

# A MINISTRY FOR HUNGRY SAINTS

## THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

✝ THE BOOK OF LUKE

### WHAT WE MOST ASSUREDLY BELIEVE

WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRIES, ASSOCIATED

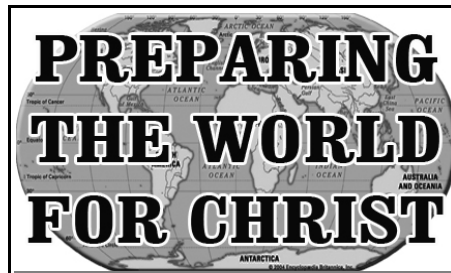
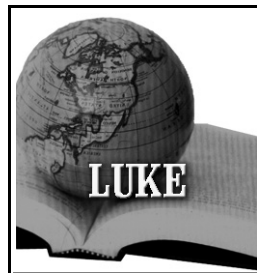
*An overview of the Gospel of Luke, by Given O. Blakely*

LESSON NUMBER 40

COMMENTARY ON: 11:29-44

### THE DENUNCIATION OF A GENERATION

When revealing His glory to Moses, God mentioned "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me" (Ex 20:5; 34:7). The same thing was mentioned by Moses in Numbers 14:18,30, and Deuteronomy 5:9. There are other declarations of this by the Son of God Himself, which will be addressed in this lesson. This all comes under the general heading of sowing and reaping (Job 4:8; Psa 126:5; Prov 1:31; Hos 8:7; 10:12; Rom 2:6; 2 Cor 9:6; Gal 6:7). This is an aspect of God's nature that is not being declared today. As a consequence, there is a prevailing ignorance of the subject, and some outright disagreement with it when it is mentioned. In our text, Jesus speaks to a generation, which is generally considered to be a forty-year period. A generation of Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty years containing some innocent people – yet they wandered.



Since May, 1993, a ministry instituted for the encouragement of believers in Christ





## The Book of Luke, 6/10/2016

### Lesson Number 40



#### 54 VERSIONS OF THE ENGLISH SCRIPTURES

ABP=Apostolic Bible Polyglot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polyglot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEB=Common English Bible (2011); CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), EMTV=English Majority Text (2002); ERV=English Revised Version (1885), ETH=Etheridge Translation (1849); ETRV=Easy to Read (1999), ESV=English Stand Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT=Goodspeed (1923), GWN=God's Word (1995), IE= International English (1973), NIRV=New Int'l Readers Version (1998); ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), JUB=Jubilee Bible (2003); KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV=Literat Translation of the Bible (1976), LEW=Lewis Translation (1896); LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MGI=Peshitta Translation (2006); MIT=Idiomatic Version; MKJV= Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NOY=George Noyes Bible (1869); NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1595), ROT=Rotheram Bible (1999); RPTE=Revised Patriarchal Greek Orthodox New Testament; RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakj (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862)

#### GREEK LEXICON LEGEND

FRIBERG; LOUW-NIDA; LIDDELL SCOTT; THAYER; VGNT GREEK DICTIONARY; GINGRICH

A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

PERSUADED OF THE NECESSITY OF KNOWING THE CERTAINTY OF THE THINGS WE BELIEVE, LUKE MAKES US MORE FIRM BY BUTTRESSING OUR FAITH, AND CONFIRMING WE HAVE NOT EMBRACED FABLES.

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

# THE DENUNCIATION OF A GENERATION

LUKE 11:29 "And when the people were gathered thick together, He began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. <sup>30</sup> For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. <sup>31</sup> The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. <sup>32</sup> The men of Nineve shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. <sup>33</sup> No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light. <sup>34</sup> The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. <sup>35</sup> Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness. <sup>36</sup> If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light. <sup>37</sup> And as He spake, a certain Pharisee besought Him to dine with him: and He went in, and sat down to meat. <sup>38</sup> And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that He had not first washed before dinner. <sup>39</sup> And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. <sup>40</sup> Ye fools, did not He that made that which is without make that which is within also? <sup>41</sup> But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you. <sup>42</sup> But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. <sup>43</sup> Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets. <sup>44</sup> Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them." ..... Luke 11:29-44

## INTRODUCTION

### A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

When revealing His glory to Moses, God mentioned *"visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me"* (Ex 20:5; 34:7). The same thing was mentioned by Moses in Numbers 14:18,30, and

Deuteronomy 5:9. There are other declarations of this by the Son of God Himself, which will be addressed in this lesson.

This all comes under the general heading of sowing and reaping (Job 4:8; Psa 126:5; Prov 1:31; Hos 8:7; 10:12;

Rom 2:6; 2 Cor 9:6; Gal 6:7). This is an aspect of God's nature that is not being declared today. It reflects an inviolable principle that applies to both good and evil. *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap"* (Gal 6:7). Other versions read, *"God is not made sport*

Jesus delivers a scathing rebuke to an entire generation, together with those who had been leading it – Given O. Blakely

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of," <sup>BBE</sup> "no one makes a fool of God," <sup>CJB</sup> "You can never make a fool out of God," <sup>GWN</sup> "You can't outsmart God," <sup>NIRV</sup> "you cannot mock the justice of God," <sup>NLT</sup> "you can't ignore God and get away with it," <sup>LIVING</sup> "God is not to be scoffed at," <sup>WEYMOUTH</sup> "God is not to be ridiculed," <sup>ISV</sup> "God is not to be sneered at," <sup>ABP</sup> and "God will not allow Himself to be sneered at (scorned, disdained, or mocked by mere pretensions or professions, or by His precepts being set aside." <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

These things are not being heard by the religious masses of our time. As a consequence, there is a prevailing ignorance of the subject, and some outright disagreement with it when it is

mentioned. In our text, Jesus speaks to a **generation**, which is generally considered to be a forty-year period. An entire generation of Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty years, having some innocent people – yet they also wandered. Of that generation, all who had refused to enter Canaan when they had been commanded to do so, fell in the wilderness. That entire generation continued to wander until "there was not left a man **of them**, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun" (Num 26:65). The number of men that fell was 603,550 (Num 1:45-46). Only twelve men spied out the land, with ten of them giving a report of unbelief, and the rest believing that report. The givers of the report, and all that all of the fighting men that believed them, were forced to die in the wilderness – and the rest of the people had to endure those forty years of desert trial (Deut 8:2). God said of that generation: "Forty years long was I grieved with **this generation**, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways." (Psa 95:10).

Accenting that God had not rejected the whole of the nation of Israel, the Spirit testifies, "Wherefore I was grieved with **that generation**, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways" (Heb 3:10). In the Judges we read of two different generations in Israel – the one during Joshua's leadership, and the one after it: "And also **all that generation** were gathered unto their fathers: and **there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which He had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim**" (Judg 2:11).

Noah was seen as "righteous" in his generation: "And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me **in this generation**" (Gen 7:1).

Solomon wrote of generations: "There is **a generation** that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.

*There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness. There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up. There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men"* (Prov 30:11-14).

It is my persuasion that we are living in a rejected generation, and that the only reason it remains is that there is a remnant of God's people within it – like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in their generations, and David and those aligned with him in his generation (Acts 13:36). There was also a preserving remnant in the spiritually depraved times of Malachi (Mal 3:16).

During the time when Israel had retrogressed to a point where Elijah thought, according to appearance, that he was the only one left, God said, "Yet I have left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (1 Kgs 19:18).

This is particularly relevant for our time, because this generation is, frankly speaking, not an acceptable one. It engages in manners of living that are in sharp conflict with the faith that justifies. It has cultured preachers and teachers who bear little resemblance to men of God, and have little to say. In fact, these men have cultured a generation that sets a new lower standard for both understanding and purity of life. It has inducted an era of spiritual powerlessness.

I am persuaded that if Jesus were to speak to Christians as a whole, He would address them much as He addressed the Jewish generation of His time.

If we give heed to this text, we will see remarkable similarities to our present generation. Religious leaders will have the same traits as those of whom Jesus speaks. In some respects, it will be found to be even worse. We have witnessed the begetting of a faithless generation, and God has taken note of it.

