

A MINISTRY FOR HUNGRY SAINTS

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

✝ THE BOOK OF LUKE

WHAT WE MOST ASSUREDLY BELIEVE

WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRIES, ASSOCIATED

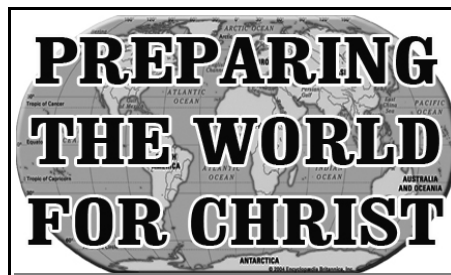
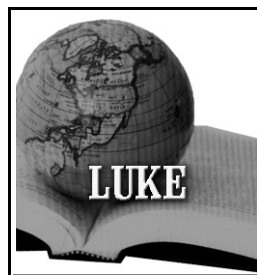
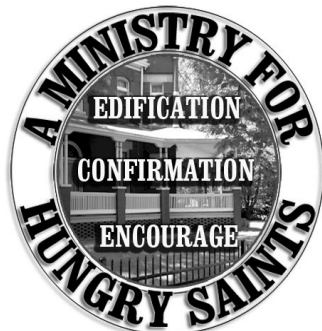
An overview of the Gospel of Luke, by Given O. Blakely

LESSON NUMBER 41

COMMENTARY ON: 11:45-54

THE GROWTH OF ANIMOSITY TOWARD JESUS

As Jesus enters the last year of His ministry, the animosity of the Jewish leaders begins to grow. This includes the scribes, Pharisees, Lawyers, Sadducees, High Priests, chief priests, and rulers of the synagogues. The presence of Jesus had interrupted their hitherto uncontested dominion. They had occupied the chief positions in the Jewish economy, and now it had been interrupted. Considering what Jesus had done among them, there is a certain remarkableness in their opposition. Rather than His mighty works and powerful words inducing fear in these leaders, it caused fierce hatred and opposition to rise within them. This strongly confirms the depravity of the human nature. Even after, in its most polished religious form, it has been exposed to an optimum level of truth, and witnessed the working of a superior power, it dares to rise in opposition to it. But God will employ their venomous hatred to fulfill His appointed and foreordained purpose – the death of His only begotten Son.

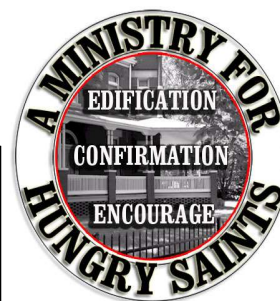


Since May, 1993, a ministry instituted for the encouragement of believers in Christ



The Book of Luke. 6/24/2016

Lesson Number 41



54 VERSIONS OF THE ENGLISH SCRIPTURES

ABP=Apostolic Bible Polyglot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2006), 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 Standard 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=Literary 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 (1995), ROT=Rotherham Bible (1999); RPTE=Revised Patriarchal Greek Orthodox New Testament; RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakh (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 GROWTH OF ANIMOSITY TOWARD JESUS

LUKE 11:45 "Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto Him, Master, thus saying Thou reproachest us also. ⁴⁶ And He said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers. ⁴⁷ Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. ⁴⁸ Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres. ⁴⁹ Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute: ⁵⁰ That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; ⁵¹ From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation. ⁵² Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered. ⁵³ And as He said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge Him vehemently, and to provoke Him to speak of many things; ⁵⁴ Laying wait for Him, and seeking to catch something out of His mouth, that they might accuse Him." .. Luke 11:45-54

INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

As Jesus enters the last year of His ministry, the animosity of the Jewish leaders begins to grow. This includes the following: The scribes (Mk 2:6-7; 10:33), the Pharisees (Matt

12:14; Mk 3:6), the Lawyers (Lk 14:3), the Sadducees (Matt 22: 23), the High Priests (Matt 26:3-4; Lk 3:2), the chief priests (Matt 21:15; 26:3), and the rulers of the synagogues (Lk 13:14).

⇒ **THE SCRIBES.** After the Babylonian Captivity, when the nation lost its independence, the scribes (2 Sam 8:17; 20:25; 1 Kgs 4:3; Neh 12:36; Jer 36:10, etc), turned their attention to the law, gaining for

As Jesus nears the time of His appointed death, the animosity of the Jewish leaders begins to accelerate – Given O. Blakely

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t h e m s e l v e s
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time of Jesus, they were key teachers
among the Jews.

