lord Jesus Christ] **does not cast out demons except by Beelzebul** [the god of dung], **the ruler of the demons** [a reference to Satan].

οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι ἀκούσαντες εἶπον, Οὗτος οὐκ ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ Βεελζεβοὺλ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων.

The Pharisees said this to keep the Jews in a state of confusion. If this gathering of Jews had responded and believed in Christ, there would be

no reason for the Pharisees to make this statement. They made this statement to reinforce the negative volition of the audience. Since the Pharisees cannot deny the validity of the miracles, all they can do is to explain them away. (Never once do the scribes, priests or Pharisees deny the validity of the Lord's miracles).

‘Beelzebul’ is a title of derision for Satan. It means the ‘prince or god of dung.’ Satan is called prince since he is in charge of all demons. So, the Pharisees, in order to deride Jesus Christ and at the same time connect him with Satan, assign this name to him.

12:25. And Jesus knowing their thoughts [omniscience] said to them, any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined. And any city or house divided against itself will not stand [an axiom and the prediction of the 5th cycle of discipline coming upon Judea].

εἰδὼς δὲ τὰς ἐνθυμήσεις αὐτῶν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Πᾶσα βασιλεία μερισθεῖσα καθί ἑαυτῆς ἐρημοῦται, καὶ πᾶσα πόλις ἢ οἰκία μερισθεῖσα καθί ἑαυτῆς οὐ σταθήσεται.

During His three-year ministry, Jesus used many different methods when he answered the religious crowd. He used sarcasm, parables, logic and rhetorical questions. If one is going to use logic, he must begin with a premise. His premise is axiomatic. There was an axiom then and it is still true today. This axiom was true of a family, of a city and of a nation. With this premise, the Lord begins to use inescapable logic. His logic is developed in verses 26-28. He uses a debater's technique in that He assumes for the moment that the supposition of the Pharisees is correct.

12:26. Consequently, if Satan casts out Satan [assumed to be true], he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand?

καὶ εἰ ὁ Σατανᾶς τὸν Σατανᾶν ἐκβάλλει, ἐφί ἑαυτὸν ἐμερίσθη· πῶς οὖν σταθήσεται ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ;

If Jesus were an agent of Satan as the pharisees allege, and at the same time casting out Satan's demons, that would be tantamount to violating the axiom just mentioned. Jesus Christ demonstrates that their supposition is ludicrous. Why would Satan be casting out his own demons. Satan is using demon possession in an attempt to hinder the Lord's ministry. Satan would not be casting out his own agents!

12:27. Furthermore, if I cast out demons by Beelzebul [and you assume I do], **by whom do your sons** [the prophets, the sons of Israel] **cast them out** [historical present]? **Consequently, they** [the prophets] **will be your judges.**

καὶ εἰ ἐγὼ ἐν Βεελζεβοὺλ ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια, οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν ἐν τίνι ἐκβάλλουσιν; διὰ τοῦτο αὐτοὶ κριταὶ ἔσονται ὑμῶν.

The Pharisees have already contended and taught and even put in writing that these prophetic miracles had been accomplished by the power of God. Why would the Lord's be any different?

Satan as the ruler of the world operates through two agencies namely religious mankind and demons. The Pharisees who are working for Satan say that Jesus is working for Satan. This is a case of Repression and Projection or just plain lying.

Scripture relates idol worship to the actual worship of demons (Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17; Psalm 106:37) so it should not be surprising that involvement with idolatry could lead to demon possession. In summary, the worship of demons in the Old Testament would imply a lot of demon possession.

12:28. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God and I do [an actual 1st class condition], **then the Kingdom of God has come to you** [since the future king is with you].

εἰ δὲ ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ ἐγὼ ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια, ἄρα ἔφθασεν ἐφί ὑμᾶς ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.

In all of the prophets of the past, especially in Isaiah, it was declared that the servant of Jehovah [Isaiah 40; 42; 49; 50 ;51] accomplishes his miracles in the power of the Spirit. So, since He accomplishes them in the power of the Spirit this was the sign of His coming, and so the kingdom is here, the Messianic kingdom and the fulfilment of the Davidic covenant. 2 Samuel 7:16, “Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”

Then, Jesus relates a parable.