## THE PEOPLE WERE GATHERED THICK TOGETHER

LUKE 11:29A **"And when the people were gathered thick together . . ."**

Other versions read, *"thickly gathered together,"* NKJV *"the crowds were increasing,"* NASB *"multitudes were gathering together unto him,"* ASV *"the people crowded around him,"* CJB *"the crowds thronged together,"* DARBY *"the multitudes running together,"* DOUAY *"the crowds were mobbing him,"* MIT *"the crowds grew larger,"* NIRV *"the crowd were beginning to throng about him,"* WEYMOUTH *"crowded closely around him,"* PHILLIPS *and "the crowds were*

*[increasingly] thronging Him."* AMPLIFIED

The words *"gathered thick together"* are translated from a word meaning **"TO GATHER TOGETHER (TO OTHERS ALREADY PRESENT),"** THAYER **"COLLECT MORE, ASSEMBLE BESIDES,"** FRIBERG **"COLLECT BESIDES OR IN ADDITION,"** GINGRICH **AND "A CROWD MASSING LARGER AND LARGER."** DANK

This was not an assembly of people, with some leaving and others taking their place. Rather, the number that were present keep increasing, with the people being pressed together, each

one trying to get as close to Jesus as they could.

Few people in history have ever had people gather and throng them as Jesus did. There have been occasions when throngs became crazed with some form of entertainment, and were even trampled to death in the crowd. But nothing remotely like this took place in our text. No one has ever been trampled to death getting to Jesus – even if their motives were something less than honorable. Nevertheless, Jesus will speak plainly to them.

## THIS IS AN EVIL GENERATION

" 11:29B **He began to say, This is an evil generation . . ."**

**HE BEGAN TO SAY**

*" He began to say . . ."*

Other versions read, *"Jesus said,"* NIV *"Yeshua went on to say,"* CJB *"He said to them,"* NAB *"Jesus spoke to them,"* NIRV *"He addressed them,"* NJB *"He preached them this sermon,"* LIVING *"He proceeded to say,"* WEYMOUTH *"He continued,"* PHILLIPS *and "He took a fresh tack."* MESSAGE

Jesus had been speaking to a group of people, among whom were some who said He was casting out demons by Beelzebub, the prince of demons. A woman had shouted out a blessing on Mary, and the Lord announced who the ones were who would really be blessed. Now, an additional body of people began to gather around him. We might view the word *"thick"* as many people deep – almost piled on one another. This was a situation that would set modern preachers to salivating, so to speak. The crowd keeps growing and growing, and it is all entered in Jesus of Nazareth, considered by many to be a local Prophet and miracle worker. How will

Jesus speak to this swelling crowd?

**AN EVIL GENERATION**

*" . . . This is an evil generation . . ."*

Other versions read, *"wicked generation,"* NASB *"The people of today are evil,"* NIRV *"evil nation,"* TNT *"These are evil times, with evil people,"* LIVING *"The people living today are evil,"* IE *"The present generation is a wicked generation,"* WEYMOUTH *"This is a wicked age,"* WILLIAMS *"The mood of this age is all wrong,"* MESSAGE *"This present generation is a wicked one."* AMPLIFIED

The word translated *"generation"* {ghen-eh-ah} is **not** a word related to time – as several versions suggest (NIRV, LIVING, WILLIAMS, MESSAGE, GWN, IE). The meaning of this word (*"generation"*) is as follows: **"FATHERED, BIRTH, NATIVITY 2) THAT WHICH HAS BEEN BEGOTTEN, MEN OF THE SAME STOCK, A FAMILY,"** STRONG'S **"BEGETTING, BIRTH, NATIVITY,"** THAYER **"STRICTLY BIRTH, THE CIRCUMSTANCES RELATING TO ONE'S ORIGIN,"** FRIBERG **"PEOPLE LIVING AT THE SAME TIME AND BELONGING TO THE SAME REPRODUCTIVE AGE-CLASS,"** LOUW-NIDA **"OF THE PERSONS IN A FAMILY."** LIDDELL-SCOTT

Jesus is referring to a generation of Jews – a generation of Abraham's natural seed. They were a generation

that had been created and reserved for blessing, but now they were evil—i.e. **As a nation** they were evil. As a generation they were evil. There were exceptions, like the twelve, and those who remained with Jesus, but those people did not reflect the traits of that generation, and technically, they were not members of it. **In order for anyone to survive that generation, they had to rise above it, and be separate from it.** That is what Jesus was calling people to do when He said, *"If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me"* (Matt 16:24). *"Whoever serves Me must follow Me, and where I am, there will My servant be also. Whoever serves Me, the Father will honor"* NRSV (John 12:26).

Jesus referred to the generation of Jews alive at that time as *"this generation"* fourteen times – and He never said anything good about it (Matt 11:16; 12:41-42; 23:36; Matt 8:12; Lk 7:31; 11:29-32, 50-51; 17:25).

If the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, would stand up among the people and say these words today, I do not doubt for a moment that He would be publically rebuked, and cries of opposition would be heard.

Jesus delivers a scathing rebuke to an entire generation, together with those who had been leading it – Given O. Blakely

Nevertheless, that is an altogether proper assessment of the generation of our day.

There is a generation of evil people and unbelievers that go back to Cain. They are, as Solomon affirms, *"a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother. There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness. There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up. There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men"* (Prov 30:11-14).

The people to whom Jesus was speaking, although they were Jews by nature, were members of that decadent generation, which generation continues until this very day. Those who are part

of this generation are referred to as:

- ⇒ WITHOUT VALUE: *"Chaff"* (Matt 3:12)
- ⇒ UNACCEPTABLE: *"Goats"* (Matt 25:32)
- ⇒ REJECTED: *"Reprobate silver"* (Jer 6:30)
- ⇒ CANNOT BARE FRUIT: *"Tares"* (Matt 13:30)
- ⇒ SATAN'S OFFSPRING: *"Children of the wicked one"* (Matt 13:38)
- ⇒ UNUSEABLE: *"Bad fishes"* (Matt 13:48)
- ⇒ UNCHANGEABLE NATURE: *"The wicked"* (Gen 18:23; Matt 13:49).

These are all known to God now. They are not intended to be fully known to men during their tenure in this world. They will all be revealed and judged on the day of judgment. Their lives will be an undeniable testimony to their rejection.

The objective of every professing

**"Christian" is to make sure for themselves they are not in this category.** Their salvation is not to be assumed. That is the reason for the sobering admonition, *"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"* (2 Cor 13:5). The Amplified Bible reads, *"Examine and test and evaluate your own selves to see whether you are holding to your faith and showing the proper fruits of it. Test and prove yourselves [not Christ]. Do you not yourselves realize and know [thoroughly by an ever-increasing experience] that Jesus Christ is in you—unless you are [counterfeits] disapproved on trial and rejected?"*

That is, to say the very least, a sobering commission! It is not to be neglected as though it was never said.

## NO SIGN BUT THE SIGN OF JONAH THE PROPHET

<sup>11:29C</sup> ***They seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. <sup>30</sup> For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.***

### THEY SEEK A SIGN

*"They seek a sign . . ."*

Other versions read, *"It asks for a miraculous sign,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"it is looking for a sign,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"It asks for a sign,"* <sup>CJB</sup> *"It demands a sign,"* <sup>CSB</sup> *"requireth a sign,"* <sup>ETH</sup> *"They keep asking for some strange happening in the skies [to prove I am the Messiah,"* <sup>LIVING</sup> *"They ask for proof from God,"* <sup>IE</sup> *"It craves a sign,"* <sup>ISV</sup> *"It is looking for a spectacular sign,"* <sup>WILLIAMS</sup> *"a sign it seeks anxiously,"* <sup>ABP</sup> *"They ask for a miracle,"* <sup>GNB</sup> *"Everybody's looking for proof,"* <sup>MESSAGE</sup> *"it seeks and demands a sign (miracle)."* <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

Keep in mind, this is said of *"an evil generation."* This is not something someone with an honest and good heart requests after being confronted with Jesus Christ, or hearing God's Word

concerning Him. No person of integrity has ever asked for more proof of the legitimacy of Jesus Himself, those who have represented Him, or those who have been exposed to Scripture.

The reason for this circumstance is that Divine influence always accompanies the preaching of the Gospel whether it was done by the Son of God Himself, or those whom He has sent. There is a *"power"* associated with the Gospel that has to do with persuading men of its truth (Rom 1:16). The Holy Spirit works to convict men of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-10). God is working behind the scenes, drawing those who are in any way exposed to His Son (John 6:44,65). He opens men's hearts, so they can listen attentively to what is being said about His Son, and respond in faith to it (Acts 16:14). He sends forth messengers to particular people (1 Cor 3:5) – men who deliver a message that is impregnated with Divine power (Rom 10:14-17). This circumstance means no additional proofs are needed.