⇒ THE PHARISEES. These were “separatists.” They were extremely accurate and minute in all matters appertaining to the law of Moses, and led a very disciplined life outwardly.

⇒ THE LAWYERS. Among the Jews, a Lawyer was one versed in the laws of Moses, which he expounded in the schools and synagogues.

⇒ THE SADDUCEES. The origin of this Jewish sect cannot definitely be traced. They ridiculed the doctrine of the resurrection, which they denied, and they also denied the existence of angels.

⇒ THE HIGH PRIESTS. This was an office

ordained by God, with Aaron being the first High Priest. This office was an integral part of the Law of Moses.

⇒ THE CHIEF PRIESTS. Originally, this was another name for the High Priest (Ezra 7:5). Ezra also refers to “the chief priests” (Ezra 10:5). There are 64 references to “chief priests” from Matthew through Acts. This cannot be the High Priest, for the term “chief priests” is always in the plural from Matthew on. The Pulpit Commentary attempts an explanation of “chief priests” – “THE CHIEF PRIESTS ARE PRESENTED THE ECCLESIASTICAL AND SADDUCEAN PART, THE SCRIBES THE MORE LITERARY AND PROBABLY THE PHARISAIC PART, OF THE NATION.” I am inclined to think that during the time of our text, “the chief priests” were a class of priests developed by the Jews, not God.

⇒ THE RULERS OF THE SYNAGOGUES. The director of synagogue services. This office is only mentioned in the Gospels and Acts (Mk 5:36,38; 8:41; Lk 13:14; Acts 18:8,17).

With the exception of the high priests and regular priests, these offices, or distinct roles, were all instituted by men, not God. Wherever this kind of thing exists, there is a certain inevitable deterioration in both the fabric of thinking, and the view of Divinely established priorities. As the church has drifted away from its moorings, and from the fellowship with Christ into which it has been called (1 Cor 1:9), all manner of new and official positions rare established. Here are a few that have been created by men during the past few decades. These are taken from Help Wanted ads.

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| • Worship Leaders | • Young Adult Pastor |
| • Youth Ministers | • Discipleship Pastor |
| • Family Life Minister | • Missions Pastor |
| • Children's Ministers | • Women's Pastor |
| • Associate Pastor | • Small Group Pastor |
| • Children's Pastor | • Worship Arts Pastor |
| • Senior Pastor | • Praise Team Director |

The presence of Jesus had

interrupted the hitherto uncontested dominion of the Jewish leaders of that time. They had occupied the chief positions in the Jewish economy, and now it had been disturbed.

Considering what Jesus had done among them, there is a certain remarkableness in their opposition. Rather than His mighty works and powerful words inducing fear in these leaders, it caused fierce hatred and opposition to rise within them. This strongly confirms the depravity of the human nature. Even after, in its most polished religious form, it has been exposed to an optimum level of truth, and witnessed the working of a superior power, it dares to rise in opposition to it. But God will employ their venomous hatred to fulfill His appointed and foreordained purpose – the death of His only begotten Son.

The point to be seen is that “the flesh” cannot add anything profitable to any portion of the work of the Lord. The Lord has, through the Spirit, placed certain functions in the church – not positions to be filled, but individuals who actually minister. Some of those functions are spelled out for us.

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| • Apostles | • Ruling |
| • Prophets | • Miracles |
| • Evangelists | • Gifts of healings |
| • Pastor/Teachers | • Helps |
| • Ministering(Serve) | • Governments |
| • Teaching | • Various kinds of Languages |
| • Exhorting | |

Romans 12:6-8; 1 Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11

The point I wish to make in this section is that **the further the professed people of God get from Christ, the more human wisdom begins to dominate.** In the religious world, that distance is promoted by the adoption of human creeds and interpretations – the “traditions of men” (Mk 7:8; Col 2:8). And wherever that is true, owing to the hostility and stubbornness of “the flesh,” the program of the church is altered to meet the expectations of men rather than God – to please men rather than God, as revealed in this text.

GETTING THE POINT, BUT NOT LIKING IT

LUKE 11:45 *"Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also."*

THEN ANSWERED ONE OF THE LAWYERS

"Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him . . ."

