



**Portion:**

**SCRIPTURES**

- Matthew 12
- Galatians 1-6
- Ecclesiastes 8:1-6
- II Corinthians 3:7-18

**Title:**

**RELIGIONSHIP or  
RELATIONSHIP**

- Strangle-ism
- Egregious Accusations
- Obstinate Hearts

*People love systems and procedures. There is nothing inherently wrong with that. In fact, God designed humans with a built-in recording system, one that can be programmed to memorize systems and procedures to your great advantage. The recording mechanism is the nervous system, with countless interconnections between nerves throughout the body. One property of the system is that the more often you send signals down a certain path, messages that jump in a specific order from one nerve to the next to produce a desired action, the more locked-in that pathway becomes. It's like the busiest roadways in the largest cities; have you seen them? The endless passing tires carve out grooves in the roads. Or, like a river that cuts a channel into a mountain because it has flowed there for a thousand years.*

*However, what's even more stunning about the nervous system is that if the pathway is not efficient, it will grow new connections, novel pathways that are shorter and straighter, which are then memorized to run on automatic. What advantage does this serve? Well, just think about tying your shoelaces. Or better yet, don't think about it! And that's the point; you don't have to think about it. You have repeated the pattern so often that now all you have to do is initiate the path and it seems to run on autopilot. You can do just about anything and tie your shoes at the same time. People that play musical instruments learn patterns and eventually their fingers do the walking with what appears to be no conscious effort. In both cases it did not start out like that. It was a repetitive step-by-step process, until it became "natural." The pattern of message transmission has, in a sense, carved efficient paths, like tire grooves in a road or river channels through a mountain. And there are so many other examples in which these efficient patterns of message transmission are advantageous: typing, sports, dancing, driving, professional skills, etc. The nervous system learns efficient pathways, builds new connections as needed—then the nerves fire on autopilot to produce consistent reproducible actions—in other words, methodical duplicatable patterns that seem unconscious.*

*We humans seem to use this type of system-building in just about everything, and most times it is beneficial. However, when*

*we apply these system-building tendencies to relationships, things don't go so smoothly. It seems that humans don't respond well to their connections with loved ones being overridden by an oblivious system that requires no conscious effort, no thoughtfulness. No one wants to be in a mechanical relationship that is built on autopilot—human connections nurtured by “methodical duplicatable patterns that seem unconscious.” And let me assure you, nor does God.*

*When we build our relationship with God into a system of rules and procedures—that is called religion. And when we insist others adhere to our preferred system of rules and procedures—that is called legalism. Legalism is equivalent to strangle-ism. It's the way we choke the life out of our relationship with God. God is not interested in your legalism or your religion; He is, nevertheless, interested in a relationship. Don't turn your relationship with God into a religionship with God. If you do, you will actually be worshiping a God of your own creation, one who would command you to sit back and rest on the Sabbath, while you watch a man suffer. You will have created a God who would prefer you to strictly adhere to Sabbath rules, rather than heal a man who had been suffering his whole life. Trust me, if you think that the Father of our blessed Savior Y'shua would choose Sabbath prohibitions over a man's life, you are in a religionship with Him, not a relationship.*

## PROPHETIC SEED:

“But if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless. **For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.**”” Matthew 12:7-8 NKJV

“Then He said to them, “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? Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? **Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.**””

Matthew 12:11-12 NKJV

## PROPHETIC FRUIT:

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, **not of works**, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:8-10 NKJV

“Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, **does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?**—” Galatians 3:5 NKJV

“For as many **as are of the works of the law are under the curse**; for it is written, “**Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.**”” Galatians 3:10 NKJV

# Let's Set the Scene: Portion in a blurb

## Introduction

Last week in [Pillows of Doubt](#) we began with John's most famous question, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" Of course, as always, Y'shua answered the question by pointing to the obvious truth manifesting all around them. Prophecies are coming to life in their midst—of course He's the One! Y'shua then used that teaching opportunity to affirm John's role as the forerunner and to instruct all those with ears to hear about his ministry connection to Elijah. It will take spiritual violence for the kingdom to manifest and many will miss the opportunity. But fear not, it's all working according to the Father's will.

A stiff rebuke followed for all those living in the midst of the miracles and prophetic revelation, and yet who also refused to acknowledge it. They had so overly complicated things and if they just had more childlike innocence they would experience the true rest being offered to them.

The message concluded with this promise... *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in*

*heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30*

This week Y’shua launches from those final words. A life of faith in Christ is NOT a heavy burden. Sure if your salvation depends on your own abilities to obey, it is a heavy weight. But, with Christ, you can tap His grace for your redemption and the heart of God to guide you on your way. When you do, those seemingly complicated situations suddenly get so simple. Sure it’s okay to pick some kernels of wheat on the Sabbath if you are in need of food. And of course it’s permitted to heal a man of his infirmities, even on the Sabbath. All you have to do is know God’s heart and the choice is easy! Y’shua is the Lord of the Sabbath; He has a perfect grasp on His Father’s heart.

And there is religion over relationship, those who prefer the religion of a man over the relation of a Father? They will become quite irritated and even violent when you expose such truths. They might even get accusatory—claiming your miracles are in partnership with the Devil. It’s absurd, but a hard heart will lead people into dark places. And Y’shua exposes how ugly those dark places can get. At times, those who love the darkness go so far down, too far, to a place where repentance becomes impossible. Y’shua calls that destination unforgivable sin!

The fruit of your life will expose you; there is no hiding who you really are and for what you really stand. In fact, your very words will either prove you are justified, or convict and condemn you because you are not. When you prefer the darkness, even the evidence all around you will prove nothing—you will seek signs that will never convince you of anything. Even if someone with a hard heart is miraculously delivered from his demonic strongholds, his refusal to fill his new empty heart with God will make that deliverance temporary, leaving space for many more demonic influences to take root.

In the end, one thing is certain, your true family are those who share your faith. Sure, blood is thicker than water, but faith is like cement!

## **Matthew 12**

### **The Lead in...**

*“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”* Matthew 11:28-30 NKJV

### **Lord of the Sabbath**

1. Y’shua had just infused into the hearts of His followers that His burden is light.

2. Then, He is walking through the grainfields with His hungry disciples on the Sabbath and they pick wheat berries and eat.
  - (a) They are immediately accused by the Pharisees of doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!
  - (b) Of course Y'shua knows there is no law as such, and that it is really just the tradition that men "added to the law."
  - (c) Y'shua rebuts their assertions by referencing how David and his men ate the Showbread when they were in need and how the priests serve or work in the temple on the Sabbath and are considered blameless.
  - (d) And He reveals how now they are looking at One greater than the temple!
  - (e) He goes on to teach them how God is about mercy and not sacrifice, the heart, not legalism.
  - (f) He famously says, "The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." Matthew 12:8

### **Healing on the Sabbath**

3. Then He wants to demonstrate again what it means to be the Lord of the Sabbath—one who masters the heart of the Father!
  - (a) He finds a man with a withered hand in the synagogue. And again He wants to challenge the religious leaders and their prevailing legalism. He asks, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"



- (b) He compares men to animals and how everyone knows any human with a heart would help a hurting animal—even if it was on the Sabbath.
- (c) Why? Because it should be obvious that there is no law that would prevent a man from doing good on the Sabbath—even if doing that good actually violates a true Sabbath prohibition.
- (d) In other words, the welfare of a man supersedes Sabbath Law. And if you had your pulse on God's heart, you'd know that!
- (e) So, Y'shua healed the man and the religious leaders were incensed and wanted to execute Him—such hypocrisy.

### **The Chosen Servant**

- 4. Y'shua sensed the violence in their hearts, so He withdrew and many people followed Him—He healed them all.
- 5. Yet, as was His custom to date, He warned everyone to keep the miracles a secret (for now). Why? To fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah.
- 6. And what is the significance of that particular prophecy?
  - (a) Y'shua is the Father's beloved pleasing Servant who has His Father's Spirit.

- (b) He is eventually going after the Gentiles to bring them into His family, and He knows that the Jews (by and large) will not accept Him, at least at first!

### **A House Divided**

7. Y'shua heals a blind, mute, demon-possessed man.
8. The multitudes were amazed and believed He could be, "the Son of David," a clear Messianic Prophecy.
9. The Pharisees are again incensed and this time accuse Him in their minds of essentially practicing witchcraft.
10. Unfortunately for them, Y'shua can read minds!
  - (a) He enlightens them to the inconsistency in their thinking... Any organization, and any two people, will fracture if there is division within.
  - (b) Y'shua questions, how could I have cast out the demon if we are on the same team?
  - (c) When you point a finger you have three pointing back at you; you think this way about Me because it is true about you!
  - (d) The truth is that I have authority over demons because I have the Spirit of God and His kingdom has come.
11. Learn this lesson:
  - (a) You cannot enter another man's house and plunder it unless you first subdue the man of the house.
  - (b) That is what you just witnessed.

- (c) I entered Satan's domain, bound him, and took what he was possessing (the man's soul) for Myself!
- (d) If you are not on my sided of this conflict, then you are on the Devil's side. You cannot remain neutral.
- (e) If you don't collect souls with Me, they will just get lost in the wind.

### **The Unforgivable Sin**

12. Then Y'shua delivers one of His most difficult messages.

- (a) He teaches us that there is a type of sin that cannot be forgiven.
- (b) He calls it blasphemy against the Spirit.

### **Treasure of the Heart**

13. Bad trees yield bad fruit and good trees yield good fruit. The fruit never lies.

- (a) Y'shua points out that the religious leaders are clearly evil, incapable of saying anything good.
- (b) The only thing that can exit their mouths is what is truly in their hearts.
- (c) Good men have stored good things in their hearts and thus produce good fruit.
- (d) Evil men have stored evil things in their hearts and thus produce bad fruit.

- (e) And be warned, you will be held accountable for every word you utter.
- (f) Your words are the fruit, the very evidence of being either justified or condemned.