However, all of that power is negated by unbelief, which disqualifies a person from the salvation of God (Matt 13:58; 17:20; Mk 16:16; John 3:18,36; Rom 4:20; 11:20; 2 Cor 4:4; Heb 3:12; 1 John 5:10).

Since the entrance of an academic Christianity, and special professed scholars who are neither inspired nor sent by God, there has been considerable effort expended to talk people into believing. **Apologetics, hermeneutics, efforts to prove God created the world, etc., have caused nothing like what happened on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41), or when the resurrection of Christ was powerfully preached (Acts 4:4).** It has not produced believing households like that of Cornelius (Acts 10:7,44-48; Lydia (Acts 16:14-15), the Philippian jailor (Acts 16:31-34), and Crispus (Acts 18:8). This is not to mention the entire city of Samaria (Acts 8:5,12,14).

Our day is marked by other demands that are academic sisters to

the Jews seeking for a sign.

- ⇒ Establishing the authenticity of the Scriptures.
- ⇒ Seeking proof that God created the heavens and the earth.
- ⇒ Establishing the necessity of baptism.
- ⇒ Establishing a principle of interpretation.
- ⇒ Answering critics who say there are contradictions in Scripture.
- ⇒ The battle over original manuscripts.

These are all matters that are driven by a lack of persuasion of what the Scripture actually says about itself.

- ⇒ All Scripture was given by inspiration of God (2 Tim 3:16-17).
- ⇒ The Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35).
- ⇒ Scripture was written for our learning (Rom 15:4).
- ⇒ The Lord opens men's understanding so they can understand the Scripture (Lk 24:45).

It is true that the whole matter has been complicated by a flood of differing translations – but that is all of man's doing. In the beginning of the day of salvation, there was also the presentation of other gospels (2 Cor 11:4; Gal 1:6), another Jesus, and another spirit (2 Cor 11:4). There were many false prophets (2 Pet 2:1; 1 John 4:1).

#### HOW WERE THOSE EARLY BELIEVERS TO DISTINGUISH THE TRUTH?

What were those early believers to do with these erroneous perspectives of the Gospel? How did Christ's emissaries teach the people to go about determining what was true? Was there a principle of interpretation that was promoted? Indeed not! The inspired direction was straightforward, and it requires faith and insight.

- ⇒ **TEST THE SPIRITS.** *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1).*

⇒ **GROW UP INTO MATURITY.** *"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph 4:14-15).*

⇒ **OBTAIN SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING.** *"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col 1:9-10).*

Take such a practical matter as the flood of differing translations of Scripture. Some of them are confusing. This is because they contain the wisdom of men, who have imposed their opinions upon Scripture, doing so in the name of scholarship. These literary representations must be tested and tried, just as surely as the false prophets of the first century had to be tested. If people do not know how to do that, then they must come to the point where they can do what God has said needs to be done.

This will be greatly impacted by how closely a person is following Christ. Jesus is leading us to glory (Heb 2:10), and that involves the avoidance of traps and snares as well as the recognition of truth and its unquestionable advantages.

**THERE SHALL NO SIGN BE GIVEN IT**  
*" . . . and there shall no sign be given it . . . "*

This is an unalterable decision. For those who do not believe the record God has given of His Son (1 John 5:10-11), **no further proof will be given.** There is no way around the necessity of believing what Christ has said! This is because those who demand additional proof are **not honest** – they are

unbelieving. They were an "evil generation."

#### THE SIGN OF JONAH THE PROPHET

*" . . . and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet . . . "*

MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT is more thorough: *"But He answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt 12:39-40).*

MARK READS, *"There shall no sign be given unto this generation" (Mark 8:12).*

Other versions of Luke read, *"except Jonah's sign" CEB* *"I will give them is a miracle like that of Jonah, whose experiences proved to the people of Nineveh that God had sent him," LIVING* *"except the Jonah miracle," IE* *"But what happened to Jonah is the only sign you will be given." CEV*

**The sign of Jonah was, then, an unseen sign** – for there were apparently no witnesses to Jonah's exit from the belly of that special fish, created by God for the occasion (Jonah 1:17). I suppose it is possible that the appearance of Jonah was somewhat altered by spending three days in the belly of a fish – but such a point is not made by the Spirit. The book of Jonah records the following: *"And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land. And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey" (Jonah 3:1-3).*

Unless God told them, the people of Nineveh did not know where Jonah was from, how he was in the fishes belly for three days and three nights, or was vomited up on the shore by that

Jesus delivers a scathing rebuke to an entire generation, together with those who had been leading it – Given O. Blakely

fish. They did not know he had come back from a hopeless situation, closely related to death itself. Yet, there was such Divine power in his preaching, that the entire city of Nineveh repented.

### JONAH WAS A SIGN TO THE NINEVITES

*" . . . For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites . . . "*

Jonah himself was the sign, although there is no evidence that the people of Nineveh knew this. **It was his powerful preaching that gave witness to his legitimacy.** You cannot account for the repenting of Nineveh apart from God.

### SO SHALL THE SON OF MAN SHALL BE TO THIS GENERATION

*" . . . so shall also the Son of man*

*be to this generation."*

**Jesus Himself would be a sign to that wicked generation.** Matthew reads, *"For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth"* (Matt 12:40).

There is no record that any person on earth saw Jesus rise from the dead. Only angels knew the resurrection had taken place, and they bore witness to it to a select few (Matt 28:6; John 20:14-17). Only those to whom Jesus revealed Himself knew that He was risen from the dead, and they were commissioned to proclaim it abroad – and they did. The Jews had asked for *"a sign from heaven"* (Lk 11:16), but

here was a sign of one coming back from lower region of the dead – **and no human saw it.** As for the resurrected Christ Himself, only appointed witnesses saw Him (1 Cor 15:4-8).

The fact that Jesus was raised from the dead was, and continues to be, confirmed in **"the power of His resurrection"** (Phil 3:10). Early during the commencement of the church, when the apostles **"with great power"** gave **"witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus,"** **"great grace was upon them all"** (Acts 4:33). That witness was to the early church what Jonah's witness was to the city of Nineveh. The confirmation that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, is realized when the testimony that He is **"risen indeed"** (Lk 24:34) is believed.

## THE QUEEN OF THE SOUTH SHALL RISE UP IN THE JUDGMENT

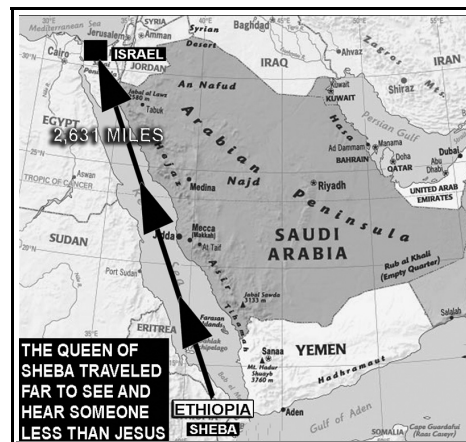
*" 31 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment WITH the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here."*

### THE QUEEN OF THE SOUTH

*"The queen of the south . . ."*

This was **"the queen of Sheba."** She **"heard of the fame of Solomon,"** and **"came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great company, and camels that bare spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart"** (2 Chron 9:1). Solomon **"answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for Solomon that he could not explain it to her"** NKJV (2 Chron 9:2).

It is said of her time with Solomon, **"And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the**



**attendance of his ministers, and their apparel; his cupbearers also, and their apparel; and his ascent by which he went up into the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, It was a true report which I heard in mine own land of thine acts, and of thy wisdom: Howbeit I believed not their words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me: for thou exceedest the fame that I heard. Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before**

**thee, and hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee to set thee on His throne, to be king for the LORD thy God: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice. And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices great abundance, and precious stones: neither was there any such spice as the queen of Sheba gave king Solomon"** (2 Chron 9:3-9).