12:29. Or else, how can one enter into a strong man's house [a prepared person] and spoil his goods, unless first he binds the strong one, and then he will plunder his house.

ἢ πῶς δύναται τις εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν τοῦ ἰσχυροῦ καὶ τὰ σκεύη αὐτοῦ ἀρπάσαι, ἐὰν μὴ πρῶτον δήσῃ τὸν ἰσχυρόν; καὶ τότε τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ διαρπάσει.

The strong man's house is the devil's world. Satan was prepared for the 1st Advent through religion and demon possession. So, when Jesus Christ entered Satan's domain, He had to expose religion for what it was and is, also had to remove demon possession. This was Jesus Christ binding the strong one, Satan. By going to the cross, Jesus would plunder Satan's domain by His strategic defeat of Satan.

12:30. He [any religious leader of Israel] who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me [through evangelism] scatters [the Pharisees are helping to blind the minds of the Jewish unbelievers through their system of works].

ὁ μὴ ὦν μετὶ ἐμοῦ κατὶ ἐμοῦ ἐστίν, καὶ ὁ μὴ συνάγων μετὶ ἐμοῦ σκορπίζει

This is a description of the Pharisees who are Satan's human emissaries. Satan who is the ruler of the world operates through two agencies namely through angels, known as demons and through certain kinds of people, and in this case, religious unbelievers. The religious Pharisees are actually working for the devil and his demons.

12:31. Therefore, I say to you, every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven them with reference to men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven [which is tantamount to rejecting Jesus Christ as savior].

Διὰ τοῦτο λέγω ὑμῖν, πᾶσα ἁμαρτία καὶ βλασφημία ἀφεθήσεται τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, ἡ δὲ τοῦ πνεύματος βλασφημία οὐκ ἀφεθήσεται.

Anytime a person rejects Christ, he maligns the Holy Spirit, his convincing ministry (John 16:8-11; Genesis 6:3). The Pharisees cannot deny the miracles, but they do reject the author of the miracles. The Spirit says that the gospel is true, but the Pharisees say it is not. In effect they are calling the Spirit a liar which is tantamount to blaspheming the Spirit. In the Church Age the nomenclature is different for in Acts 7:51, it is called resisting the Holy Spirit. Both resisting and blasphemy of the Holy Spirit are rejection of Christ as Savior.

John 16:8-11, "And when that one [the Holy Spirit] has come, He will convince the world [the unbelievers] of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: (9) concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; (10) concerning righteousness, because I go to My Father [with perfect righteousness; So the unbeliever will need perfect righteousness as well.] and you will no longer see Me; (11) concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged [So, if the unbeliever also rejects God's plan, he will also be judged]."

Genesis 6:3: Then the Lord [God the Father] said, "My Spirit [the Holy Spirit] shall not always plead the cause of God in man [to convince man regarding sin, righteousness and judgment in order that the unbeliever

might understand the need for salvation: the same concept of Common Grace is found in John 16:8-11] for he is mortal [flesh]; nevertheless, his days shall be one hundred and twenty years [the warning period before judgment].

Acts 7:51, “You men who are stiff-necked [at God Consciousness] and uncircumcised in heart [did not have spiritual circumcision because they rejected Christ at gospel hearing] and with your ears you are always resisting the Holy Spirit [at Common Grace and at the Father’s call], you are doing just as your fathers did [the unbelieving Jews of the past who persecuted and killed the prophets as per Acts 7:52]].”

12:32. And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him [for example Saul of Tarsus], **but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit** [rejects the gospel at Common Grace], **it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age** [of Israel] **nor in the age to come** [the Church Age].

καὶ ὃς ἐὰν εἴπῃ λόγον κατὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ· ὃς δὲ ἂν εἴπῃ κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου, οὐκ ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ οὔτε ἐν τούτῳ τῷ αἰῶνι οὔτε ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι.