### **The Sign of the Prophet Jonah**

- 14. They had not witnessed enough; the revelation about God's heart was not enough; the prophecy was not enough, even the warning about a sin that cannot be forgiven, still not enough—show us a sign, they demand!
- 15. "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign and there will be only one... the sign of the prophet Jonah."
  - (a) Jonah was swallowed by a great fish and was "entombed" deep in its gut for three days and three nights—then he was released.
  - (b) Y'shua will also be entombed three days and three nights before He is released.
  - (c) Nineveh, a city of horrific paganism repented at the preaching of Jonah, and he was just a prophet (and a reluctant prophet at that), yet you won't repent even though you are facing the Messiah Himself.
  - (d) The queen of the South refers to the Queen of Sheba who came to check out if Solomon's wisdom and wealth were legitimate, and witnessed the truth and believed.

- (e) In fact, she experienced more than she was promised.
- (f) And Solomon cannot compare with the Messiah—yet He is not enough for you!

## **Open Doors**

### 16. Demonic Strongholds

- (a) If you are delivered from the demonic strongholds in your life, and you don't replace those influences with Godly ones, you remain unprotected.
- (b) It is likely they will all return right through the open door, but in a much greater degree. You will be worse off than before.
- (c) That is what it will be like for this wicked generation.

## **The Will of the Father**

### 17. Faith and Family

- (a) The chapter ends as Y'shua teaches us that your faith family lines are ultimately more important than your blood family lines.
- (b) The DNA test for your faith family members is this: they do the will of God!

## STRANGLE-ISM

### 1. Religion, Legalism and Blindness

#### A. Backdrop: the Blinding Darkness of Legalism

(1) A step back to go forward... To set the stage we will do a running start from Matthew 11 into Matthew 12!

(a) The last words of Matthew 11...

1. “Come to Me, all you who labor and are **heavy laden**, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am **gentle and lowly** in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My **yoke is easy and My burden is light.**” Matthew 11:28-30 NKJV

a) There were many burdens attached to the religion that Jewish leadership foisted upon the people.

b) It was “heavy laden!” —piled up as to weigh too much to carry.

c) It was a yoke, as in that which was used to control beasts of burden.

d) The religion was hard, heavy and dark—not easy and light.

(b) Heavy Laden: What made it so heavy? Context is everything!

1. “And this occurred because of **false brethren** secretly brought in (who came in by stealth **to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage**), {16} knowing **that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith** in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be **justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law**; for **by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.**” Galatians 2:4, 16 NKJV

- a) This approach to God and His laws was typical in the first century (before Christ and still continued after the resurrection—even to the present day!)
- b) And this is precisely the problem. Works of Law is what, in the modern day, we would call legalism.
- c) It’s complete bondage because redemption has been attached to something other than faith in Christ.
- d) Even if it’s a good thing, like obeying God’s commands, if you attach any requirement for justification, other than faith, it is total bondage!

- e) The liberty we have in Christ is that we have been freed from the erroneous belief that we can obey our way into redemption.
2. “Stand fast therefore in **the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.**” Galatians 5:1 NKJV
- a) Now Y’shua’s words should mean more than ever... *“My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”*
  - b) Many Christians erroneously interpret “heavy laden” to be any teaching that espouses value to God’s commandments.
  - c) However, correctly interpreted, heavy laden is instead any requirement, other than grace through faith, to be saved.
  - d) That is why it is essential that we read the text in context!
  - e) Y’shua consistently addressed “heavy laden” errors. (Stay tuned for Matthew 12!)
- (c) A Yoke: Why a yoke? Context is everything!
1. “Now therefore, why **do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?** But we believe that **through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we**



**shall be saved** in the same manner as they.”” Acts  
15:10-11 NKJV

- a) Later on in the book of Acts, this crisis was still being addressed.
- b) A yoke would have been well understood in their culture as being symbolic of something that is regarded as oppressive or burdensome.
- c) A yoke is a wooden crosspiece fastened over the necks of two (or more) animals and then attached to the equipment they are required to pull.
- d) Under complete control of their master, the animals are bound together and “forced” to perform their “duty.”
- e) The yoke around the neck, to which Peter is referring in Acts, was any requirement, other than grace through faith, to be saved.
- f) Religious “masters” were yoking salvation to obedience, something that no one *could* bear!
- g) They also yoked the people to themselves, as to have them under their complete control, something that no one *should* bear!
- h) Many Christians, however, erroneously interpret this teaching in Acts 15, as if it is minimizing the

importance, or canceling altogether the value, of God's commandments.

i) That is why it is essential that we read the text in context!

2. "And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "**Unless** you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, **you cannot be saved.**" {5} But some of the sect of the **Pharisees who believed** rose up, saying, "**It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.**""

Acts 15:1, 5 NKJV

- a) First notice we are taking about BELIEVERS that Y'shua is the Messiah—not adversaries!
- b) The context is quite clear.
- c) First century Jews were having a difficult time wrapping their minds around the idea that obeying God's commandments was not a requirement for eternal redemption.
- d) It makes sense they would be stuck in this way of thinking because that is what they had been taught their whole lives by the Jewish leadership.

e) This is why we have all the corrections to this faulty doctrine being made by Y'shua, throughout the book of Matthew.

(d) Definitions: Concerning People

1. Relation: the way in which two or more people are **connected**, as in by blood or marriage.
2. Relationship: *Relation* + the way in which people **regard** and **behave** toward each other; the **effect** one person has on or his **relevance** to another person.
3. Religion: the **belief** in and worship of a superhuman power, especially a god(s); a particular **system** of faith and worship; a **pursuit** or **interest** to which someone ascribes supreme importance.
4. \*Religionship: *Religion* + the connection people have to a particular **belief, system, pursuit** or **interest**; the **impersonal** connection and behavior toward their religion, as opposed to the **personal** connection toward their God.
5. Food for Thought!
  - a) \**Religionship is not a "real" word (at least not yet). I made it up and its definition for the purpose of emphasizing the main point of this sermon. DJH*

b) *Also note: strangle-ism is another word I made up with it's definition. It's the way we choke the life out of our relationship with God*

6. Working Concepts!

- a) Religion: when we **insist** that our relationship with God is dependent on a system of rules and procedures.
- b) Legalism: when we **insist** others must adhere to our or a preferred system of rules and procedures to be in right standing with God.

(e) Religionship or Relationship

1. **“Do not quench the Spirit.** Do not despise prophecies. **Test all things;** hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.” I Thessalonians 5:19-22 NKJV

- a) It is incumbent upon you to test whether or not you are involved in religion, legalism, strangle-ism, and religionship—or relationship!
- b) There are those who would prefer to practice a religion over seeking the intimacy of a relationship, those who would choose the religion of a man over the relation of a Father.

- c) Note to self: Yahweh cannot use a compromised man to change a compromised world!

(2) The Definitive Word of Legalism—a taste of Galatians

- (a) Let's do a little exploratory surgery into the letter to the Galatians. I encourage you to read the entire letter, but for now, I isolated a number of key verses that will sufficiently diagnose and treat the prevailing disease of **religionship** and **legalism**.

1. "I marvel that you are **turning away so soon** from Him who **called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another**; but there are some who trouble you and want to **pervert the gospel** of Christ." Galatians 1:6-7 NKJV

- a) A different gospel: that which is not really another gospel (good news), because it is not good news at all! Why?
- b) Because it is a perverted version of good news, and quite troubling.
- c) If you believe you must add something to God's grace to be saved that is NOT good news.

2. "For you have heard of my **former conduct in Judaism**, how **I persecuted the church** of God beyond measure and **tried to destroy it**. And I

advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, **being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.**"

Galatians 1:13-14 NKJV

- a) Paul was previously the most zealous for the "traditions of his fathers," which is precisely the problem.
  - b) Those traditions dictated strict obedience to God's commandments for salvation, in other words, legalism.
  - c) Paul was so adamant about his "legalism and religion" that he persecuted the church over it.
  - d) As a result of his beliefs, he was locked into "works of law" for salvation. (More on "work of law" coming.)
3. "And **this occurred** because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth **to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus**, that they might **bring us into bondage**)," Galatians 2:4 NKJV
- a) After his conversion, Paul realized that even after other Jews were converted, they were still stuck in their "legalism and religion."

- b) What's going on here? What is our "liberty" in Christ?
- c) Some Jewish brothers, who still had the same wrong beliefs that Paul used to have, had come in behind Paul in the region and tried to convince the Galatians that they still needed to adhere to all the commands of God to be saved.
- d) That is bondage, quite the opposite of the liberty we have in Christ—by grace we are saved through faith, it is not of works (of law), but for good works.
  - 1) "For by **grace you have been saved through faith**, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, **not of works**, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God prepared beforehand that **we should walk in them.**"  
Ephesians 2:8-10 NKJV
- e) Bondage: You believe works are needed for your salvation.
- f) Liberty (freedom): You believe works result from your salvation.

- g) It is for this freedom (the freedom and empowerment to obey God) that Christ has set us free! (Galatians 5:1)
4. “knowing that **a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be **justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law**; for **by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.**”  
Galatians 2:16 NKJV
5. Let’s clarify, once and for all, what it means when Paul uses the term “works of law.”
- a) Here is Paul’s definitive statement, clarifying that it is only by faith that a man is justified. He uses the Hebraic phrase “works of law” to distinguish the requirement to obey the law in order to be saved, from obedience to the law as a result of faith. That is why he says, “by **works of law** no flesh shall be justified.” He brings complete clarity to this distinction in his letter to the Romans. Notice the two opposing ideas...“doers of vs. deeds of”
- 1) “(for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but ***the doers of the law will be justified***.” Romans 2:13 NKJV



- 2) “Therefore **by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified** in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Romans 3:20 NKJV
  - 3) “Doers of the law” is a phrase that means obedience as a result of faith (an indication that justification has taken place).
  - 4) “Deeds (or works) of law” is a phrase that means you are trying to be justified by obedience (apart from faith).
6. “O foolish Galatians! Who has **bewitched** you that you should **not obey the truth**, before whose eyes Jesus **Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified**? This only I want to learn from you: **Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?**” Galatians 3:1-2 NKJV
- a) The Galatians already had the truth, but someone came in and twisted their thinking.
  - b) Paul clearly taught them that faith in Christ crucified was the path to salvation.
  - c) That’s how they received the Holy Spirit.
  - d) They did not receive the Holy Spirit by trying to work their way to salvation by obedience.