**Peruse the observations of the queen of Sheba** (2 Chron 9:3-4). See how alert she was. She observed and took due note of:

- ➡ Solomon's wisdom.
- ➡ The house he had built.
- ➡ The meat (food) of his table.
- ➡ The seating NKJV of his servants.
- ➡ The service NKJV of his ministers.
- ➡ The apparel of his ministers.
- ➡ His cupbearers.
- ➡ The apparel of his cupbearers.
- ➡ The entryway NKJV by which he went up into the house of the Lord.

Consider the conclusions she



reached (2 Chron 9:5-8).

- ⇒ It was a true report that she had heard of his acts.
- ⇒ It was a true report she heard of his wisdom.
- ⇒ The half of his greatness had not been told her.
- ⇒ Solomon exceeded the fame she had heard of him.
- ⇒ The men and servants that were continually before him were happy.
- ⇒ The men and servants that were continually before him heard his wisdom.
- ⇒ The Lord delighted in Solomon to set him on His throne to be the king for the Lord his God.
- ⇒ God loved Israel to establish them, forever.
- ⇒ God made him king for judgment and justice.

The queen had heard reports of the wisdom and excellence of Solomon, and went to see for herself if they were true. She found they had been grossly understated, and reflected her insight when seeing the undeniable evidence.

#### IN THE JUDGMENT

*" . . . shall rise up in the judgment WITH the men of this generation, and condemn them . . . "*

In the day of judgment, the queen of Sheba, and the generation to which Jesus ministered will arise and appear at

the same time. There were things they had in common, and they will be judged according to their responses to them.

#### SHE CAME

*" . . . for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon . . . "*

Both the Queen and that generation had heard reports of someone who excelled. The Queen came *"from the ends of the [inhabited] earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon."* AMPLIFIED

Josephus calls her *"A QUEEN OF EGYPT AND ETHIOPIA."* CLIM-1.PAR.6 It is generally considered that she was from Ethiopia, and not the Sheba that was in Egypt. She is said to have come from *"the utmost parts of the earth"* to see and hear Solomon. Egypt was less than 200 miles from Israel, while Ethiopia was over 2,600 miles away. That seems to me to better blend with the text.

#### A GREATER THAN SOLOMON IS HERE

*" . . . and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. "*

A Person that is *"greater than Solomon"* is worthy of people coming a greater distance to be exposed to Him. Some saw it and left all to follow Him (Mk 10:28; Lk 5:28). Saul of Tarsus abandoned a significant religious career

to follow Jesus.

**We are living in a unique period of time – one in which the devil has worked extensively within the framework of Christendom.** Under his diabolical leadership, Jesus is not the One people are hearing about. From the stinking pile of Christendom men are hearing about institutions, programs, social adjustment, health and wealth, and cherished human dogmas. There is little evidence of genuine spiritual life, and therefore promotion, advertisement, purported social expertise, and marital and family proficiency are being held out to the people. Jesus has now been relegated to the backroom of religion, thereby making more room for sectarianism, charlatans, and careers. **But none of these have drawn the interest of people like Jesus did.**

Our Lord observed and commented on the generation to whom He was speaking. **They had given Him significantly less attention than the busy Queen of Sheba had given to Solomon.** Jesus did not view this as an innocent oversight. Their ignoring of the Son of God brought the judgment of heaven against their main city, and their land.

Now, Jesus announces to them that the Queen of Sheba will rise up with them and condemn that generation in the day of judgment. She came further to hear less, and was impressed with seeing what was less.

## THE MEN OF NINEVEH SHALL RISE UP IN THE JUDGMENT

*"<sup>32</sup> The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment WITH this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here."*

Revealing the Divine attitude towards those who reject what is sent from heaven to them, the Lord Jesus continues His blistering rebuke of the generation to whom He has been ministering. This is the real Jesus to which we are being exposed, and we

should not be surprised by His response to skepticism and rejection. Consider the following:

- ⇒ God created man (Gen 1:27; 5:1)
- ⇒ Man was created for His glory (Isa 43:7)
- ⇒ God has been longsuffering (2 Pet 3:9).

**God has given men certain advantages to assist them in seeing themselves and Himself properly:**

- ⇒ The Law (Ga; 3:24-25)
- ⇒ Daily provision (Psa 136:25; 145:15)
- ⇒ The provision of salvation (Heb 2:3).
- ⇒ A Savior to make known the nature of God (Luke 2:11; Acts 5:31).
- ⇒ A Savior to take away sin (Heb 9:26).
- ⇒ A good Gospel (Rom 10:15; 1 Pet 1:12)).
- ⇒ An honest summons to come (Matt 11:28).
- ⇒ Sends preachers (Rom 10:14).

Jesus delivers a scathing rebuke to an entire generation, together with those who had been leading it – Given O. Blakely

Now the Lord Jesus will show that all men have not rejected those sent to them by God. Their example should stimulate men to be sensitive toward the Lord. In fact, He will hold them responsible for doing so.

#### THE MEN OF NINEVEH

*"The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment WITH this generation, and shall condemn it . . ."*

The Lord continues to emphasize that the day of judgment is going to be extensive. All accounts will be settled. Everyone's future and the reason for it will be made clear. Those who have responded to God will be aligned against those who did not. In this case, Jesus will cite the citizens of Nineveh. God sent a messenger to them. He did not bring good news, or glad tidings. He rather delivered the message God had told him to proclaim. That message is referred to as *"the preaching."* The Lord told Jonah, *"Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee"* (Jonah 3:2). Here is the message he delivered – and there was not a spark of hope in it: *"Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown"* (Jonah 3:4).

It is written, *"So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the*

*greatest of them even to the least of them"* (Jonah 3:5). The reason for this action is revealed: *"For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water: But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?"* (Jonah 3:6-9).

God responded when He saw "their works" – *"And God saw THEIR WORKS, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not"* (Jonah 3:10).

#### THEY REPENTED

*" . . . for they repented at the preaching of Jonas . . ."*

Nineveh, so far as we know, had never been in contact with Jonah before. He was from another country, and another race of people. He delivered

a notice from the Living God that the city of Nineveh was going to be destroyed in forty days. He presented no options.

Yet, under the leadership of their king, who was not a worshiper of God, the entire city repented *"at the preaching of Jonah"* – no miracle, no sign, no wonder – **just preaching.**

#### A GREATER THAN JONAH IS HERE

*" . . . and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here."*

The people to whom Jesus was speaking were hearing someone *"greater than Jonah."* He had wrought miracles among them. He had clearly declared the conditions for following Him, and how God would respond to those believing on Him. He had miraculously fed a great multitude of them, doing so out of pure compassion.

Now Jesus announces to them that not only are they answerable to God for rejecting Him, but the Queen of Sheba and the city of Nineveh would judge and condemn them on the day of judgment. I hardly see how a more serious judgment could have been announced! On the day of judgment these people will be exposed, as well as every member of the race of mankind.

## NO MAN PUTS A CANDLE IN A SECRET PLACE

*"<sup>33</sup> No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light."*

This same saying was spoken by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:15), and in His parable of the sower (Lk 8:16). In the Sermon on the Mount, the meaning is that God does not intend for His children to be concealed from the people. In the parable of the Sower, the intent is to confirm that the Word of God, and the

Gospel in particular, is intended to have fruitage that is **seen** by others.

This being true, real life from God cannot be hidden. By virtue of its sharp contrast with the worldly order, it stands out, drawing attention to itself. If professing "Christians" are not seen, it is because there really is no light in them. If they once did display genuine life, yet now do not, they are like salt that has lost its savor, and is *"good for nothing"* and will therefore be discarded (Matt 5:13).

I do not believe this kind of thinking is common in the professed "Christian" community.

#### NO MAN

*"No man, when he hath lighted a candle . . ."*

By saying *"no man,"* Jesus is emphasizing that even men, made in the image of God, would not do what He now mentions. This is an action that defies and contracts all human reasoning. It is something foolish on earth, as well as in heaven.

**PUTTETH IT IN A SECRET PLACE**

*"...putteth it in a secret place..."*

For Jesus to do what these people requested – show them a sign from heaven – it would be like lighting a candle and hiding it from view. This is simply not something Deity would do.

**NEITHER UNDER A BUSHEL**

*"... neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick..."*

It would also make no sense to put a lighted candle under a bushel, limiting the area that was illuminated.