Saul of Tarsus probably spoke against Jesus more than any man that ever lived but when he heard the gospel under crisis evangelism, he believed in Christ, and his pre-salvation sins were all forgiven.

12:33. Either make [recognize] **the tree** [as] **good and its fruit** [as] **good** [the ministry of Christ namely his miracles and message], **or else make** [recognize] **the tree** [as] **corrupt and its fruit** [as] **corrupt for the tree is known by its fruit.**

Ἡ ποιήσατε τὸ δένδρον καλὸν καὶ τὸν καρπὸν αὐτοῦ καλόν, ἢ ποιήσατε τὸ δένδρον σαπρὸν καὶ τὸν καρπὸν αὐτοῦ σαπρόν· ἐκ γὰρ τοῦ καρποῦ τὸ δένδρον γινώσκεται.

The tree is the Lord Jesus Christ. Make the tree good: recognize me for what I am. I have performed these miracles, I have cast out demons, I have declared the gospel, recognize me as the absolute good and believe in me. If one takes good fruit from a tree, then he must recognize the tree as good. Christ wants the Pharisees to understand where they stand. To say the ministry of Jesus is corrupt (his fruit is corrupt) is to say that he is working in the power of Satan. Good fruit indicates a good tree, and the Pharisees must recognise Jesus for what He is through His production; “or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by its fruit.” In other words, he lays it on the line: I am the tree, either you accept me or reject me, and He points out to them where they are at that point. They have said that the fruit is corrupt by saying that He performs His miracles in the power of Satan and that He casts out demons in the power of Beelzebul. The Pharisees need to understand their absurd position before they can realize the need to change their minds and believe in Him for their salvation.

12:34. Offspring of vipers! How can you, being evil [religion is evil], speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν, πῶς δύνασθε ἀγαθὰ λαλεῖν πονηροὶ ὄντες; ἐκ γὰρ τοῦ περισσεύματος τῆς καρδίας τὸ στόμα λαλεῖ.

Jesus Christ now calls these religious leaders the same as John the Baptist did namely religious vipers. The viper was the most common poisonous snake in Palestine. Every time they open their mouths, they put forth poison, every time the Pharisees speak, out comes poisonous legalism.

Parable:

12:35. A good man [Jesus] out of the good treasure [in his soul] brings out good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings out evil things.

ὁ ἀγαθὸς ἄνθρωπος ἐκ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ θησαυροῦ ἐκβάλλει ἀγαθά, καὶ ὁ πονηρὸς ἄνθρωπος ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ θησαυροῦ ἐκβάλλει πονηρά.

Jesus is the good man. Notice that doctrine is called intrinsically good treasure, because doctrine is the most valuable thing in the world: “and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.” The most valuable thing to the religious unbeliever is evil. That is, his treasure. Human viewpoint is his treasure, salvation by works is his treasure, and therefore he brings forth evil things. By this parable He is saying very simply: You are the ones working for Satan.

12:36. But I say to you that every idle word [any statement of salvation by works], **whatever men may speak, they shall give account of it** [The religious leaders believed and communicated salvation by works, a double indictment] **in the day of judgment** [a reference to the Great White Throne Judgment].

λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι πᾶν ῥῆμα ἄργον ὃ λαλήσουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἀποδώσουσιν περὶ αὐτοῦ λόγον ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως·

An idle word is any statement of salvation by works. Any time that someone maligns the Holy Spirit by rejecting the gospel, any system of legalism, any system of religionism, this is the idle word. This is: Out of the evil treasury they bring forth evil things. These Pharisees “shall give an account in the day of judgement.” Why? What is going to be judged in the day of judgement? Good works manufactured from the sin nature. Who says you can be saved by good works? The Pharisees here and, of course, any system of religion. These Pharisees will have to give an account in the Day of Judgment. Good manufactured from the sin nature will be the basis of their indictment at the Great White Throne Judgment. The Pharisees say that one can be saved by good works from the area of strength of the sin nature. They are not only going to be indicted on the basis of their good works as a substitute for the work of the cross but also for teaching the same. This is why the Pharisees are called twice the sons of hell. They get a double condemnation at the Last Judgment.