7. “Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it **by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?**—”

Galatians 3:5 NKJV

- a) Make up your mind, did you come to the truth by trying to get right with God the same way Jewish leadership has always taught it?
- b) Or, was it by hearing about Christ and believing?

8. “For as many as are of the **works of the law** are **under the curse**; for it is written, “**Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law,** to do them.””

Galatians 3:10 NKJV

- a) Here is where most Christians really twist Galatians. If you are of “works of law,” Why are you under a curse?
  - It is a curse to try to obey the law.
  - If you try to obey the law you will fail.
  - Works of law, by definition, means you are NOT obeying the law!
- b) (Hint: consider what you have learned thus far in this teaching)

- c) Reference point for Galatians 3:10: *“Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.”*
- 1) *“‘Cursed is the one who does not confirm all the words of this law **by observing them.**’ “And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’” Deuteronomy 27:26 NKJV*
- d) So ask yourself, are you cursed for trying to do them, or are you cursed for not doing them? (see Deuteronomy 27:14-25). And don't forget what *“doing the law means as per Romans 2:13. (Doers of the law” is a phrase that means obedience as a result of faith (an indication that justification has taken place and obedience follows! Obedience to what?*
- e) Cursed is the one who...
- 1) ...makes a carved or molded image
  - 2) ...treats his mother and/or father with contempt
  - 3) ...moves his neighbor's boarder
  - 4) ...makes the blind to wander off (deceives them)
  - 5) ...perverts the justice
  - 6) ...lies with his father's wife

- 7) ...lies with any kind of animal
  - 8) ...lies with his sister
  - 9) ...lies with his mother-in-law
  - 10) ...attacks his neighbor secretly.
  - 11) ...takes a bribe to slay an innocent person.
- f) Answer: you are cursed for violating God's commands, hence "works of law" is a phrase attached to one who does NOT do the law!
9. "But that **no one is justified by the law** in the sight of God is evident, for "**the just shall live by faith.**"  
Galatians 3:11 NKJV
- a) \*\*\*No one will ever be justified by the law because using the law to be justified (works of law), by definition, means you are not obeying the law, because the law can never be used to be justified!
10. "**What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come** to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator."  
Galatians 3:19 NKJV
- a) With all this new knowledge, can the law still serve any purpose?

- b) The law always existed, yes, even before Mount Sinai. But it was added (or codified in writing), so that no man could have an excuse.
- c) Once codified, transgressions became more obvious.
- d) How long will the law serve this purpose?
- e) Until the seed should come!
- f) But what does that mean? Does it mean that the law had a purpose only until Christ came in the first century?

11. **“Is the law then against the promises of God?**

**Certainly not!** For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. But the Scripture has confined all under sin, **that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ** might be given to those who believe.”

Galatians 3:21-22 NKJV

- a) Is there something wrong with the law? Of course not!
- b) The law serves its purpose to show us that we can't ever be righteous on our own.
- c) If the law could have ever done what Christ came to do, there would have been no need for Christ.

d) So again I ask, with all this new knowledge, can the law still serve any purpose?

12. “Therefore **the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ**, that we might be **justified by faith**. But **after faith has come**, we are **no longer under a tutor**.”

Galatians 3:24-25 NKJV

a) The law is the tutor to bring us to Christ and to the understanding that He is the only way to be justified.

b) So then, I guess we don't need a tutor anymore, once we have Christ (after we have faith)?

c) So again I ask, with all this new knowledge, can the law still serve any purpose?

13. “For **you are all sons** of God **through faith** in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:26 NKJV

a) We become sons through faith, and...

14. “And if you are Christ's, **then you are Abraham's seed**, and heirs according to the promise.” Galatians 3:29 NKJV

a) If you are in the faith you are Abraham's seed, BUT...

15. “Now I say that the heir, **as long as he is a child**, does **not differ at all from a slave**, though he is master of

all, but is **under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father.**" Galatians 4:1-2 NKJV

- a) As long as the son is an immature child, he still needs the guardian and tutor to keep pointing to Christ.
- b) For how long? Until the appointed time.
- c) And when is that?

16. "Even so we, **when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.** But **when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son**, born of a woman, born under the law, **to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.**" Galatians 4:3-5 NKJV

- a) So again I ask, with all this new knowledge, can the law still serve any purpose?
- b) It would seem that the appointed time came when Christ came the first time... because it was then that we were adopted as sons.
- c) We were freed from bondage to the "elements of the world..." but are we freed from God's laws?
- d) And again, if we as sons are still children, was Christ's first coming THE appointed time?

e) Answer: although we are master of all, we are still **under guardians and stewards!**

f) So, I guess we need to look for ANOTHER appointed time!

17. \*\*\*“My little children, for whom I labor in birth again **until Christ is formed in you,**” Galatians 4:19 NKJV

1) Ah, there it is 15 verses later. The appointed time was not at Christ’s first coming, but instead, when Christ is fully formed in His people.

2) In other words, when the kingdom of heaven manifests on earth!

3) So again I ask, with all this new knowledge, can the law still serve any purpose?

4) Yes...until Christ is fully formed in His people, the guardian and tutor remains necessary.

5) And because this is true, it is imperative you keep this in context and don’t get drawn back into thinking you need the law to be saved!

18. “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and **do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.** Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. And I testify again to **every man who**



**becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.** You have become estranged from Christ, **you who attempt to be justified by law;** you have fallen from grace.” Galatians 5:1-4 NKJV

- a) We have come full circle.
- b) Do not be brought back into bondage, thinking that obedience can save you.
- c) But rather live in the liberty that only grace through faith can save you, and with that grace you are now empowered to obey.
- d) You see... *“For by **grace you have been saved through faith**, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, **not of works**, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”*

Ephesians 2:8-10 NKJV

- (3) Half the message was our launchpad—now we can move onto Matthew 12!

## **B. The Lord of the Sabbath**

- (1) Mercy over Sacrifice
  - (a) Sifting through priorities...

1. "At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, "Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!" But He said to them, "**Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread [1 Samuel 21:1-6] which was not lawful for him to eat [Leviticus 24:5-9], nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? [Numbers 28:9-10]** Yet I say to you that **in this place there is One greater than the temple.** But if you had known what this means, '**I desire mercy and not sacrifice,**' [Hosea 6:6] you would not have condemned the guiltless. For **the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.**" Matthew 12:1-8 NKJV

a) Y'shua had just infused into the hearts of His followers that His burden is light... I think it is

easier to grasp what that means, now that we examined what the heavy burdens and yokes.

- 1) What Y'shua imparted in 52 words in Matthew 11:28-30, Paul addressed in an entire letter to the Galatians.
  - 2) The heavy burden...you must keep the law to be justified, is an overwhelming weight and it will crush you.
  - 3) The light burden is this...a man is justified by by faith in Jesus Christ. So, stand in the liberty by which Christ has made you free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage...
  - 4) Bondage? Yes, if you who attempt to be justified by law, you will neglect the gift of grace.
- b) Now Y'shua is walking through the grainfields with His hungry disciples on the Sabbath and they pick some grains and eat.
  - c) They are immediately accused by the Pharisees of doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!
  - d) Of course Y'shua knows there is no law as such, and the accusation is really just about a violation of the tradition that men "added to the law."

e) And God is very clear on not adding or taking away from His word!

1) “You **shall not add to the word** which I command you, **nor take from it**, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.” Deuteronomy 4:2

NKJV

2) “For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: **If anyone adds to these things**, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and **if anyone takes away from the words** of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

Revelation 22:18-19 NKJV

3) “Adding or taking away” is very different than what Y’shua did in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) when multiple times He said, “You have heard it said said of old... but I say to you...”

- 4) Why is it different? Because He did not add or take away; instead, He clarified what they were missing.
- 5) See all three teachings on the Sermon in the Mount...
  - [On Collision Course!](#) (Matthew 5)
  - [Tomorrow Never Comes](#) (Matthew 6)
  - [Six Degrees of Separation](#) (Matthew 7)
- 6) Y'shua equipped us to discern the heart of God and understand what He would see as priorities!
  - f) As such, Y'shua rebuts their assertions by referencing how David and his men ate the Showbread when they were in need and how the priests serve or work in the temple on the Sabbath and are considered blameless.
  - g) And now you are looking at One greater than the temple!
  - h) He goes on to teach them how God is about mercy and not sacrifice, the heart, not legalism.
  - i) "For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."  
Matthew 12:8

(2) Apologetics for...Y'shua's stance on the Law (see: [On Collision Course](#))

(a) *“Y’shua did not come to loosen or halt the law, but to fully preach it.”*

1. *“Do not think that I came to **destroy** the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to **destroy** but to **fulfill**.”*  
Matthew 5:17 NKJV

(b) Showbread and Temple Service

1. A Perfect Example of God’s Heart:
  - a) David and his men had not eaten. Do you eat from the showbread meant only for the priests or do you let you men suffer? (See I Samuel 21:6)
  - b) The bread was replaced every Sabbath with fresh bread and only the priests were permitted to eat it! (See: Leviticus 24:5-9 and Exodus 25:30)
  - c) What do you do? The bread happens EVERY WEEK; the men are hungry NOW! Clearly the men are MORE IMPORTANT than the Bread.
2. Another Perfect Example: The Priests and the Sabbath
  - a) The Priests are commanded to work on the Sabbath (see Numbers 28:9-10). *Have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?* (Matthew 12:5)
  - b) Are they Guilty of violating the Sabbath?