**THAT THEY MAY SEE THE LIGHT**

*"... that they which come in may see the light."*

Here, the purpose of the light is not only to illuminate a particular area, but to draw the attention of others – *"that those who enter may see the light."* <sup>NRSV</sup>

**SOMETHING THAT IS CLARIFIED**

Right here we have a clarification about a circumstance that has caused no small amount of confusion in the church-world. Why are there dead churches, like Sardis (Rev 3:1). Why are there divisions and carnality as the was in church of Corinth (1 Cor 3:3), and departing churches like those in the province of Galatia (Gal 1:6). Why are

there professing Christians who are really *"adulterers and adulteresses,"* like those to whom James wrote (James 4:4).

**IT IS BECAUSE THERE IS LITTLE OR NO LIGHT ION THEM.**

When people enter such assemblies, they behold no light. And why not? Because God has not given them any! **He does not put His light in a secret place where it cannot be seen, or hide it under the bushel of sectarianism.** He simply does not do such a thing! Men may argue long and with great determination to establish that such people are real Christians, really in Christ, and are simply making a few mistakes. But if light cannot be seen, it simply is not there – period.

To confirm this is the truth, Jesus lived it out. **He refused to invest His Divine power in those who spurned it.** He would not give a sign to disinterested and doubting people. **He would not put His light under a bushel.**

Our Lord did not leave this in the area of conjecture. He did many mighty works in places like Bethsaida and Capernaum – not so much so they would be seen, **but that the futility of such works in that kind of environment would be known.** Any people that were good, like Peter, Andrew, and Philip,

had to get out of that area. On one occasion, to heal a blind man, Jesus took him out of that city, which was like a *"bushel"* that would conceal the light from being seen (Mk 8:22-26). After healing that blind man Jesus told him, ***"Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town"*** (Mark 8:26). Jesus would not put His light under a bushel!

**Demonstrated In Israel**

God gave Israel their own land, purging it of its former inhabitants through Joshua (Josh 11:16-23). They were to be a shining light, showing forth the working of the Lord. But they did not do so. Instead they *"defiled"* God's land (Jer 2:7; 3:9-10; 16:18; Ezek 36:17). **Therefore, the Lord took them out of the land.** First He removed the ten tribes of Israel by the Assyrians (2 Kgs 17:1-41), then Judah was removed by the Babylonians (Jer 52:28-30). And why were they driven out? **Because God does not put His light under a bushel!**

It is not my purpose to be judgmental, or merely to be critical. But when the *"newness of life"* is not evident in the church, it is really because there is no light there – **and it is not there because God does not put His light under a bushel!** He does not out it where it cannot be seen.

**ONE EYE = FULL OF LIGHT**

*"<sup>34</sup> The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness."*

**THE LIGHT OF THE BODY IS THE EYE**

*"The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light..."*

Matthew also records these words in his account of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 6:22).

The point of the saying is that when the eye of the inner man is properly focused, life is lived correctly. As eyes are beholding, or looking at, Jesus (Heb 12:2), the proper direction and intention of life become more apparent. This is the kind of life of which Isaiah prophesied, when he foretold the nature of life in Christ Jesus. *"A highway shall be there, and a road, And it shall be called the HIGHway of Holiness. The unclean SHALL NOT pass over it, But it shall be for others. Whoever walks the road,*

*although a fool, SHALL NOT GO ASTRAY. No lion shall be there, Nor shall any ravenous beast go up on it; It shall not be found there. But the redeemed shall walk there, And the ransomed of the LORD SHALL RETURN, And COME TO ZION with singing, With everlasting joy on their heads. They SHALL OBTAIN joy and gladness, And sorrow and sighing SHALL FLEE AWAY"* <sup>NKJV</sup> (Isa 35:8-10).

Let us be clear about this. This prophecy is an accurate depiction of the

Jesus delivers a scathing rebuke to an entire generation, together with those who had been leading it – Given O. Blakely

saved of the Lord. There is no such thing as a saved person who is not on this “highway of holiness.” **In order to “err,” or “go astray,” one has to get off the highway.** That is the way it is!

Now, for those who are on this highway, or are keeping the faith, a “sign” is not needed, as the crowd has requested. **For the saved, life on the “highway of holiness” is clarifying and confirming.**

Further, those who have requested a sign from Jesus have done so because they did not have “eyes to see” (Deut 29:4). No sign would help them to believe. Jesus did not, and still does

not, work great signs and wonders before those who have no capacity to perceive them and profit from them. It is not that a time finally came when the Lord Jesus ceased to do such things, as some falsely allege. **Rather, a people arose that were incapable of profiting from such works – so they were not granted the privilege of seeing them.**

Once again, Christ’s ministry among men proved that **wicked hearts cannot profit from the “wonderful works of God.”** There is no wisdom inherent in unregenerated men that can effectively address this situation. Without God, it cannot be changed or improved.

#### WHEN THINE EYE IS EVIL

*“ . . . but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.”*

Matthew also records these words in his record of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 6:23).

If a person is focused on the world, he cannot accurately see anything that really matters. The eye being evil, and the whole body being full of darkness, is another way of saying, *“whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God”* (James 4:4). These conclusions cannot be effectively negated.

## TAKE HEED THAT YOUR LIGHT IS NOT ACTUALLY DARKNESS

*“<sup>35</sup> Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.<sup>36</sup> If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.”*

#### TAKE HEED

*“Take heed therefore . . .”*

Other versions read, *“Then watch out,”* NASB *“See to it,”* NIV *“Therefore consider,”* NRSV *“Therefore be careful,”* RSV *“Take care then,”* CSB *“Beware, therefore,”* ETH *“So make sure,”* NIRV and *“So be on your guard.”* LIVING

**There are certain realities associated with the life of faith that mandate an attentive and vigilant posture.**

- ⇒ We are holding the heavenly treasure in an “earthen vessel” (2 Cor 4:7).
- ⇒ Our adversary is the devil who is walking about seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet 5:8).
- ⇒ The necessary resources to live acceptably to God are accessed by faith (Rom 5:2).

⇒ The universe and our bodies are in a state of deterioration (Matt 24:35; 2 Cor 4:16).

⇒ The maintenance of spiritual life requires fighting (1 Tim 6:12).

⇒ Part of salvation is the “renewing of the Holy Spirit” (Tit 3:5).

⇒ There are imaginations and thoughts that must be thrown down (2 Cor 10:3-5).

The professing believer who is ignorant concerning spiritual things (2 Cor 2:11; 2 Pet 3:8), is slothful (Heb 6:12), of lacks alertness (1 Pet 5:8), **is on the precipice of eternal ruin.**

Taking heed is being perceptive of both times and surroundings. It is living with an awareness that there are dangers all around us, and that the required resources cannot be obtained unless we are aware of the need for them, as well as their reality. If we are not vigilant and watchful, know that the devil never sleeps, and will never pass by an open door.

#### THAT THE LIGHT IN THEE IS NOT DARKNESS

*“ . . . that the light which is in thee be not darkness . . .”*

It is possible that what is assessed as illumination may actually be deception – that what a person thinks is truth is really a lie that will plunge one into eternal ruin.

Each individual is responsible for knowing whether what he has embraced is the truth or not.

⇒ The knowledge of the truth compels one to “come to the light” (John 3:21).

⇒ Truth makes one “free” from spiritual encumbrances (John 8:32).

⇒ “The truth” is God’s means through which we are “sanctified,” or set apart for Divine use (John 17:17).

⇒ Jesus said, “Everyone who is of the truth heareth My voice” (John 18:37).

⇒ In order to be saved, one must receive “the love of the truth” (2 Thess 2:10).

⇒ “The truth” is to be obeyed (Gal

5:7).

- ⇒ Salvation is accomplished in those who *"obey the truth"* (2 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 1:22).
- ⇒ God has appointed that men are saved in coming to *"the knowledge of the truth"* (1 Tim 2:4).
- ⇒ It is possible for a professing believer to be void of the truth (1 John 2:4).