12:37. For by your words [faith alone in Christ alone] **you shall be justified** [declared righteous and qualified to go to heaven], **and by your words** [salvation by works] **you shall be condemned** [to the Lake of Fire].

ἐκ γὰρ τῶν λόγων σου δικαιωθήσῃ, καὶ ἐκ τῶν λόγων σου καταδικασθήσῃ.

12:38. Then, certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Teacher [as unbelievers, they call Him ‘teacher’], **we want to see a sign** [another miracle] **from you** [wanting another sign is just a way of expressing negative volition toward the gospel].

Τότε ἀπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ τινες τῶν γραμματέων καὶ Φαρισαίων λέγοντες, Διδάσκαλε, θέλομεν ἀπὸ σοῦ σημεῖον ἰδεῖν.

Miraculous and other Signs:

1. Virgin conception followed by a virgin birth. (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:22, 23).

Isaiah 7:14, “Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you all [the Jewish people] a miraculous sign: Behold, a virgin will be pregnant and will bear a son, and she [Mary will recognize that Jesus is the God-Man based on what Gabriel had told her in Luke 1:35, and so she will be the first to use this title] will call His person Immanuel [a title].”

Matthew 1:22, 23, “Now this whole matter occurred in order that what was communicated by the Lord through the prophet [Isaiah 7:14] might be fulfilled saying, “Behold, the virgin shall become pregnant [literally in the Greek: “she will have in the womb”] and she shall give birth to a son and they [Jewish believers] shall call his name Immanuel” which is translated “God with us.”

2. He would be born in Bethlehem, Judah. (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:5, 6)

Matthew 2:5, 6 “They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for in this way, it has been written by the prophet: (6) And you Bethlehem, Land of Judah, are by no means least among the leaders of Judah for out of you shall come forth a ruler [the Messiah] who will shepherd my people Israel.” [Micah 5:2]

3.The Guiding Star. (Matthew 2:2)

We must assume that at some stage in their history they had been told (presumably by Daniel, having been given a prophecy regarding this matter) of a particular star that would appear at the time of the birth of the Messiah. When their astronomers informed them of this sign that the king had been born, they set out for Jerusalem. It is possible that the entire fraternity came along. Matthew 2:2, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw [calculated that this was] His star in the east [in the land of the ancient Medes] and have come to worship Him.”

4. David’s throne through the Lord Jesus Christ will be forever. (2 Samuel 7:16)

The Jews were given many ways of identifying the Messiah. Two ways pertinent to this passage are as follows: He would be in the royal line of David, and He would come into this world by means of a virgin pregnancy and birth. Although David and Bathsheba had four sons, only the lines of two sons survived. Joseph was in the line of Solomon, and Mary was in the line of Nathan. Thus, their marriage brought the two existing royal lines of David together. The Jews should have realized that this royal marriage could easily have been the marriage in which the humanity of Christ would be born.

2 Samuel 7:16, “Your throne and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever [through the Lord Jesus Christ].”

5. Jesus wrapped in death cloth. (Luke 2:7)

Luke 2:7, “And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in death-cloths [cloth used for burial] and laid Him in a manger [Isaiah 1:3], because there was no room for them in the inn [due to the Feast of Hanukkah and the census].”

6. Jesus placed in a feeding trough. (Isaiah 1:3; Luke 2:7 above)

Isaiah 1:3, “The ox knows its master, the ass its owner’s manger, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand.”

7. Cured leprosy and many other miracles including the casting out of demons. (Isaiah 35:5, 6; Matthew 11:4, 5)

Isaiah 35:5-6a, “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.”

Matthew 11:4, 5, “Jesus answered and said to them [John’s disciples], “Go and report to John what you hear [the Lord’s commands regarding the miracles] and see [the results of his commands]: (5). The blind, receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up [resuscitated], and the poor have the gospel preached to them [the poor get what they need the most].

8. He will proclaim the good news to the poor. (Isaiah 61:1a; Matthew 11:5)

Isaiah 61:1a, “The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.”