- c) What should they do?
  - d) The Levitical Priests were divided into 24 groups for the purposes of their service in the Temple, known as the [priestly divisions or courses](#). You can see the details in I Chronicles 24:1-19.
  - e) This simply means that a priest only served on the Sabbath one time every 24 weeks.
  - f) Why are they blameless? (Matthew 12:5) Because the command for the Temple service happens every week, and the priest who is on duty must do so only two times per year!
  - g) Therefore, there is no prohibition in the sanctuary on the Sabbath!
3. Now we really know what Y'shua meant when He said... **'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,'** [*Hosea 6:6*] you **would not have condemned the guiltless.** For **the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.**"" Matthew 12:7-8 NKJV
- a) *I desire mercy and not sacrifice...*
    - 1) "For I desire **mercy and not sacrifice,** And the knowledge of God more than **burnt offerings.**" Hosea 6:6 NKJV

- 2) Yahweh prioritizes the heart above all else, especially your understanding of His heart!
  - b) If you understood these things, you would have recognized that when one command is transgressed in order to fulfill another command, which takes precedent in the moment, the “violator” is guiltless (as if they have transgressed no command)!
  - c) *Why is the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath?* Not because He has taught us how to violate it, but because he has taught us how to keep it with the heart of the Father!
- (3) The Father’s Heart: Pay attention, be sensitive to God’s Heart for people
- (a) I perceive that you are very religious...
    1. “Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, **I perceive that in all things you are very religious;** for as I was passing through and **considering the objects of your worship,** I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, **Him I proclaim to you:”**  
Acts 17:22-23 NKJV



- a) You must catch the brilliance here.
  - b) Paul is addressing a group of pagans in Greece.
  - c) But, he also recognizes that they consider themselves highly spiritual.
  - d) They worship many gods, and to ensure they don't miss one, they have even erected a statue to an unknown god.
  - e) Paul acknowledges their spiritual propensity, thus connecting with their hearts, and then he tells them that he has good news for them.
  - f) He knows who the unknown god is, the God they don't know.
  - g) Then, he introduces them to the Lord of all Creation, Yahweh, and his son Y'shua. (See Acts 17:16-33)
- (b) All things to all men by all means...for the Gospel's sake!
1. "For **though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all**, that I might win the more; and **to the Jews I became as a Jew**, that I might win Jews; **to those who are under the law, as under the law**, that I might win those who are under the law; **to those who are without law, as without law** (not being

without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; **to the weak I became as weak**, that I might win the weak. **I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. Now this I do for the gospel's sake**, that I may be partaker of it with you." I Corinthians 9:19-23 NKJV

- a) Again, you must appreciate Paul's brilliance.
  - b) Recognize the context. What is he saying?
  - c) He connects with people on a heart level.
  - d) He ensures that people know that he understands them, and has empathy for them.
  - e) He does this because it opens their hearts for the Gospel.
  - f) He is certain to clarify for us that he is NOT saying he is without law to the lawless, and that he is always under God's laws.
  - g) The big takeaway is simply that he wants to connect with people, so they can hear the message of the gospel, instead of repelling people with religion and legalism.
- (c) The Law of Liberty

1. **“Receive one who is weak in the faith,** but not to disputes over doubtful things. For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. **Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats;** for God has received him... {13}

Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, **not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother’s way.** I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. **Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died.”** Romans 14:1-3, 13-15  
NKJV

- a) See Romans 14:1-15 to understand the liberty we have in Christ.
- b) In it we learn that the welfare of a brother takes precedence over our own liberty!
- c) What is liberty? The freedom, power, and knowledge to obey God, and the wisdom to know

when our brother's needs are the priority in the moment!

- d) When you study the context of Romans 14, you will come to realize that the conflict Paul is resolving goes two ways.
- e) Those weak in the faith do not have enough knowledge about God's laws to make informed decisions about their food and the rules God has placed in the Torah. They can't recognize clean from unclean meat so they choose to eat vegetables only.
- f) Those who are mature in the faith know the difference. However, even though knowing gives you liberty to make a choice, if that choice causes another brother to stumble, because they do not share that same liberty, then you are better off eating only vegetables with them, so they do not stumble, believing they might be eating something unclean.
- g) Once they become mature in the faith, they will know the difference.

- h) Conversely, those who cannot distinguish clean from unclean, should refrain from judging those who Do.
- i) In other words, in all matters, the heart of God is that we prefer one another.

### C. Healing on the Sabbath

#### (1) Doing Good on the Sabbath

##### (a) Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?

1. “Now when He had departed from there, He went into their synagogue. And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, **“Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”**—that they might accuse Him. Then He said to them, “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? Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? **Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.**” Then He said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other. Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him.” Matthew 12:9-14 NKJV

- a) Y'shua again wants to demonstrate what it means to be the Lord of the Sabbath—one who masters the heart of the Father!
- b) He finds a man with a withered hand in the synagogue. And again He wants to challenge the religious leaders and their prevailing legalism. He asks, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"
- c) He compares men to animals and how everyone knows any human with a heart would help a hurting animal—even if it was on the Sabbath.
- d) Why? Because it should be obvious that there is no law that would prevent a man from doing good on the Sabbath—even if doing that good deed actually violates a true Sabbath prohibition.
- e) In other words, the welfare of a man supersedes Sabbath Law.
- f) And if you had your pulse on God's heart, you'd know that!
- g) So, Y'shua healed the man and the religious leaders were incensed and wanted to execute Him—such hypocrisy.

h) Why would Y'shua create such controversy...

AGAIN to show that... "The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." Matthew 12:8

(2) Apologetics when one Law is in conflict with another...

(a) Knowing the heart of God... Sabbath vs. Circumcision

1. "The people answered and said, "You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?" Jesus answered and said to them, "**I did one work, and you all marvel. Moses therefore gave you circumcision [Leviticus 12:3]** (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), **and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath [Exodus 20:8]**. If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, **so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath?** Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.""  
John 7:20-24 NKJV

(b) The controversy: essential clarification about the Law.

1. "And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin **shall be circumcised.**" Leviticus 12:3 NKJV
2. "Remember the Sabbath day, to **keep it holy.**" Exodus 20:8 NKJV

- a) When one Law is in conflict with another, you must discern the heart of God on the matter.
- b) In other words, when keeping one command will cause you to break another, you must choose which one is the “priority in the moment.”
- c) When you do, it’s as if you did not break the command that you chose to violate, because you honored the higher command in the moment.
- d) The opportunity to keep the Sabbath is WEEKLY, the opportunity to circumcise on the eighth day is ONE TIME! What would you do?
- e) Y’shua’s emphasis on priorities was not an annulment of the law, but instead the proper application of the Law.
- f) *“Y’shua did not come to loosen or halt the law, but to fully preach it.” Matthew 5:17*

#### **D. The Chosen Servant**

(1) He has His eyes on the Gentiles

(a) Y’shua does everything with prophecy in mind!

1. “But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew from there. And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all. Yet He warned them not to make Him known, **that it might be fulfilled which was spoken**



**by Isaiah the prophet**, saying: *“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.** He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory; **And in His name Gentiles will trust.**”* Matthew 12:15-21 NKJV

- a) Y’shua sensed the violence in their hearts, so He withdrew and many people followed Him—He healed them all.
- b) Yet, as was His custom to date, He warned everyone to keep the miracles a secret (for now).
- c) Why? To fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah 42:1-4!
- d) And what is the significance of that particular prophecy?
  - 1) Y’shua is the Father’s beloved pleasing Servant who has His Father’s Spirit.
  - 2) He is eventually going after the Gentiles to bring them into His family, and He knows that many Jews (at first) will not accept Him!

- 3) The Parable of the Wedding Feast (Mat. 22:1-14) teaches precisely how Israel will first reject Y'shua, thus opening the invitation to the Gentiles. You can study those details in: [Let the Dead Bury the Dead](#) (Page 65 in the notes.)
- 4) In short... the original invitees (Israel) turn down the invitation of the King, so he invites everyone else (Gentiles) to the wedding.

(2) Prophecy: Matthew 12:18-21 & Isaiah 42:1-4

(a) Line-by-Line Comparison

1. “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.” **Matthew 12:18** NKJV
  - a) “Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.” **Isaiah 42:1** NKJV
    - 1) Y'shua is His Father's delight and has His heart for the Gentiles!
2. “He will not quarrel nor cry out, Nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets.” **Matthew 12:19** NKJV

- a) “He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street.” **Isaiah 42:2 NKJV**
  - 1) Y’shua will not force anyone to hear His voice! It must happen naturally to separate authentic hearts from imposters.
- 3. “A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench, Till He sends forth justice to victory;” **Matthew 12:20 NKJV**
  - a) “A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth.” **Isaiah 42:3 NKJV**
    - 1) Nothing will be forced at all, until it is time to declare final justice!
- 4. “And in **His name Gentiles will trust.**”” **Matthew 12:21 NKJV**
  - a) “He **will not fail nor be discouraged, Till He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands shall wait for His law.**”” **Isaiah 42:4 NKJV**
    - 1) And it is in verse 21 that Y’shua makes His prophetic exclamation!
    - 2) The Gentiles will come to Him!

- 3) What does that mean? Justice will be established in the earth and even the Gentiles (the coastlands) will come under His law.
  - 4) All will be united under one God and one law.
  - 5) \*It's the law that drives us to Christ, and once saved by grace through faith, it's grace that empowers us to obey it!
- (b) What follows in Isaiah was precisely Y'shua's ministry and ours!
1. "Thus says God the Lord, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, Who gives breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk on it: "I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; **I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles,** To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house. **I am the Lord, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another,** Nor My praise to carved images. Behold, the former things have come to pass, **And new things I declare;** Before they spring forth I tell you of them."" Isaiah 42:5-9 NKJV

- a) Israel's rejection of the Messiah so His focus could turn to the Gentiles was all part of God's plan!
  - 1) "For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that **blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.**" Romans 11:25 NKJV

## EGREGIOUS ACCUSATIONS

### 2. A House in Conflict

#### A. A House Divided

- (1) Don't make the same mistake these religious people make!
  - (a) He who is not with Me is against Me!
    - 1. "Then one was brought to Him who was **demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him**, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed and said, "**Could this be the Son of David?**" Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, "**This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.**" But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "**Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation**, and every city or house

divided against itself **will not stand**. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. **How then will his kingdom stand?** And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. **But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.** Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first **binds the strong man?** And then he will plunder his house. **He who is not with Me is against Me**, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad."