***"The light which is in you" is ones concept of the truth – what he thinks to be right, and acceptable to God. When that perception is wrong, it darkens the whole spectrum of Truth, causing the person to be blind, and therefore stumble in the darkness. If the foundational understanding is wrong, nothing can be clearly seen. In understanding, as in life, if the foundation is on the sand, the whole structure of thinking falls to the ground, and nothing is seen as it really is. At no point does true spiritual life consist of an admixture of truth and the lie.***

#### **DOTH GIVE THEE LIGHT**

*"...If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light."*

#### **HAVING NO DARK PART**

Other versions read, *"with no dark part in it,"* <sup>NASB</sup> *"no part of it in darkness,"* <sup>NRSV</sup> *"no part whatever in it be darkness,"* <sup>ETH</sup> *"does not have any dark portion,"* <sup>MGI</sup> *"with no dark corners,"* <sup>NLT</sup> *"none of it is dark,"* <sup>IE</sup> and *"without having any part dark,"* <sup>MONTGOMERY</sup>

This precise statement is conducive to much thought. A *"single eye,"* or a solitary focus, does not allow for **any** darkness – ***"having no part dark."*** **Any error in fundamental thought, or focus, at once causes everything to be distorted.** It is the nature of error to attempt to bend all Divine utterance around itself. Therefore, when a person adopts a false doctrine – like *"once saved always saved,"* or *"baptism has nothing to do with salvation,"* or *"you cannot do anything to cause God to love you less,"* it becomes necessary to distort all inspired utterances that include that subject. **Just as light does not make any room for darkness, darkness does not make any room for light.** At the point light and darkness meet, they will never blend, intermingle, or combine into one. They simply cannot be homogenized. This is something their carnal mind cannot comprehend.

#### **DOTH GIVE THEE LIGHT**

*" . . . If thy whole body therefore be full of light . . . the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light."*

**One's spiritual focus determines the amount of light, or illumination and understanding, that can be realized.** If the focus is skewed, there are whole bodies of truth that may become obscured and mysterious. For example, if ones view of being righteousness is wrong, it will not be clear if it can be obtained, how to appropriate it, and what effect does it have upon one's character.

However, if the *"one thing"* view is properly present (Psa 27:4; Lk 10:42; Phil 3:13), it will shed light on every area of revelation. The absolute harmony of truth will also be perceived, and the freedom that comes from knowing the truth will be joyously experienced. The whole body will be *"full of light."* There will also be a satisfaction and confidence that is unparalleled. Such a person will not balk at any word from God, or embrace something he sees causes confusion and misunderstanding..

## **A PHARISEE BESOUGHT HIM TO DINE WITH HIM**

*" 37 And as He spake, a certain Pharisee besought Him to dine with him: and He went in, and sat down to meat."*

#### **A CERTAIN PHARISEE BESOUGHT HIM**

*"And as He spake, a certain Pharisee besought Him to dine with him..."*

The Lord had been speaking with the greatest sobriety and focus. It apparently caught the attention of this Pharisee. Perhaps he thought it would be to his advantage to have this Rabbi in his home. However, he will find that Jesus does not blend well with those

who hold to the traditions of men. Jesus was the embodiment of moral light.

#### **HE WENT IN AND SAT DOWN**

*" . . . and He went in, and sat down to meat."*

Other versions read, *"He went in and reclined at the table,"* <sup>NASB</sup> *"and took His place at the table,"* <sup>NRSV</sup> *"So Jesus accepted the invitation,"* <sup>GWN</sup> *"He entered his house and sat right down at the table,"* <sup>MESSAGE</sup> and *"When Jesus arrived, he sat down to eat without first performing the ceremonial washing required by Jewish custom. This greatly*

*surprised his host."* <sup>LIVING</sup>

Notice how the Lord responds graciously to the invitation. He does not make the people ill-at-ease in His presence, even though He will not pass over the willful expressions of the flesh. We behold in Him an example of proper social conduct. He does not compromise, but neither does He introduce agitation. He did not come to destroy men's lives. As He Himself said, *"For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them"* (Luke 9:56).

However, as this incident will

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confirm, the Lord Jesus will nor remain silent when issues are raised that have been caused and directed by the mere traditions of men. Truth will not sleep in the presence of misrepresentation. Jesus will never react in such a manner

as to put the wicked at ease. That is simply the manner of the Divine nature.

This kind of conduct requires wisdom, as well as a fundamental interest in the eternal welfare of men.

Those who are really being led by the Spirit (Rom 8:13-14) will never react to circumstance in such a way as to make unbelievers comfortable in their unbelief. True spiritual influence has a drawing power on the humble and contrite.

## EXTERNAL RELIGION VERSUS INTERNAL REALITY

*"<sup>38</sup> And when the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that He had not first washed before dinner. <sup>39</sup> And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. <sup>40</sup> Ye fools, did not He that made that which is without make that which is within also?"*

### THE PHARISEE MARVELED

*"And when the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that He had not first washed before dinner . . ."*

Here was a man whose religion was driven by the traditions of men. The washing to which he refers was **not** part of the "divers washings" that were "imposed" on men under the Law (Heb 9:10) – which were not unintended to extend beyond "the time of reformation," or the reshaping of things that entered with the New Covenant (Heb 9:10).

Mark elaborates on this tradition. *"And when they saw some of His disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables"* (Mark 7:2-4).

This was a ceremonial washing, not a sanitary one – and it was not required by the Law of God. Yet, because it was held as though it was actually commanded by God, it was an

absolute requirement for the Jews.

There are still a number of religious traditions that are expected to be honored by professing "Christians." Of such traditions it is written:

⇒ *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ"* (Col 2:8).

⇒ *"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?"* (Col 2:20-22)

In Christ, the people are not to live by rules, but **by faith**: *"The just shall live by faith"* (Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38). It is our personal persuasion of revealed realities that dictates how we live. The redeemed ones do not live by rules of right or wrong, but by knowing whether their lives are accepted or rejected by God. By living in this manner, whatever is done, is done unto the glory of God – so that God can be seen in it, and glorified by it (1 Cor 10:31; Col 3:17,23).

Throughout history, the professing church has had monumental difficulty in this area. There is a staggering amount of ignorance concerning perceiving what is and is not acceptable to God. This stems from a lack of faith, although that is sometimes very difficult to admit.

**Under the Law, the details of life had to be spelled out because the**

**people had not yet received a new heart and a new spirit** (Ezek 36:26). They had not been "born again" (1 Pet 1:23), or experienced "the washing of regeneration" (Tit 3:5). Consequently, through the ceremonial law, or "the handwriting or ordinances" (Col 2:14), they were told precisely how to obey the Ten Commandments.

However, for the Pharisees, the ceremonial law was not enough. They took their interpretation of the Law and developed their own ideas of how to fulfill the Law. Now, this Pharisee marvels that Jesus ignored their tradition, which he, like others, had equated with the Law of God itself.

### MAKING CLEAN THE OUTSIDE OF THE CUP

*" . . . And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter . . ."*

Because Jesus knows what the man is thinking, He will address those thoughts. Unlike others who confronted Jesus with this kind of thing (Mk 7:2-5), there is no record of the Pharisee saying anything to Jesus about this. **Yet Jesus addresses His thoughts, and does so publicly.**

Other versions read, *"Then the Lord said to him, Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"You Pharisees make the outside of the cup and the plate clean,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"Now ye Pharisees make clean the exterior of the cup and the dish,"* <sup>MRD</sup> *"You Pharisees wash the outside,"* <sup>LIVING</sup> *"Here we see how you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup or plate,"* <sup>WEYMOUTH</sup> and *"I know you Pharisees burnish the surface of your cups and plates so they*

*sparkle in the sun.*" MESSAGE

First, let it be clear that the outward lives of men are to be pure. They must know how to possess their vessels in sanctification and honor (1 Thess 4:4; Eph 5:3). Our manner of life should be becoming to the Gospel of Christ, confirming its power when it is believed (Phil 1:27). There ARE things, that when DONE, exclude one from the Kingdom of God (1 Cor 6:9-10; Gal 5:20-21). However, outward purity can be achieved by those who are alienated from God and dominated by sin. That is precisely the point Jesus is making in this statement. The Pharisees had outwardly spotless lives – but it was to impress men, not to please God. Within, they were corrupt.

#### YOUR INWARD PART

*" . . . but your inward part . . . "*

Other versions read, *"inside of you,"* NASB *"your insides,"* CEB *"but within,"* ETH *"your interior,"* MIT and *"your secret hearts."* WEYMOUTH

I prefer the translation, *"inward part,"* or *"inward parts."* to *"inside."* The reference is to a separate part of the human makeup, not merely something that occurs inside the body. The base things to which Jesus refers do not dwell merely in the body, but are integral to an inner part of the persons. Whereas the *"body"* majors on what one does, the inner part reveals who or what

the person IS. The *"outward man"* is perishing (2 Cor 4:16), but the inward man is not.