Note what the Lord has addressed to the scribes and Pharisees:

⇒ **OUTWARDLY PURE, BUT INWARDLY CORRUPT.** *"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." (Luke 11:39)*

⇒ **PASSED OVER JUDGMENT AND THE LOVE OF GOD.** *"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." (Luke 11:42)*

⇒ **LOVE PLACES OF PRIORITY.** *"Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the*

uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets." (Luke 11:43)

⇒ **DEAD MEN THAT DO NOT APPEAR TO BE SO.** *"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 11:44)*

These had been scathing rebukes. They were specifically addressed to the scribes and the Pharisees. Yet, the Lawyers, who were experts in the Law, did not view them as only applicable to the scribes and the Pharisees. **This is because they all had the same mindset. Their religion had made them self-centered, not God-centered.** Our adversary the devil (1 Pet 5:8), still promotes this kind of unanimity – uniting around tradition instead of God's Christ and His revelation.

THOU REPROACHEST US ALSO

" . . . Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also."

Other versions read *"You insult us to,"* ^{NASB} *"you give a bad name to us as*

to them," ^{BBE} *"you vilify us also!"* ^{ETH} *"thou putttest vs to rebuke also,"* ^{GENEVA} *"you reflect disparagingly on us as well,"* ^{MIT} *"you have insulted my profession, too, in what you just said,"* ^{LIVING} *"you are insulting our group, too,"* ^{IE} *"you said cruel things about us,"* ^{CEV} *"when you say that, you affront us too,"* ^{GOODSPEED} and *"You reproach and outrage and affront even us!"* ^{AMPLIFIED}

It is generally understood that a "lawyer" was a SCRIBE WHO HAD ESPECIALLY DEVOTED HIS ATTENTION TO THE UNRAVELMENT OF THE DIFFICULT AND DISPUTED QUESTIONS WHICH AROSE IN THE DAILY LIFE OF THE PEOPLE. ^{PULPIT COMMENTARY}

The words of this lawyer fulfill the words of Jeremiah the prophet, *"behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it"* (Jer 6:10). If this man really felt reproached, he should have repented, recognizing who He was hearing speak. We know that his heart was not right by the response Jesus now gives. If he would have acknowledged his sin and repented, this could have been the occasion when he was forgiven, and permitted to move in closer.

CREATING BURDENS BUT GIVING NO RELIEF

"⁴⁶ And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers."

WOE UNTO YOU LAWYERS

"And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! . . ."

Other versions read, *"Woe unto you lawyers as well,"* ^{NASB} *"you experts in the Law, woe to you,"* ^{NIV} *"A curse is on you, teachers of the law!"* ^{BBE} *"How terrible for you legal experts too!"* ^{CEB} *"To you also woe, doctors of the law,"* ^{DARBY} *"How horrible it will be for you*

experts in Moses' Teachings!" ^{GWN} *"As for you experts in the law—judgment awaits you,"* ^{MIT} *"Woe also to you scholars of the law!"* ^{NAB} *"How terrible for you authorities on the law!"* ^{NIRV} and *"what sorrow also awaits you experts in religious law!"* ^{NLT}

Jesus made very clear, when He commenced His ministry, what He had come to do: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised"*

(Luke 4:18). His was a ministry of heavenly relief and rejuvenation." Healing! Deliverance! Sight! "Liberty!" What a marvelous ministry, and so much needed!

In the meantime, what were these experts in the Law doing? What did their professed expertise move them to do? Jesus tells them, and does so with undeniable clarity.

YE LADE MEN WITH BURDENS

" . . . for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne . . ."

Other versions read, *"you load men*

As Jesus nears the time of His appointed death, the animosity of the Jewish leaders begins to accelerate – Given O. Blakely

with burdens hard to bear," ^{NKJV} "you weigh men down with burdens," ^{NASB} "grievous to to be borne," ^{ASV} "crushed under the weight of the rules you make for them," ^{BBE} "impossible burdens," ^{CEB} "crushed under the weight of the rules you make for them," ^{BBE} "load men with cumbrous burdens," ^{WEYMOUTH} "load men with cumbrous burdens," ^{MONTGOMERY} and "you load men with oppressive burdens hard to bear." ^{AMPLIFIED}

Some of us have experienced legalistic burdens that actually made life more difficult than it already was. Perhaps they meant well. However, as I learned by experience, if men preach a Gospel with power (Rom 1:16), they will not need to make these unreasonable rules, and then impose them on men. It is still true, "Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane" (1 Tim 1:9).