Matthew 12:22-30 NKJV

- a) The multitudes were amazed and believed He could be, "the Son of David."
  - 1) See details about the Son of David in: [Let the Dead Bury the Dead](#) (Page 38 in the notes.)
- b) The Pharisees are again incensed and this time accuse Him in their minds of essentially practicing witchcraft.
- c) Unfortunately for them Y'shua can read minds!
- d) He enlightens them to the inconsistency in their thinking... Any organization, and any two people, will fracture if there is division within.

- e) Y'shua questions them about how He could have cast out the demon if He and the demon were on the same team?
- f) He rebukes the religious leaders AGAIN... You know, when you point a finger, you have three pointing back at you; you think this about Me because it is true about you!
- g) The truth is that I have authority over demons because I have the Spirit of God and His kingdom has come.
- h) Learn this lesson:
  - 1) You cannot enter a man's house and plunder it unless you first subdue the man of the house.
  - 2) That is what you just witnessed.
  - 3) I entered Satan's domain, bound him, and took what he possessed (the man's soul) for Myself!
  - 4) You can't remain neutral. You're either on My side of this conflict, or the Devil's side.
  - 5) If you don't collect souls with Me, they will just get lost in the wind.

## **B. The Unforgivable Sin**

(1) You've gone TOO FAR!

(a) Y'shua delivers one of His most difficult messages...

1. ““Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, **but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men.** Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; **but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him,** either in this age or in the age to come.” Matthew 12:31-32 NKJV
  - a) He teaches us that there is a type of sin that cannot be forgiven.
  - b) He calls it blasphemy against (or speaking against) the Holy Spirit.
    - 1) For clarity, it is not that there is such a sin that is too horrible to forgive; rather that there is such a heart that has become too dark to repent.
    - 2) We will not cover the immense details about the idea of unforgivable sin here, but if you wish to study this topic with intention, visit this document: [Understanding the Sin That Leads to Death](#) (I highly recommend you get a grasp on this very difficult concept!)
    - 3) The document will give you an extensive explanation of unforgivable sin. It also contains



hyperlinks to many teachings on our site that address this topic.

- c) \*For our purpose today know this: when your heart has become so dark that you actually give credit to the devil for the work of the Holy Spirit, you have crossed over to the realm in which repentance has become impossible.

### **C. Treasure of the Heart**

(1) The Diagnosis: fruit never lies!

(a) Bad trees yield bad fruit and good trees yield good fruit.

1. ""Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? **For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.** But I say to you that for **every idle word men may speak, they will give account** of it in the day of judgment. For **by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.**"" Matthew 12:33-37 NKJV

- a) Y'shua points to the obvious evil of religious leaders, who are incapable of saying anything good.
  - 1) See Matthew 23 for Y'shua's lengthy rebuke of religious leaders.
- b) The only thing that can exit their mouths is what is truly in their hearts.
  - 1) Good men have stored good things in their hearts and thus produce good fruit.
  - 2) Evil men have stored evil things in their hearts and thus produce bad fruit.
- c) And be warned, you will be held accountable for every word you utter. Your words are the fruit of what is really inside of you. They are very evidence of you being either justified or condemned.

## OBSTINATE HEARTS

### **3. No Room for Change**

#### **A. The Sign of the Prophet Jonah**

##### (1) Three Days AND Three Nights

- (a) The Disease of Religionship: one denomination at time  
—Heavy Laden instead of Revelation; a Yoke of  
Bondage instead of Freedom!

1. “Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, **“Teacher, we want to see a sign from You.”** But He answered and said to them, **“An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.** For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here.” Matthew 12:38-42 NKJV

a) The religious leaders had not witnessed enough; the revelation about God’s heart was not enough; the prophecy was not enough, even the warning about a sin that cannot be forgiven, still not enough—show us a sign, they demand!

- b) “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign and there will be only one,” ...the sign of the prophet Jonah.
- c) Jonah was swallowed by a great fish and was “entombed” deep in its gut for three days and three nights—then he was released.
- d) Y’shua will also be entombed three days and three nights before He is released.
  - 1) Ironically multiple generations of Christians, even to the present day, cannot count three days and three nights in their death, burial and resurrection narrative.
  - 2) The sign of Jonah has eluded them, even as it did those trapped in religionship in the first century—what Y’shua called an evil and adulterous generation!
- e) Nineveh, a city of horrific paganism repented at the preaching of Jonah, and he was just a prophet (and a reluctant prophet at that), yet they wouldn’t repent, even though they were standing before the Messiah Himself.
- f) The queen of the South refers to the Queen of Sheba, who came to check out if Solomon’s

wisdom and wealth were legitimate. She witnessed the truth and believed.

- g) And Solomon cannot compare with the Messiah—yet He is not enough for you!
- h) In fact, the Queen of Sheba experienced more than she was promised. (See I Kings 10:1-13)
  - 1) “Then she said to the king: **“It was a true report which I heard** in my own land about your words and your wisdom. However I did not believe the words until I came and saw with my own eyes; **and indeed the half was not told me.** Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard.” I Kings 10:6-7 NKJV
  - i) This is not the place for extensive notes on this topic. See [Passover Teachings](#) for a detailed explanation of three days and three nights!

## **B. Open Doors**

### (1) Demonic Strongholds

(a) If you don't fill your heart with God...

1. **““When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept,**

and put in order. Then he goes and **takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself**, and they enter and dwell there; **and the last state of that man is worse than the first**. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.”” Matthew 12:43-45 NKJV

- a) If you are delivered from the demonic strongholds in your life, and you don't replace those influences with Godly ones, you remain unprotected.
- b) It is likely they will all return right through the open door, but in a much greater degree.
- c) You will even be at risk of ending worse off than you started.
- d) That is what it will be like for this wicked generation.
  - 1) “For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, **they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning**. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.” II Peter 2:20-21 NKJV

### C. The Will of the Father

(1) Faith is like cement!

(a) True Family

1. “While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, **His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him.** Then one said to Him, “Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You.” But He answered and said to the one who told Him, “Who is My mother and who are My brothers?” And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, “Here are My mother and My brothers! **For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.**”” Matthew 12:46-50 NKJV

- a) The chapter ends as Y’shua teaches us that your faith family lines are ultimately more important than your blood family lines.
- b) The DNA test to find your faith family members is this: Do they do the will of God?
- c) Your true family are those who share your faith. Blood is thicker than water, but faith is like cement!

### D. Relationship with the King!

- (1) Religionship or Relationship: Context is Everything!
- (a) Even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect...
1. “But if **the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious**, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, **how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory.** For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious. Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech— unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ. But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. Nevertheless when one turns



**to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” II Corinthians 3:7-18 NKJV**

- a) Maybe Paul’s most distinctive words displaying how the ministry of the Holy Spirit (grace through faith) and the laws of God work together, and how the law without the Spirit can only lead to condemnation and death. Pay attention closely!
- (b) Let’s take it step-by-step (so you can learn relationship instead of religionship)!
  1. The law is a ministry of death when all you have is words on a stone.
  2. And even with that being true, the law was still glorious.
  3. How is that possible? Because our inability to uphold the law, without God’s power, points us to Christ! In other words, the more you are aware of your sin, the more you are in need of a savior.

a) “I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. **And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death.** For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me. **Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.** Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! **But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good,** so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful. **For we know that the law is spiritual,** but I am carnal, sold under sin.” Romans 7:9-14 NKJV

4. So, if the law ministry (the ministry that pointed toward condemnation) was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry of the Spirit?
5. One glorious ministry: designed to condemn
6. One more glorious ministry: imparts righteousness
7. When you compare the two, it's as if the first is not glorious at all (even though we know that the law is spiritual, and it is we who are carnal, buried in sin—Romans 7:14)

8. The law is passing away—eventually when heaven and earth pass away (Matthew 5:17-18) and when we are no longer children in need of a tutor, or guardians and stewards (Galatians 4:1-2).
9. So, the law was glorious, even though it would one day be unnecessary, for those who have Christ fully formed in them (Galatians 4:19).
10. But, even right now (then and now) people remain blinded to understanding the Old Testament, and how the Law and the Spirit work together.
11. It should make complete sense with Christ in your life. (So why do Christians, even today, not see how the two work together?)
12. If we understand how the Law and the Spirit work together, we have liberty. We are are saved by grace through faith **for good works** (Ephesians 2:8-10). It is for **that freedom** that Christ has set us free (Galatians 5:1)!
13. Knowing this is how you are transformed into His image from glory to glory.
14. In other words, it is how Christ becomes fully formed in you (Galatians 4:19)!

(2) Religionship or Relationship: Context is Everything!

(a) Do not be in a hurry to leave the king's presence!

1. "Who is like the wise? Who knows the explanation of things? A person's wisdom brightens their face and changes its hard appearance. **Obey the king's command, I say, because you took an oath before God. Do not be in a hurry to leave the king's presence.** Do not stand up for a bad cause, for he will do whatever he pleases. **Since a king's word is supreme, who can say to him, "What are you doing?"** Whoever obeys his command will come to no harm, and the wise heart will know the proper time and procedure. For there is a proper time and procedure for every matter, though a person may be weighed down by misery." Ecclesiastes 8:1-6 NIV

a) Yes! Obey the King's commands—that's your duty!

b) Yes! Stay in His presence—that's your power!

c) Yes! His word is supreme—you will be blessed for obeying Him!

d) Yes! You must know how your relationship with God and your obedience to God work together.

1) **There is a proper time and procedure** for every matter—You know that God's laws apply to every situation!

- 2) The wise heart **knows the proper time and procedure** for every matter—You know when and how to apply God’s laws in each situation!
- 3) A man who does not know these things becomes weighed down (heavy laden and yoked) by misery (legalism and religion).

“COME TO ME, ALL YOU WHO LABOR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST. TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU AND LEARN FROM ME, FOR I AM GENTLE AND LOWLY IN HEART, AND YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. FOR MY YOKE IS EASY AND MY BURDEN IS LIGHT.””