Matthew 11:5, “The blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up [resuscitated], and the poor have the gospel preached to them [the poor get what they need the most].”

9. Finally, the sign of Jonah. (Jonah 1:17; Matthew 12:39, 40)

Jonah 1:17, “Now the Lord provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

12:39. But He answered and said to them, an evil and adulterous generation [a reference to spiritual adultery] seeks after a sign, and there shall be no sign given to it [this adulterous generation] except the sign of the prophet Jonah.

ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Γενεὰ πονηρὰ καὶ μοιχαλὶς σημεῖον ἐπιζητεῖ, καὶ σημεῖον οὐ δοθήσεται αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ τὸ σημεῖον Ἰωνᾶ τοῦ προφήτου.

12:40. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the huge fish, so the Son of Man shall be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

ὥσπερ γὰρ ἦν Ἰωνᾶς ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ τοῦ κήτους τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας, οὕτως ἔσται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τῆς γῆς τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας.

Every Pharisee believed in Sheol (Hades) which is the heart of the earth. Every Pharisee thought that if he was lucky, and if he performed enough good deeds, he would go to Sheol and be seated next to Abraham in a position of honor. Now, Jesus is saying He will be three days and three nights in Sheol. After which He will come back to be resurrected. These same Pharisees will all be alive within a year and a half when Jesus comes out of the grave. The sign that they are going to get is resurrection.

12:41. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment against this generation, and shall condemn it, because they changed their thinking [about Christ and believed in Him] at the proclaiming of Jonah and behold One [The Lord Jesus Christ] greater than Jonah is here.

ἄνδρες Νινευῖται ἀναστήσονται ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης καὶ κατακρινοῦσιν αὐτήν· ὅτι μετενόησαν εἰς τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰωνᾶ, καὶ ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Ἰωνᾶ ὧδε.



Nineveh, the oldest and most-populous city of the ancient Assyrian empire, situated on the east bank of the Tigris River. In circa 760 BC, the Lord commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh, Assyria since nearly everyone was positive at God-consciousness, they would therefore respond to the gospel message and to Jonah's teaching and so lasted nearly another 150 years. Jonah 1:1, 2, "The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai: (2) Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because

its wickedness has come up before me.” However, Jonah who despised the Assyrians boarded a ship headed for Tarshish, Spain to get as far away from Nineveh. A severe storm occurred and Jonah had to be thrown overboard into the sea to save the ship; then a large fish swallowed him and eventually vomited him up on the shore of the east coast of the Med.

Jonah was a type, and Jesus was the antitype. Jonah was three days and nights in the belly of a great fish; Jesus was three days and nights in the heart of the earth. After three days and nights, Jonah came- out of the fish; after three days and nights Jesus came-out of the tomb.

When Jonah went to Nineveh there was a great revival and thousands and thousands of Assyrians believed in Christ as their saviour, and they are going to stand in resurrection bodies and live with God forever, whereas these self-righteous, religious Jews are going to spend eternity in the lake of fire. The sign will be complete, for here on the one hand are resurrected Assyrians who responded to the grace of God and the gospel, and on the other hand you Pharisees who in your self-righteousness and your human good have rejected Christ and blasphemed against the Holy Spirit. Apparently, the Lord will use the example of the Assyrians at the Great White Throne judgment in His case against the Jewish unbelievers. He will use a group of people more despised by the Jews than any people who have ever lived namely the Assyrians in resurrection bodies.

Jonah 3:4-8, “Then Jonah began to go through the city one day’s walk; and he shouted loudly and said, “Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown. (5) Then the people of Nineveh believed in God; and they called a fast and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least of them. (6) When the word reached the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, laid aside his robe from him covered himself with sackcloth and sat on the ashes. (7) He issued a proclamation and it said, “In Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let man, beast, herd, or flock taste a thing. Do not let them eat or drink water. (8) But both man and beast must be covered with sackcloth; and let men call on God earnestly [believe in

Jesus Christ] that each may turn from his wicked way and from the violence which is in his hands.”