#### IS FULL OF

*" . . . is full of ravening and wickedness . . . "*

Other versions read, *"greed and wickedness,"* NKJV *"robbery and wickedness,"* NASB *"extortion and wickedness,"* RSV *"thieves and full of evil,"* BBE *"plunder and wickedness,"* DARBY *"rapine and iniquity,"* DOUAY *"greed and evil,"* GWN *"rape and evil,"* MGI *"rapacity and wickedness,"* NOY *"greed and selfishness,"* WEYMOUTH *"seizure and wickedness,"* ABP *"full of violence and evil,"* GNB *"maggoty with greed and secret evil,"* MESSAGE and *"greed and robbery and extortion and malice and wickedness."* AMPLIFIED

**RAVENING:** This word has the following lexical meaning: "THE ACT OF PLUNDERING, ROBBERY," THAYER AND "CARRYING OFF SOMEONE'S BELONGINGS BY FORCE ROBBERY, PLUNDERING." FRIBERG

An example of this is found in the words of Jesus, also spoken to the Pharisees, together with the scribes: *"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses"* (Matt 23:14). Later versions omit this statement, although they include it in Luke 20:47, a parallel passage.

These men did not *"devour widows' houses"* by outward robbery, or with weapons. Rather, they did it by crafty stealth, using religion as the basis for gaining their property for themselves. The widows thought they were giving them to God.

#### YE FOOLS

*" . . . Ye fools, did not He that made that which is without make that which is within also?"*

Other versions read, *"Foolish ones,"* NKJV *"Foolish people!,"* CEB *"Wanting in understanding!"* ETH *"Ye devoid of understanding,"* LEW *"Irrational ones,"* MIT *"Ye deficient in understanding!"* MRD *"unthinking,"* YLT *"You are foolish,"* LIVING *"Stupid Pharisees!"* MESSAGE and *"You senseless (foolish, stupid) ones [acting without reflection or intelligence!]"* AMPLIFIED

Although the Pharisees prided themselves in imagining they were thinking and intelligent, Jesus saw they were really fools – dupes, or imbeciles. THAYER Today appropriate terms would be *"BLOCKHEAD, DIMWIT, DOPE, DUMBBELL, DUMMY, NITWIT, NUMSKULL, PINHEAD; BIRDBRAIN, FEATHERBRAIN, FEATHERHEAD, RATTLEBRAIN, SCATTERBRAIN."* MERRIAM-WEBSTER

These were insulting words, and the Lord intended that they should be so. The religion of these men had made them spiritually demented. They were not capable of thinking properly.

## ALL THINGS SHALL BE CLEAN UNTO YOU

*" 41 But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you."*

#### GIVE ALMS

*"But rather give alms of such things as ye have . . . "*

Other versions read, *"give that which is within as charity,"* NASB *"give what is inside the dish to the poor,"* NIV *"give for alms those things which are*

*inside,"* NRSV *"give for alms those things which are within,"* ASV *"give to the poor such things as you are able,"* BBE *"give to those in need from the core of who you are,"* CEB *"Give what is inside as a gift to the poor,"* GWN *"Give attention, rather, to inner motives such as compassion,"* MIT *"give from your heart to those in need,"* NET *"Give to poor people what is inside the dish,"* NIRV *"So clean the inside by giving gifts to the poor,"* NLT *"The next time you give to the poor people, give*

*your heart, too,"* LIVING *"dedicate once for all your inner self,"* WILLIAMS *"Better cleanse what is within,"* MONTGOMERY *"give your inmost life as charity,"* GOODSPEED *"Turn both your pockets and your hearts inside out and give generously to the poor,"* MESSAGE *"But [dedicate your inner self and] give as donations to the poor of those things which are within [of inward righteousness]."* AMPLIFIED

You see what inconsistencies are

Jesus delivers a scathing rebuke to an entire generation, together with those who had been leading it – Given O. Blakely

found in the various translations of this text – all taken from the Greek text. Yet, the translators used their own thinking to determine how they thought it ought to be written. From the human point of view, we have several alternatives before us.

- ⇒ What is inside as charity. <sup>NASB</sup>
- ⇒ Give what is inside the dish to the poor. <sup>NIV/NIRV</sup>
- ⇒ Give what is within as alms. <sup>ASV/NRSV</sup>
- ⇒ Give what you are able to give. <sup>BBE</sup>
- ⇒ Give from the core of who you are. <sup>CEB</sup>
- ⇒ Give your heart too. <sup>LIVING</sup>
- ⇒ Give what is inside as a gift to the poor. <sup>GWN</sup>
- ⇒ Give attention to your motives. <sup>MIT</sup>
- ⇒ Give from your heart. <sup>NET</sup>
- ⇒ Dedicate once and for all your inner self. <sup>WILLIAMS</sup>
- ⇒ Cleanse what is within. <sup>MONTGOMERY</sup>
- ⇒ Give your inmost life as charity. <sup>GOODSPEED</sup>
- ⇒ Turn both your pockets and your hearts inside out and give generously

to the poor. <sup>MESSAGE</sup>  
 ⇒ Dedicate your inner self and give donations to the poor. <sup>AMPLIFIED</sup>

There are fourteen different representations of this text! Several of them can be at once eliminated. Jesus has just told these people that inwardly they were *“is full of ravening and wickedness.”* **The versions that say hey should give what is within, and what is in the dish, cannot possibly represent what Jesus is saying.** Some say that the meaning is that they are to give from their own inner platters because they are full. Therefore, they should give the excess. <sup>JOHN GILL</sup> But this cannot be so, because Jesus said the inside was *“full of ravening and excess.”*

The point is that they were to give of the substance they had amassed – what they had in possessions, or had without. **When it came to things that were without, the Pharisees only thought of what they looked like. But Jesus requires them to behold their**

**possessions, which were abundant, consider them second and give to those who had nothing.** In other words, they were to be good stewards of what they had – even though some of it had been gained out of covetousness – like robbing widows houses. If these men followed Jesus’ words, they would return those goods, and then give some more from the goods they had obtained properly.

**ALL THINGS ARE CLEAN**  
*“ . . . and, behold, all things are clean unto you.”*

I gather that this speaks of the same principle Jesus made known to a certain rich man. He had inquired concerning obtaining eternal life. Finally Jesus had said to him, *“If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me”* (Matt 19:21). I gather this is the kind of thing involved here – providing for others at personal expense.

## PASSING OVER JUDGMENT AND THE LOVE OF GOD

*“ 42A But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God . . . ”*

### WOE UNTIL YOU PHARISEES

*“ But woe unto you, Pharisees! . . . ”*

Other versions read, *“But a curse is on you, Pharisees!”* <sup>BBE</sup> *“How terrible for you Pharisees!”* <sup>CEB</sup> *“How horrible it will be for you Pharisees!”* <sup>GWN</sup> *“But brace yourselves for judgment, Pharisees!”* <sup>MIT</sup> *“What sorrow awaits you Pharisees!”* <sup>NLT</sup> and *“You Pharisees are in for trouble!”* <sup>CEV</sup>

The Gospels record Jesus saying *“Woe unto . . . ”* twenty-eight times (Matt 11:21; 18:7; 23:13,14,15,16,23, 25,27,29; 24:19; 26:24; Lk 6:24, 25,26; 10:13; 11:42,43,44,46,47,52; 17:1; 21:23; 22:22). From Genesis thru Malachi, those words are recorded thirty

times. They speak of a cursed Divine judgment being focused on a particular person or group. This speaks of an aspect of God that is very real and which must be avoided at all cost. It is a judgment without hope, without mercy, and without retraction. As long as a person remains in the class of people being judged, that judgment will be experienced. There are, then, certain manners of conduct that summon Divine wrath. How grateful I am that the Lord is forward to let us know what they are!