MATTHEW 11:28-30 NKJV

**Summary:** STRANGLE-ISM

## **1. Religion, Legalism and Blindness**

### **A. Backdrop: the Blinding Darkness of Legalism**

- (1) A step back to go forward... To set the stage we will do a running start from Matthew 11 into Matthew 12!
  - (a) The last words of Matthew 11...
    1. There were many burdens attached to the religion that Jewish leadership foisted upon the people.
      - a) It was “heavy laden!” —piled up as to weigh too much to carry.

- b) It was a yoke, as in that which was used to control beasts of burden.
  - c) The religion was hard, heavy and dark—not easy and light.
- (b) Heavy Laden: What made it so heavy? Context is everything!
1. This approach to God and His laws was typical in the first century (before Christ and still continued after the resurrection—even to the present day!)
    - a) And this is precisely the problem. Works of Law is what, in the modern day, we would call legalism.
    - b) It's complete bondage because redemption has been attached to something other than faith in Christ.
    - c) Even if it's a good thing, like obeying God's commands, if you attach any requirement for justification, other than faith, it is total bondage!
    - d) The liberty we have in Christ is that we have been freed from the erroneous belief that we can obey our way into redemption.
  2. Now Y'shua's words should mean more than ever...  
*"My yoke is easy and My burden is light."*

- a) Many Christians erroneously interpret “heavy laden” to be any teaching that espouses value to God’s commandments.
  - b) However, correctly interpreted, heavy laden is instead any requirement, other than grace through faith, to be saved.
  - c) That is why it is essential that we read the text in context!
  - d) Y’shua consistently addressed “heavy laden” errors. (Stay tuned for Matthew 12!)
- (c) A Yoke: Why a yoke? Context is everything!
1. Later on in the book of Acts, this crisis was still being addressed.
    - a) A yoke would have been well understood in their culture as being symbolic of something that is regarded as oppressive or burdensome.
    - b) A yoke is a wooden crosspiece fastened over the necks of two (or more) animals and then attached to the equipment they are required to pull.
    - c) Under complete control of their master, the animals are bound together and “forced” to perform their “duty.”

- d) The yoke around the neck, to which Peter is referring in Acts, was any requirement, other than grace through faith, to be saved.
  - e) Religious “masters” were yoking salvation to obedience, something that no one *could* bear!
  - f) They also yoked the people to themselves, as to have them under their complete control, something that no one *should* bear!
  - g) Many Christians, however, erroneously interpret this teaching in Acts 15, as if it is minimizing the importance, or canceling altogether the value, of God’s commandments.
  - h) That is why it is essential that we read the text in context!
2. The context is quite clear.
- a) First notice we are taking about BELIEVERS that Y’shua is the Messiah—not adversaries!
  - b) First century Jews were having a difficult time wrapping their minds around the idea that obeying God’s commandments was not a requirement for eternal redemption.



- c) It makes sense they would be stuck in this way of thinking because that is what they had been taught their whole lives by the Jewish leadership.
- d) This is why we have all the corrections to this faulty doctrine being made by Y'shua, throughout the book of Matthew.

(d) Definitions: Concerning People

1. Relation: the way in which two or more people are **connected**, as in by blood or marriage.
2. Relationship: *Relation* + the way in which people **regard** and **behave** toward each other; the **effect** one person has on or his **relevance** to another person.
3. Religion: the **belief** in and worship of a superhuman power, especially a god(s); a particular **system** of faith and worship; a **pursuit** or **interest** to which someone ascribes supreme importance.
4. \*Religionship: *Religion* + the connection people have to a particular **belief, system, pursuit** or **interest**; the **impersonal** connection and behavior toward their religion, as opposed to the **personal** connection toward their God.
5. Food for Thought!

- a) *\*Religionship is not a “real” word (at least not yet). I made it up and its definition for the purpose of emphasizing the main point of this sermon. DJH*
- b) *Also note: strangle-ism is another word I made up with it’s definition. It’s the way we choke the life out of our relationship with God*

## 6. Working Concepts!

- a) Religion: when we **insist** that our relationship with God is dependent on a system of rules and procedures.
- b) Legalism: when we **insist** others must adhere to our or a preferred system of rules and procedures to be in right standing with God.

### (e) Religionship or Relationship

1. It is incumbent upon you to test whether or not you are involved in religion, legalism, strangle-ism, and religionship—or relationship!
  - a) There are those who would prefer to practice a religion over seeking the intimacy of a relationship, those who would choose the religion of a man over the relation of a Father.
  - b) Note to self: Yahweh cannot use a compromised man to change a compromised world!

(2) The Definitive Word of Legalism—a taste of Galatians

(a) Let's do a little exploratory surgery into the letter to the Galatians. I encourage you to read the entire letter, but for now, I isolated a number of key verses that will sufficiently diagnose and treat the prevailing disease of **religionship** and **legalism**.

1. A different gospel: that which is not really another gospel (good news), because it is not good news at all! Why?
  - a) Because it is a perverted version of good news, and quite troubling.
  - b) If you believe you must add something to God's grace to be saved that is NOT good news.
2. Paul was previously the most zealous for the "traditions of his fathers," which is precisely the problem.
  - a) Those traditions dictated strict obedience to God's commandments for salvation, in other words, legalism.
  - b) Paul was so adamant about his "legalism and religion" that he persecuted the church over it.

- c) As a result of his beliefs, he was locked into “works of law” for salvation. (More on “work of law” coming.)
3. After his conversion, Paul realized that even after other Jews were converted, they were still stuck in their “legalism and religion.”
- a) What’s going on here? What is our “liberty” in Christ?
  - b) Some Jewish brothers, who still had the same wrong beliefs that Paul used to have, had come in behind Paul in the region and tried to convince the Galatians that they still needed to adhere to all the commands of God to be saved.
  - c) That is bondage, quite the opposite of the liberty we have in Christ—by grace we are saved through faith, it is not of works (of law), but for good works.
    - 1) Bondage: You believe works are needed for your salvation.
    - d) Liberty (freedom): You believe works result from your salvation.
    - e) It is for this freedom (the freedom and empowerment to obey God) that Christ has set us free! (Galatians 5:1)

4. Let's clarify, once and for all, what it means when Paul uses the term "works of law."
  - a) Here is Paul's definitive statement, clarifying that it is only by faith that a man is justified. He uses the Hebraic phrase "works of law" to distinguish the requirement to obey the law in order to be saved, from obedience to the law as a result of faith. That is why he says, "by **works of law** no flesh shall be justified." He brings complete clarity to this distinction in his letter to the Romans. Notice the two opposing ideas..."doers of vs. deeds of"
    - 1) "Doers of the law" is a phrase that means obedience as a result of faith (an indication that justification has taken place).
    - 2) "Deeds (or works) of law" is a phrase that means you are trying to be justified by obedience (apart from faith).
5. The Galatians already had the truth, but someone came in and twisted their thinking.
  - a) Paul clearly taught them that faith in Christ crucified was the path to salvation.
  - b) That's how they received the Holy Spirit.

- c) They did not receive the Holy Spirit by trying to work their way to salvation by obedience.
6. Make up your mind, did you come to the truth by trying to get right with God the same way Jewish leadership has always taught it?
- a) Or, was it by hearing about Christ and believing?
7. Here is where most Christians really twist Galatians. If you are of “works of law,” Why are you under a curse?
- It is a curse to try to obey the law.
  - If you try to obey the law you will fail.
  - Works of law, by definition, means you are NOT obeying the law!
- a) (Hint: consider what you have learned thus far in this teaching)
  - b) So ask yourself, are you cursed for trying to do them, or are you cursed for not doing them? (see Deuteronomy 27:14-25). And don’t forget what “doing the law means as per Romans 2:13. (*Doers of the law*” is a phrase that means obedience as a result of faith (an indication that justification has taken place and obedience follows! Obedience to what?

- c) Cursed is the one who...
- 1) ...makes a carved or molded image
  - 2) ...treats his mother and/or father with contempt
  - 3) ...moves his neighbor's boarder
  - 4) ...makes the blind to wander off (deceives them)
  - 5) ...perverts the justice
  - 6) ...lies with his father's wife
  - 7) ...lies with any kind of animal
  - 8) ...lies with his sister
  - 9) ...lies with his mother-in-law
  - 10) ...attacks his neighbor secretly.
  - 11) ...takes a bribe to slay an innocent person.

d) Answer: you are cursed for violating God's commands, hence "works of law" is a phrase attached to one who does NOT do the law!

8. \*\*\*No one will ever be justified by the law because using the law to be justified (works of law), by definition, means you are not obeying the law, because the law can never be used to be justified!
9. With all this new knowledge, can the law still serve any purpose?

- a) The law always existed, yes, even before Mount Sinai. But it was added (or codified in writing), so that no man could have an excuse.
- b) Once codified, transgressions became more obvious.
- c) How long will the law serve this purpose?
- d) Until the seed should come!
- e) But what does that mean? Does it mean that the law had a purpose only until Christ came in the first century?

10. Is there something wrong with the law? Of course not!

- a) The law serves its purpose to show us that we can't ever be righteous on our own.
- b) If the law could have ever done what Christ came to do, there would have been no need for Christ.
- c) So again I ask, with all this new knowledge, can the law still serve any purpose?

11. The law is the tutor to bring us to Christ and to the understanding that He is the only way to be justified.

- a) So then, I guess we don't need a tutor anymore, once we have Christ (after we have faith)?



b) So again I ask, with all this new knowledge, can the law still serve any purpose?

12. We become sons through faith, and...

13. If you are in the faith you are Abraham's seed, BUT...

14. As long as the son is an immature child, he still needs the guardian and tutor to keep pointing to Christ.

a) For how long? Until the appointed time.

b) And when is that?

15. So again I ask, with all this new knowledge, can the law still serve any purpose?

a) It would seem that the appointed time came when Christ came the first time... because it was then that we were adopted as sons.

b) We were freed from bondage to the "elements of the world..." but are we freed from God's laws?

c) And again, if we as sons are still children, was Christ's first coming THE appointed time?

d) Answer: although we are master of all, we are still **under guardians and stewards!**

e) So, I guess we need to look for ANOTHER appointed time!

16. \*\*\*Ah, there it is 15 verses later. The appointed time was not at Christ's first coming, but instead, when Christ is fully formed in His people.