The Gospel, on the other hand, enables the lame to walk, promising them "newness of life" (Rom 6:4) – the

"spirit . . . of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim 1:7).

YOU TOUCH NOT THE BURDENS

" . . . and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers."

Other versions read, "will not lift finger to help them," ^{NIV} "lift a finger to ease them," ^{NRSV} "refuse to lift a single finger to help them," ^{CEB} "won't lift a finger to carry any of these loads," ^{GWN} "do not reach out so much as a finger to help them support their loads," ^{MIT} "you do not personally [even gently] touch the burdens with one of your fingers." ^{AMPLIFIED}

This by no means suggests that Jesus treated sinners with undue ease. His handling of the scribes, Pharisees, and Lawyers confirms that to be the case. He would not break a bruised reed – but it **was** a reed, not a thorn bush. He would not quench a smoking flax, but it **was** flax, not a tare.

Why are those with a penchant for legalism so strict, and often so much

without mercy? Because they are unacquainted with the power of the Gospel (Rom 1:6), the "power of His resurrection" (Phil 3:10), and "And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Eph 1:19). When one's message lacks power, impetus must be promoted by some man-made means. Such men – and I was once among them – are very slow to admit their message lacks power, even though there is evidence all around them shouting it out.

They are not aware, as they should be, of Satan's power to dominate people, and that principalities and powers hold men captive. They operate under the delusion that they are only engaged in a war of words. But, as powerful as they may be, these adversarial powers are no match for the power of the Gospel, an Omnipotent High Priest, and an empowering Spirit. What these deluded ones are seeking to do on their own is done more effectively, extensively, and on an enduring basis through the power of God.

BUILDING THE SEPULCHERS OF THE FATHERS

⁴⁷ **Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them."**

WOE UNTO YOU!

"Woe unto you! . . ."

Including this verse, Jesus has said "Woe unto you" six times in this chapter: to Pharisees, and Lawyers (verses 42,43,44,46,47,52). This is the real Jesus, and we are being exposed to the effect those who make it difficult for the sheep have upon Him. **You will never find Jesus gentle, meek, and lowly with those who perpetrate false teaching, or who make life more grueling and toilsome for those who love and serve Him.** Hear Him as He speaks to this matter: "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones **which believe in Me**, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his

neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matt 18:6).

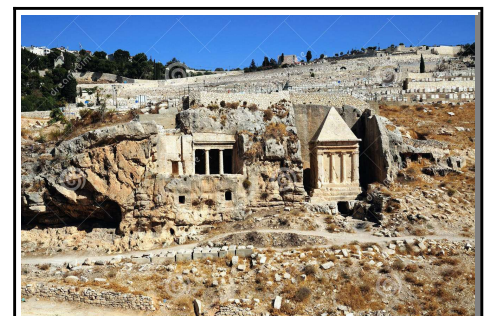
When the Thessalonians were being troubled by religious bigots, Paul wrote to them, "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you" (2 Thess 1:6). Jesus told the people that offences would come, but gave them a larger perspective of the matter. "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but **woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!**" (Matt 18:7).

YE BUILD THE SEPULCHERS OF THE PROPHETS

" . . . for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets . . ."

Other versions read, "You build tombs for the prophets," ^{NIV} "you make

resting-places for the bodies of the prophets," ^{BBE} "You built memorials to the prophets," ^{CEB} "You build tombs in memory of the prophets," ^{CJB} "You build the monuments for the prophets," ^{GWN} and "For you are rebuilding and repairing the tombs of the prophets." ^{AMPLIFIED}



TOMBS OF THE PROPHETS – ZECHARIAH

Jesus repeats these same words shortly before His sacrificial death (Matt 23:29). He was referring to the Jews

building structures over the places where the prophets were buried. This very day, there is a massive tomb built over the burial place for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.



Tomb of Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

While the practice of building tombs for the prophets may appear innocent enough, that is certainly not how Jesus regarded it. This is accented by the fact that they were seeking at that time to kill the great Prophet of all – the Son of the Living God. He is the One that Abraham was promised would bless the whole world. He is the One of whom the prophets prophesied when they wrote of a coming Messiah.

YOUR FATHERS KILLED THEM

"...and your fathers killed them."

The *"fathers"* of that generation did not appreciate the prophets, and so they killed them. The generation to whom Jesus was speaking did not appreciate the Son of God, so they were seeking to kill Him. Their despising of the prophets themselves is confirmed by their rejection of the One of whom they prophesied.