### YE TITHE

*“ . . . for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs . . . ”*

Other versions read, *“you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs,”* <sup>NIV</sup> *“make men give a tenth of every sort of plant,”* <sup>BBE</sup> *“give God one-tenth of your mint, spices, and every garden herb,”* <sup>GWN</sup>

*“you tithe right down to mint, rue, and every herb,”* <sup>MIT</sup> *“you are careful to tithe even the tiniest income from your herb gardens,”* <sup>NLT</sup> *“you are careful to tithe even the smallest part of your income,”* <sup>LIVING</sup> *“You even give Him ten percent of all the little plants in your gardens--mint, rue, or other seasoning herbs.”* <sup>IE</sup>

### The Tithe

The “tithe” was a tenth part. Particular instances of paying a tithe go back to times **before** the Law:

- ⇒ Abraham paid, or “gave,” tithes to Melchisedec of all the spoils he had taken from five armies (Gen 14:20) Apostolic doctrine refers to this in Hebrews 7:2-6).
- ⇒ Before the Law, Jacob vowed to God, *“of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee”* (Gen 28:22).



⇒ Under the Law, the tithe was for the support of the priests. That law is spelled out in Leviticus 27:30-33; Num 18:21-24; Deut 12:6-7, 18-19; 14:22-29; 26:12-15).

⇒ Apostolic doctrine refers to this practice, paralleling it with the support of the ministry (1 Cor 9:13-14).

⇒ An extensive teaching on the tithe is given in Hebrews 7:5-10. In that passage, Jesus, of whom it is witnessed that He is alive, is said to be receiving tithes (Heb 7:8).

Thus you have tithes given to the Lord before the Law, and during the Law, with the risen Christ receiving them after the Law. For some this is a sensitive area, but such an attitude cannot be justified.

⇒ The fact that holy men paid tithes before the Law indicates that this principle is written on sensitive

hearts.

⇒ The fact that it is used as a point of reasoning for the support of those who preach the Gospel confirms that **this is an area of truth.**

⇒ The fact that Jesus is still receiving tithes, shows that **it has not been relegated to a state of obsolescence.**

Now, it is the responsibility for every believer to work this out in their own lives.

#### AND PASS OVER JUDGMENT AND THE LOVE OF GOD

*" . . . and pass over judgment and the love of God . . . "*

The Pharisees looked upon the tithe as something that sanctified them, as though God especially approved of everyone who tithed. But this is not at all the case, as Jesus will confirm.

When reporting this incident, Matthew's Gospel says the Pharisees had

*"omitted the **weightier matters** of the Law" (Matt 23:23). That is, there are things that carried more weight in the Divine balances.* Matthew says those matters were *"judgment, mercy, and faith."* Luke says they were *"judgment and the love of God" – the "love of God"* being a summation of mercy toward men, faith toward God, and a love for God and man. Matthew says they *"omitted"* these *"weightier matters."* Luke says they *"passed over"* them, which indicates this was not an inadvertent error, but a deliberate omission.

At this point, as Jesus will confirm, we are not being exposed to some things that are to be done, and some things that may not be done *"also."* Men are inclined to think that only the larger, or sometimes outward things, **need** to be done. Other less weighty things, men imagine, can be omitted, with the weightier matters alone bringing the blessing of God. However, Jesus will show that this is not at all the case. Weightier matters do not eliminate lesser ones.

## OUGHT TO HAVE DONE, AND NOT LEAVE THE OTHER UNDONE

*" 42B . . . these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."*

#### THESE OUGHT YE TO HAVE DONE

*"...these ought ye to have done..."*

Other versions read, *"these are the things you should have done,"* <sup>NASB</sup> *"you ought to have practiced the latter,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"it is these you ought to have practiced,"* <sup>NRSV</sup> *"it is right for you to do these things,"* <sup>BBE</sup> *"You have an obligation to do these things,"* <sup>CJB</sup> *"You should tithe, yes,"*

The things that they *"should have done"* were paying their tithes on all of their crops, for they were an agricultural

society. They should have tithed.

#### NOT LEAVE THE OTHER UNDONE

*" . . . and not to leave the other undone."*

Other versions read, *"without leaving the others undone,"* <sup>NKJV</sup> *"without neglecting the others,"* <sup>NASB</sup> *"without leaving the former undone,"* <sup>NIV</sup> *"without disregarding the others!"* <sup>CJB</sup> *"not have left those aside."* <sup>DARBY</sup>

The things that should not have been left undone were the things they had *"passed over"* (Luke), or *"omitted,"* (Matthew). By saying *"undone,"* Jesus is saying that God has made no allowance for men to omit *"judgement*

*and the love of God."* Neither, indeed, has He made allowance for failing in the matter of tithing. However, the great matters sanctify the lesser ones. Every act of obedience does not have equal weight, so to speak. However, neither is there any allowance for disobedience.

This is another way of pointing out that true holiness and purity begin within – but they certainly do not end there. Also, if they are not within, nothing done on the outside is received.

Within the New Covenant men are given the facts in the case, and are expected to address them fully in working out their own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil 2:12).

## WOE UNTO YOU PHARISEES

Jesus delivers a scathing rebuke to an entire generation, together with those who had been leading it – Given O. Blakely

*" 43 Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets."*

Jesus now pronounces another "woe" upon the Pharisees because of their love for prominence.

#### THEY LOVED THE UPPERMOST SEATS IN THE SYNAGOGUE

*"Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues . . ."*

Other versions read, *"best seats in the synagogues," "front seats,"* NASB *"most important seats,"* NIV *"seat of*

*honor,"* NRSV *"chief seats,"* ASV *"most prominent,"* CEB *"first seat,"* DARBY *"honored seats."* LEW

Prominence is what these men loved. **Anyone who has been exposed to the professional religious realm, knows that the love for prominence still exists.** It is a facet of pride, and is strictly condemned by the Lord. Legitimate "honor" is always reserved for those to whom is **"is due"** (Rom 13:7). Within the body of Christ, that honor is toward those who feed and care for the flock of God (Heb 13:7,17,24). However, it is not an honor that is to be sought or coveted.

The honor is to be sought is the honor that comes from God.

#### THEY LOVED THE GREETINGS IN THE MARKETS

*" . . . and greetings in the markets."*

Other versions read, *"respectful greetings,"* NASB *"greeted with respect,"* NRSV and *"[you love] to be greeted and bowed down to in the [public] marketplaces."* AMPLIFIED

It is not that respectful greetings are themselves wrong. Rather, it is loving them, and expecting them that Jesus is addressing.

## WOE UNTO YOU SCRIBES AND PHARISEES

*" 44 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them."*

This is now the third "woe" Jesus pronounces upon these pretentious leaders. They were not what they appeared to be, and apparently no one knew this before Jesus arrived on the scene. He saw it as soon as He began walking among them. What He says here is an evaluation that He still makes when it is appropriate.

#### HYPOCRITES

*"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! . . ."*

Most all modern versions omit the word "hypocrites." Matthew uses the word, and all of the translations include it in his account: *"Woe unto you,*

*scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"* (Matt 23:27).

The word "hypocrite" has the following lexical meaning: "AN ACTOR, STAGE PLAYER; A DISSEMBLER, PRETENDER," THAYER "AS A MORAL OR RELIGIOUS COUNTERFEIT," FRIBERG "PLAYACTOR," GINGRICH

Religion seems to be a field where this kind of people particularly flourish. This is the direct result of a general lack of interest in *"pure religion and undefiled"* (James 1:27). Those within the professed church who are **not** living by faith (Heb 10:38), **not** walking in the Spirit (Gal 5:16), and are **not** presenting their bodies a living sacrifice to God (Rom 12:1-2), **are wide doorways through which charlatans can enter in and spread their "damnable heresies"** (2 Pet 2:1).

Nevertheless, God judges such men harshly, even if it is *"unstable*

*souls"* (2 Pet 2:14) that they lead astray. The people of God are nowhere directed to pray for such leaders. Concerning the Pharisees, Jesus told His disciples, *"Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch"* (Matt 15:14), or *"Leave them."* NIV

#### YOU ARE LIKE GRAVES

*" . . . for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them."*

Such "hypocrites" are like graves with no markers – where men walk over them, and not aware they are there. Let it be clear, that there is no room for death in the Kingdom of God, unless it be the slaying and death of *"the flesh."* In the religious world, all who are *"dead"* toward God are excluded from the Kingdom, and have no part in it at all. That is simply the way it is.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 6/24/16. In our next lesson, we will continue our series in the Gospel of Luke. The FORTY-FOURTH lesson will cover verses 45 thru 54 of chapter 11: "THE GROWTH OF ANIMOSITY AGAINST JESUS." As the appointed time for the sacrificial death of Christ approaches, the animosity of the Jewish leaders begins to grow, and the determination to take His life dominates their thinking. Our meeting will begin at 6:30 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.