- 1) In other words, when the kingdom of heaven manifests on earth!
- 2) So again I ask, with all this new knowledge, can the law still serve any purpose?
- 3) Yes...until Christ is fully formed in His people, the guardian and tutor remains necessary.
- 4) And because this is true, it is imperative you keep this in context and don't get drawn back into thinking you need the law to be saved!

17. We have come full circle.

- a) Do not be brought back into bondage, thinking that obedience can save you.
- b) But rather live in the liberty that only grace through faith can save you, and with that grace you are now empowered to obey.

(3) Half the message was our launchpad—now we can move onto Matthew 12!

## **B. The Lord of the Sabbath**

(1) Mercy over Sacrifice

(a) Sifting through priorities...

1. Y'shua had just infused into the hearts of His followers that His burden is light... I think it is easier to grasp what that means, now that we examined what the heavy burdens and yokes.
  - a) What Y'shua imparted in 52 words in Matthew 11:28-30, Paul addressed in an entire letter to the Galatians.
  - b) The heavy burden...you must keep the law to be justified, is an overwhelming weight and it will crush you.
  - c) The light burden is this...a man is justified by by faith in Jesus Christ. So, stand in the liberty by which Christ has made you free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage...
  - d) Bondage? Yes, if you who attempt to be justified by law, you will neglect the gift of grace.
2. Now Y'shua is walking through the grainfields with His hungry disciples on the Sabbath and they pick some grains and eat.
  - a) They are immediately accused by the Pharisees of doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!

- b) Of course Y'shua knows there is no law as such, and the accusation is really just about a violation of the tradition that men "added to the law."
  - c) And God is very clear on not adding or taking away from His word!
  - d) "Adding or taking away" is very different than what Y'shua did in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) when multiple times He said, *"You have heard it said said of old... but I say to you..."*
  - e) Why is it different? Because He did not add or take away; instead, He clarified what they were missing.
3. Y'shua equipped us to discern the heart of God and understand what He would see as priorities!
- a) As such, Y'shua rebuts their assertions by referencing how David and his men ate the Showbread when they were in need and how the priests serve or work in the temple on the Sabbath and are considered blameless.
  - b) And now you are looking at One greater than the temple!
  - c) He goes on to teach them how God is about mercy and not sacrifice, the heart, not legalism.

d) "For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

Matthew 12:8

(2) Apologetics for...Y'shua's stance on the Law

(a) *"Y'shua did not come to loosen or halt the law, but to fully preach it."*

(b) Showbread and Temple Service

1. A Perfect Example of God's Heart:

a) David and his men had not eaten. Do you eat from the showbread meant only for the priests or do you let your men suffer? (See I Samuel 21:6)

b) The bread was replaced every Sabbath with fresh bread and only the priests were permitted to eat it! (See: Leviticus 24:5-9 and Exodus 25:30)

c) What do you do? The bread happens EVERY WEEK; the men are hungry NOW! Clearly the men are MORE IMPORTANT than the Bread.

2. Another Perfect Example: The Priests and the Sabbath

a) The Priests are commanded to work on the Sabbath (see Numbers 28:9-10). *Have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?* (Matthew 12:5)

b) Are they Guilty of violating the Sabbath?

- c) What should they do?
- d) The Levitical Priests were divided into 24 groups for the purposes of their service in the Temple, known as the [priestly divisions or courses](#).
- e) This simply means that a priest only served on the Sabbath one time every 24 weeks.
- f) Why are they blameless? (Matthew 12:5) Because the command for the Temple service happens every week, and the priest who is on duty must do so only two times per year!
- g) Therefore, there is no prohibition in the sanctuary on the Sabbath!

3. *I desire mercy and not sacrifice...*

- a) Yahweh prioritizes the heart above all else, especially your understanding of His heart!
- b) If you understood these things, you would have recognized that when one command is transgressed in order to fulfill another command, which takes precedent in the moment, the “violator” is guiltless (as if they have transgressed no command)!
- c) *Why is the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath?* Not because He has taught us how to

violate it, but because he has taught us how to keep it with the heart of the Father!

(3) The Father's Heart: Pay attention, be sensitive to God's Heart for people

(a) I perceive that you are very religious...

1. You must catch the brilliance here.

a) Paul is addressing a group of pagans in Greece.

b) But, he also recognizes that they consider themselves highly spiritual.

c) They worship many gods, and to ensure they don't miss one, they have even erected a statue to an unknown god.

d) Paul acknowledges their spiritual propensity, thus connecting with their hearts, and then he tells them that he has good news for them.

e) He knows who the unknown god is, the God they don't know.

f) Then, he introduces them to the Lord of all Creation, Yahweh, and his son Y'shua. (See Acts 17:16-33)

(b) All things to all men by all means...for the Gospel's sake!

1. Again, you must appreciate Paul's brilliance.

- a) Recognize the context. What is he saying?
- b) He connects with people on a heart level.
- c) He ensures that people know that he understands them, and has empathy for them.
- d) He does this because it opens their hearts for the Gospel.
- e) He is certain to clarify for us that he is NOT saying he is without law to the lawless, and that he is always under God's laws.
- f) The big takeaway is simply that he wants to connect with people, so they can hear the message of the gospel, instead of repelling people with religion and legalism.

(c) The Law of Liberty

1. See Romans 14:1-15 to understand the liberty we have in Christ.
  - a) In it we learn that the welfare of a brother takes precedence over our own liberty!
  - b) What is liberty? The freedom, power, and knowledge to obey God, and the wisdom to know when our brother's needs are the priority in the moment!



- c) When you study the context of Romans 14, you will come to realize that the conflict Paul is resolving goes two ways.
- d) Those weak in the faith do not have enough knowledge about God's laws to make informed decisions about their food and the rules God has placed in the Torah. They can't recognize clean from unclean meat so they choose to eat vegetables only.
- e) Those who are mature in the faith know the difference. However, even though knowing gives you liberty to make a choice, if that choice causes another brother to stumble, because they do not share that same liberty, then you are better off eating only vegetables with them, so they do not stumble, believing they might be eating something unclean.
- f) Once they become mature in the faith, they will know the difference.
- g) Conversely, those who cannot distinguish clean from unclean, should refrain from judging those who Do.

h) In other words, in all matters, the heart of God is that we prefer one another.

### **C. Healing on the Sabbath**

(1) Doing Good on the Sabbath

(a) Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?

1. Y'shua again wants to demonstrate what it means to be the Lord of the Sabbath—one who masters the heart of the Father!

- a) He finds a man with a withered hand in the synagogue. And again He wants to challenge the religious leaders and their prevailing legalism. He asks, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"
- b) He compares men to animals and how everyone knows any human with a heart would help a hurting animal—even if it was on the Sabbath.
- c) Why? Because it should be obvious that there is no law that would prevent a man from doing good on the Sabbath—even if doing that good deed actually violates a true Sabbath prohibition.
- d) In other words, the welfare of a man supersedes Sabbath Law.
- e) And if you had your pulse on God's heart, you'd know that!

- f) So, Y'shua healed the man and the religious leaders were incensed and wanted to execute Him —such hypocrisy.
- g) Why would Y'shua create such controversy... AGAIN to show that... “The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.” Matthew 12:8

(2) Apologetics when one Law is in conflict with another...

(a) Knowing the heart of God... Sabbath vs. Circumcision

(b) The controversy: essential clarification about the Law.

1. When one Law is in conflict with another, you must discern the heart of God on the matter.

a) In other words, when keeping one command will cause you to break another, you must choose which one is the “priority in the moment.”

b) When you do, it's as if you did not break the command that you chose to violate, because you honored the higher command in the moment.

c) The opportunity to keep the Sabbath is WEEKLY, the opportunity to circumcise on the eighth day is ONE TIME! What would you do?

d) Y'shua's emphasis on priorities was not an annulment of the law, but instead the proper application of the Law.

e) *“Y’shua did not come to loosen or halt the law, but to fully preach it.” Matthew 5:17*

#### **D. The Chosen Servant**

(1) He has His eyes on the Gentiles

(a) Y’shua does everything with prophecy in mind!

1. Y’shua sensed the violence in their hearts, so He withdrew and many people followed Him—He healed them all.

a) Yet, as was His custom to date, He warned everyone to keep the miracles a secret (for now).

b) Why? To fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah 42:1-4!

c) And what is the significance of that particular prophecy?

1) Y’shua is the Father’s beloved pleasing Servant who has His Father’s Spirit.

2) He is eventually going after the Gentiles to bring them into His family, and He knows that many Jews (at first) will not accept Him!

3) The Parable of the Wedding Feast teaches precisely how Israel will first reject Y’shua, thus opening the invitation to the Gentiles.

4) In short... the original invitees (Israel) turn down the invitation of the King, so he invites everyone else (Gentiles) to the wedding.

(2) Prophecy: Matthew 12:18-21 & Isaiah 42:1-4

(a) Line-by-Line Comparison

1. **Matthew 12:18 & Isaiah 42:1**

a) Y'shua is His Father's delight and has His heart for the Gentiles!

2. **Matthew 12:19 & Isaiah 42:2**

a) Y'shua will not force anyone to hear His voice! It must happen naturally to separate authentic hearts from imposters.

3. **Matthew 12:20 & Isaiah 42:3**

a) Nothing will be forced at all, until it is time to declare final justice!

4. **Matthew 12:21 & Isaiah 42:4**

a) And it is in verse 21 that Y'shua makes His prophetic exclamation!

b) The Gentiles will come to Him!

c) What does that mean? Justice will be established in the earth and even the Gentiles (the coastlands) will come under His law.

d) All will be united under one God and one law.

- e) \*It's the law that drives us to Christ, and once saved by grace through faith, it's grace that empowers us to obey it!
- (b) What follows in Isaiah was precisely Y'shua's ministry and ours!
  - 1. Israel's rejection of the Messiah so His focus could turn to the Gentiles was all part of God's plan!