12:42. The queen of the south [Sheba, southwestern Arabia; possibly Yemen] **shall rise-up in the Judgment against this generation, and shall condemn it, for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth** [approximately 1,366 miles through the desert]**to hear the wisdom of Solomon, [the gospel] and behold One greater than Solomon is here.**

βασίλισσα νότου ἐγερθήσεται ἐν τῇ κρίσει μετὰ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης καὶ κατακρινεῖ αὐτήν· ὅτι ἦλθεν ἐκ τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς ἀκοῦσαι τὴν σοφίαν Σολομῶνος, καὶ ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Σολομῶνος ὧδε.



Not only did the Jews despise the Assyrians, but also the Arabs. This would include the Arabic Queen of Sheba who made a long journey from southern Arabia to Jerusalem. In Jerusalem, she not only heard the gospel to which she responded, but also learned many things from the wisdom of Solomon. Her testimony will also bring judgment against that generation of Jews for she travelled a long way to hear Solomon whereas the Jews will not listen to the Lord who is in their presence. This testimony will apparently be used by the Lord at the Great White Throne Judgment.

1 Kings 10:1-10, “When the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon and his relationship to the LORD, she came to test Solomon with hard questions. ² Arriving at Jerusalem with a very great caravan—with camels carrying spices, large quantities of gold, and precious stones—she came to Solomon and talked with him about all that she had on her mind. ³ Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for the king to explain to her. ⁴ When the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon and the palace he had built, ⁵ the food on his table, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, his cupbearers, and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the LORD, she was overwhelmed. ⁶ She said to the king, “The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true. ⁷ But I did not believe these things until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half was told me; in wisdom and wealth you have far exceeded the report I heard. ⁸ How happy your people must be! How happy your officials, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom! ⁹ Praise be to the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel. Because of the LORD’s eternal love for Israel, he has made you king to maintain justice and righteousness.” ¹⁰ And she gave the king 120 talents [one talent equals 75 pounds; by today’s price this would be approximately 260,000,000 million dollars] of gold, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. Never again were so many spices [apparently the spice was worth more than the gold] brought in as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

12:43. When the unclean spirit [demon] **has gone out of a man, he** [an illustration of all formerly demon possessed Pharisees] **walks through dry places** [he stays with religion] **seeking refreshment** [through religion] **and finds none** [there is no refreshment in religion].

Ὅταν δὲ τὸ ἀκάθαρτον πνεῦμα ἐξέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, διέρχεται διὰ ἀνύδρων τόπων ζητοῦν ἀνάπαυσιν, καὶ οὐχ εὕρισκει.

Apparently, some of the Pharisees had been demon possessed but the Lord had removed the demons from all the demon possessed Pharisees so that they could use their volition and believe in Him. Did they exercise their volition through faith and believe in Christ? No, they “walk through dry places,” they stuck with religion. And yet, in their religion they are seeking refreshment and found none. There is no refreshment in religion. Religion is salvation by works or legalism. There is no refreshment in legalism, there is no refreshment in hypocrisy, in salvation or spirituality by works, there is no refreshment in self-righteousness.

12:44. Then he [the Pharisee] **said, I will return into my house** [the temple representing the principle of legalism] **from where I came out. And when he has come** [back to the Temple], **he finds it empty** [of truth], **swept** [clean of truth], **and decorated** [with a system of self-righteousness].

τότε λέγει, Εἰς τὸν οἶκόν μου ἐπιστρέψω ὅθεν ἐξῆλθον· καὶ ἐλθὼν εὕρισκει σχολάζοντα σεσαρωμένον καὶ κεκοσμημένον.

Matthew 23:38, “Behold, your house [temple, constructed by Herod the Great] is being left to you desolate [the witness was completely obscured during the 1st Advent and so the temple was destroyed in August of 70 AD]!

The purpose of the temple was to be a witness of Christ, “the tabernacle of witness” (Acts 7:44). Everything in the temple was to testify, teach something about Christ, but since Jesus Christ was not accepted as Savior,

his thinking was not in their stream of consciousness. In their souls was only religious thinking; they had accepted the ritual but had rejected the reality. So, the temple no longer taught about Christ, but was a center for teaching religion.

