

# Matthew 12:43

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

## Analysis

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**When the unclean spirit is gone out** (τὸ ἀκάθαρτον πνεῦμα ἐξέλθῃ, to akatharton pneuma exelthē)—Jesus transitions from condemning unbelief to warning against mere reformation without regeneration. The akatharton pneuma ('unclean spirit') represents demonic possession, but the parable applies to any spiritual cleansing without filling by God's Spirit.

**Walketh through dry places** (διέρχεται δι' ἀνύδρων τόπων, dierchetai di' anydrōn topōn)—Ancient belief held that demons inhabited waterless, desolate regions (cf. Isaiah 13:21; 34:14). The spirit seeks anapausis (ἀνάπαυσις, 'rest') but finds none—demons are restless until they possess and destroy.

## Historical Context

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Spoken in the context of accusations that Jesus cast out demons by Beelzebub. The parable warns that external reform (religious activity, moral improvement) without Spirit-regeneration leaves one vulnerable to worse demonic oppression.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. Have you experienced moral reformation without true regeneration—a 'swept house' but still empty of God's presence?
2. What does this passage reveal about the danger of stopping at removing sin rather than filling your life with Christ?

## Interlinear Text

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Ὅταν δὲ τὸ ἀκάθαρτον πνεῦμα ἐξέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ  
When G1161 G3588 the unclean spirit is gone out of G3588  
G3752 G169 G4151 G1831 G575

ἀνθρώπου διέρχεται δι' ἀνύδρων τόπων ζητοῦν  
a man he walketh through dry places seeking G2212  
G444 G1330 G1223 G504 G5117

ἀνάπαυσιν καὶ οὐχ εὑρίσκει  
rest and none findeth G2147  
G372 G2532 G3756

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 41:18** (Parallel theme): I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

**Job 1:7** (Kingdom): And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

**Job 2:2** (Kingdom): And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

**Matthew 8:29** (Parallel theme): And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

**Acts 8:13** (Parallel theme): Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

**1 Peter 5:8** (Kingdom): Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

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