## **Summary: EGREGIOUS ACCUSATIONS**

### **2. A House in Conflict**

#### **A. A House Divided**

- (1) Don't make the same mistake these religious people make!
  - (a) He who is not with Me is against Me!
    - 1. The multitudes were amazed and believed He could be, "the Son of David."
      - a) The Pharisees are again incensed and this time accuse Him in their minds of essentially practicing witchcraft.
      - b) Unfortunately for them Y'shua can read minds!
      - c) He enlightens them to the inconsistency in their thinking... Any organization, and any two people, will fracture if there is division within.

- d) Y'shua questions them about how He could have cast out the demon if He and the demon were on the same team?
- e) He rebukes the religious leaders AGAIN... You know, when you point a finger, you have three pointing back at you; you think this about Me because it is true about you!
- f) The truth is that I have authority over demons because I have the Spirit of God and His kingdom has come.
- g) Learn this lesson:
  - 1) You cannot enter a man's house and plunder it unless you first subdue the man of the house.
  - 2) That is what you just witnessed.
  - 3) I entered Satan's domain, bound him, and took what he possessed (the man's soul) for Myself!
  - 4) You can't remain neutral. You're either on My side of this conflict, or the Devil's side.
  - 5) If you don't collect souls with Me, they will just get lost in the wind.

## **B. The Unforgivable Sin**

(1) You've gone TOO FAR!

(a) Y'shua delivers one of His most difficult messages...

1. He teaches us that there is a type of sin that cannot be forgiven.
  - a) He calls it blasphemy against (or speaking against) the Holy Spirit.
  - b) For clarity, it is not that there is such a sin that is too horrible to forgive; rather that there is such a heart that has become too dark to repent.
  - c) \*For our purpose today know this: when your heart has become so dark that you actually give credit to the devil for the work of the Holy Spirit, you have crossed over to the realm in which repentance has become impossible.

### **C. Treasure of the Heart**

- (1) The Diagnosis: fruit never lies!
  - (a) Bad trees yield bad fruit and good trees yield good fruit.
    1. Y'shua points to the obvious evil of religious leaders, who are incapable of saying anything good.
      - a) The only thing that can exit their mouths is what is truly in their hearts.
        - 1) Good men have stored good things in their hearts and thus produce good fruit.
        - 2) Evil men have stored evil things in their hearts and thus produce bad fruit.



- b) And be warned, you will be held accountable for every word you utter. Your words are the fruit of what is really inside of you. They are very evidence of you being either justified or condemned.

## **Summary: OBSTINATE HEARTS**

### **3. No Room for Change**

#### **A. The Sign of the Prophet Jonah**

##### (1) Three Days AND Three Nights

- (a) The Disease of Religionship: one denomination at time—Heavy Laden instead of Revelation; a Yoke of Bondage instead of Freedom!

1. The religious leaders had not witnessed enough; the revelation about God's heart was not enough; the prophecy was not enough, even the warning about a sin that cannot be forgiven, still not enough—show us a sign, they demand!

- a) “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign and there will be only one,” ...the sign of the prophet Jonah.
- b) Jonah was swallowed by a great fish and was “entombed” deep in its gut for three days and three nights—then he was released.

- c) Y'shua will also be entombed three days and three nights before He is released.
  - 1) Ironically multiple generations of Christians, even to the present day, cannot count three days and three nights in their death, burial and resurrection narrative.
  - 2) The sign of Jonah has eluded them, even as it did those trapped in religionship in the first century—what Y'shua called an evil and adulterous generation!
- d) Nineveh, a city of horrific paganism repented at the preaching of Jonah, and he was just a prophet (and a reluctant prophet at that), yet they wouldn't repent, even though they were standing before the Messiah Himself.
- e) The queen of the South refers to the Queen of Sheba, who came to check out if Solomon's wisdom and wealth were legitimate. She witnessed the truth and believed.
- f) And Solomon cannot compare with the Messiah—yet He is not enough for you!
- g) In fact, the Queen of Sheba experienced more than she was promised. (See I Kings 10:1-13)

## **B. Open Doors**

### (1) Demonic Strongholds

(a) If you don't fill your heart with God...

1. If you are delivered from the demonic strongholds in your life, and you don't replace those influences with Godly ones, you remain unprotected.

a) It is likely they will all return right through the open door, but in a much greater degree.

b) You will even be at risk of ending worse off than you started.

c) That is what it will be like for this wicked generation.

## **C. The Will of the Father**

### (1) Faith is like cement!

(a) True Family

1. The chapter ends as Y'shua teaches us that your faith family lines are ultimately more important than your blood family lines.

a) The DNA test to find your faith family members is this: Do they do the will of God?

b) Your true family are those who share your faith. Blood is thicker than water, but faith is like cement!

## **D. Relationship with the King!**

- (1) Religionship or Relationship: Context is Everything!
  - (a) Even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect...
    1. Maybe Paul's most distinctive words displaying how the ministry of the Holy Spirit (grace through faith) and the laws of God work together, and how the law without the Spirit can only lead to condemnation and death. Pay attention closely!
  - (b) Let's take it step-by-step (so you can learn relationship instead of religionship)!
    1. The law is a ministry of death when all you have is words on a stone.
    2. And even with that being true, the law was still glorious.
    3. How is that possible? Because our inability to uphold the law, without God's power, points us to Christ! In other words, the more you are aware of your sin, the more you are in need of a savior.
    4. So, if the law ministry (the ministry that pointed toward condemnation) was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry of the Spirit?
    5. One glorious ministry: designed to condemn

6. One more glorious ministry: imparts righteousness
7. When you compare the two, it's as if the first is not glorious at all (even though we know that the law is spiritual, and it is we who are carnal, buried in sin—Romans 7:14)
8. The law is passing away—eventually when heaven and earth pass away (Matthew 5:17-18) and when we are no longer children in need of a tutor, or guardians and stewards (Galatians 4:1-2).
9. So, the law was glorious, even though it would one day be unnecessary, for those who have Christ fully formed in them (Galatians 4:19).
10. But, even right now (then and now) people remain blinded to understanding the Old Testament, and how the Law and the Spirit work together.
11. It should make complete sense with Christ in your life. (So why do Christians, even today, not see how the two work together?)
12. If we understand how the Law and the Spirit work together, we have liberty. We are saved by grace through faith **for good works** (Ephesians 2:8-10). It is for **that freedom** that Christ has set us free (Galatians 5:1)!

13. Knowing this is how you are transformed into His image from glory to glory.

14. In other words, it is how Christ becomes fully formed in you (Galatians 4:19)!

(2) Religionship or Relationship: Context is Everything!

(a) Do not be in a hurry to leave the king's presence!

1. Yes! Obey the King's commands—that's your duty!

2. Yes! Stay in His presence—that's your power!

3. Yes! His word is supreme—you will be blessed for obeying Him!

4. Yes! You must know how your relationship with God and your obedience to God work together.

a) **There is a proper time and procedure** for every matter—You know that God's laws apply to every situation!

b) The wise heart **knows the proper time and procedure** for every matter—You know when and how to apply God's laws in each situation!

c) A man who does not know these things becomes weighed down (heavy laden and yoked) by misery (legalism and religion).

“COME TO ME, ALL YOU WHO LABOR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST. TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU AND LEARN FROM ME, FOR I AM GENTLE AND LOWLY IN HEART, AND YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. FOR MY YOKE IS EASY AND MY BURDEN IS LIGHT.””

MATTHEW 11:28-30 NKJV

**QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION** (PLEASE REFER TO THE SERMON NOTES TO HELP NAVIGATE THESE QUESTIONS)

**1. In Matthew 11:28-30, Y’shua offers us rest from hard yokes and heavy burdens.**

A. In order to understand what that means, please explore Galatians 2:4, 16; 5:1 & Acts 15:1-11. Then, explain what the hard yoke and heavy burden must be (while also considering Matthew 5:17-20).

**2. Read and re-read the letter to the Galatians and refer to the sermon notes to help.**

A. Why might we consider the letter to the Galatians the definitive word on legalism (the belief that works are needed for your salvation)?

B. In light of this, define “works of law.” (See Romans 2:13 and 3:20 to help.)

- C. Explain why if you are of the works of the law are under the curse. (See Galatians 3:10 and Deuteronomy 27:26)
- D. Use Galatians 3:24-25 and Galatians 4:1-2, 19 to explain why the law still has value!

**3. Read Matthew 12:1-14 and consider the Father's heart when there seems to be conflicts in applying His Laws.**

- A. Use Acts 17:22-23; I Corinthians 9:19-23; Romans 14:1-15 and John 7:20-24 to explain God's heart about how to apply His laws in different circumstances.
- B. Then re-read Matthew 12:1-14 and explain why Y'shua taught what He did.

**4. Compare the prophecy referred to in Matthew 12:18-21 to its source in Isaiah 42:1-4**

- A. How does Isaiah 42:4 better explain is Matthew 12:21?
- B. How does Isaiah 42:4 show that we will all be united under one God and one law?
- C. How does Isaiah 42:4 support this statement? "It's the law that drives us to Christ, and once saved by grace through faith, we are empowered to obey it!"

**5. What is Y'shua's response when religious leaders accuse Him of consorting with demons Matthew 12:22-30?**



- A. How might their obstinate hearts to make such an accusation be related to the honorific possibility of being guilty of what He teaches in Matthew 12:31-32?
- B. How are we to discern if leaders are worthy of following?  
(See Matthew 12:33-37)

**6. A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign...**

- A. What is the only sign Y'shua will give them? (Matthew 12:38-42)
- B. How is that sign in conflict with the modern Christian narrative of the death, burial and resurrection fitting into a Friday night to Sunday morning?

**7. Read Matthew 12:43-45 and II Peter 2:20-21...**

- A. Write a short essay comparing the two passages.
- B. According to Matthew 12:46-50, who is your true family?

**8. Read II Corinthians 3:7-18... (Use the sermon notes to help!)**

- A. In light of everything you learned in this lesson, explain the proper balance between the Law and the Spirit. (Hint: see Romans 7:9-14)

**9. Read II Ecclesiastes 8:1-6... (Use the sermon notes to help!)**

- A. In light of everything you learned in this lesson, explain the proper distinction between religiosity and relationship.