12:45. Then, he goes and takes with him seven other spirits [demons] more evil than himself [than the evil Pharisee], and they enter in and live there [in the body of the Pharisee]. And the last state of that man [possessed by seven demons] is worse than the first [possessed by one demon]. Even so it also shall be to this evil generation [that was the case for many in that generation].

τότε πορεύεται καὶ παραλαμβάνει μεθὶ ἑαυτοῦ ἑπτὰ ἕτερα πνεύματα πονηρότερα ἑαυτοῦ, καὶ εἰσελθόντα κατοικεῖ ἐκεῖ· καὶ γίνεται τὰ ἔσχατα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκείνου χεῖρονα τῶν πρώτων. οὕτως ἔσται καὶ τῇ γενεᾷ ταύτῃ τῇ πονηρᾷ.

These Pharisees were given a period of grace, but since they did not take advantage of this opportunity, their latter state was much worse than their previous state. Though these Jews had an opportunity to seek the Lord, they didn't. Instead, they went back to legalism as taught in the temple and undoubtedly became involved in Satan's communion table which involvement led to demon possession. 1 Corinthians 10:21, "You cannot drink the cup of the Lord [the Communion table requires fellowship] and the cup of demons [demon influence: living in the cosmic system]; therefore, you cannot partake of the table of the Lord [the Eucharist for this worship requires the spiritual life] and the table of demons [demon influence and possession].

12:46. But while He yet talked with the people, behold, His mother and His brothers [four half-brothers] stood outside, desiring to speak with Him.

Ἔτι αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος τοῖς ὄχλοις ἰδοὺ ἡ μήτηρ καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ εἰστήκεισαν ἔξω ζητοῦντες αὐτῷ λαλῆσαι.

12:47. Then, one said to Him, Behold, Your mother and Your brothers stand outside, desiring to speak with You.

[εἶπεν δέ τις αὐτῷ, Ἴδου ἡ μήτηρ σου καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοί σου ἔξω ἐστήκασιν ζητοῦντές σοι λαλήσαι.]

12:48. And He answered and said to him who told Him, who is My mother? And who are My brothers?

ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν τῷ λέγοντι αὐτῷ, Τίς ἐστὶν ἡ μήτηρ μου, καὶ τίνες εἰσὶν οἱ ἀδελφοί μου;

The Lord's half brothers and sisters were all unbelievers at that time. So, as a family with the exception of Mary there was no eternal relationship. So, what was the Lord's point in what he had just said? Family-relationships must be set aside for eternal relationships.

12:49. And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples [all 12 were saved including Judas Iscariot] and said, Behold, My mother and My brothers [His true family were made up of believers with whom He had an eternal relationship]!

καὶ ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ εἶπεν, Ἴδου ἡ μήτηρ μου καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοί μου·

Jesus compared His family with His apostles namely unbelievers with believers. The phrase, “My mother and My brothers” is an inclusive phrase for family. Even though Mary was a believer, the family as a whole were unbelievers at that time. However, since all the apostles to Israel were believers including Judas Iscariot, He called them His family. If Jesus's brothers and sisters had been believers at that time, the Lord could not have said what he said!

12:50. For whoever shall do the will of My Father in Heaven [believe in Jesus Christ], the same is My brother and sister and mother.

ὅστις γὰρ ἂν ποιήσῃ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πατρὸς μου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς αὐτός μου ἀδελφὸς καὶ ἀδελφὴ καὶ μήτηρ ἐστίν.

John 6:40, “For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who sees [in his soul] the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”

The Pharisees, the Sadducees and the scribes were born of aristocratic families and many members of the Sanhedrin. And Jesus is saying once again to the Pharisees that even though you are aristocrats, you cannot be a part of the eternal family of God unless you believe in Me.

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Based on the scholarly work of R.B. Thieme Jr.

I recommend downloading 'THIEME'S BIBLE DOCTRINE DICTIONARY' from this website: rbthieme.org