During His ministry on earth, Jesus made quite clear how people who reject God's messengers are regarded in heaven. *"He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me"* (Luke 10:16).

As for Israel of old rejecting the prophets and not hearing them, hear

what God witnessed against them: *"And I will persecute them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them: Because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, which I sent unto them by my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but ye would not hear, saith the LORD"* (Jer 29:19).

If it can be confirmed that a person is delivering a message or a special insight from God, men are obliged to receive that message or face the judgment of God.

THE ROLE OF CONFESS THE SINS OF THE FATHERS

When Israel fell on hard times, they would often trace it back to the recalcitrance of earlier generations as well as themselves:

⇨ *"We have sinned against the LORD our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God"* (Jer 3:25).

⇨ *"We acknowledge, O LORD, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers: for we have sinned against thee"* (Jer 14:20).

⇨ *"Our fathers have sinned, and are not; and we have borne their iniquities"* (Lam 5:7).

⇨ *"O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee"* (Dan 9:8).

When decadent spiritual generations are found, it is often owing to the departure of earlier successive generations, who established the ignoring of God's Word, and a backward movement. I have witnessed such departure in my lifetime, which covers several generations – from complete generations, with a partial generation.

There came a time when messages were tailored for the ones being addressed rather than in faithfulness to God Himself, and His Son and His Administration of the Kingdom.

⇨ A generation arose in which the Word of God was not seen as essential.

⇨ Human tradition was given the position intended for the Word.

⇨ Jesus Christ Himself was minimized.

⇨ Faith began to wane.

⇨ The wisdom of men was given a prominent place.

⇨ Schools of "high learning" surfaced, minimizing the role of the church in preparing leaders.

⇨ Immorality began to surface within the church.

⇨ Mature believers were placed into the background.

⇨ Youth was vaulted into the foreground.

⇨ Churches as a whole became weak and uninformed in the things of the Kingdom.

⇨ Heaven and the ages to come were minimized.

⇨ Place was made for worldly professionals.

All of these things had a genesis in some generation. Spiritual degeneration was set in motion within the professed church, just as it was in Israel.

THE RELEVANCE OF THIS

The relevance of this is seen in the manner in which Jesus addresses the scribes, Pharisees, and Lawyers. They were all in a backward stance that was the result of a massive departure from God that took place in previous generations. It seems to me that we are in that kind of generation.

Centuries before the period covered by our text, it was written, *"Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law"* (2 Chron 15:3). However, recovery was with reach, for the next verse reads, *"But when they in their trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Israel, and sought him, **He was found of them**"* (2 Chron 15:4).

Hosea also prophesied of such times, which it appears are still present in Israel. He also added a prophecy of their recovery: *"For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter*

days" (Hosea 3:4-5).

During those spiritually decadent times, sharp rebukes and corrections were ministered to the people – just as Jesus is doing with the scribes, Pharisees, and lawyers.

It is our prayer that the modern church will realize its state, together with its causes, and set itself to seek the Lord with all its heart.

ALLOWING THE DEEDS OF YOUR FATHERS

"⁴⁸ Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchers. for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchers."

Matthew's Gospel

*"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchers of the righteous, And say, **If we had been in THE DAYS OF OUR FATHERS, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.** Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets."* (Matt 23:29-31).

ALLOWING THE DEEDS

*"Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of **your fathers** . . ."*

Other versions read, *"approve the deeds of your fathers,"* ^{NKJV} *"consent to the deeds of your fathers,"* ^{RSV} *"completely approve,"* ^{CJB} *"ye acquiesce,"* ^{MRD} *"agree with,"* ^{NIRV} *"both witness to what your ancestors did and approve it,"* ^{NJB} *"are well pleased*

with," ^{YLT} *"find consenting pleasure in,"* ^{ROT} *"think that was the right thing for your people to do,"* ^{CEV} *"are monuments to your murdering ancestors more than to the murdered prophets,"* ^{MESSAGE} *and "give your full approval and consent to the deeds of your fathers."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

The point here is that they had not traced their generation back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – the true "fathers" () – but to the wicked generation that rose after them: *"another generation,"* which was **after Joshua**. As it is written, *"And Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old."* (Judg 2:8)

*"And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnathheres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash. 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.**"* (Judg 2:9-10). After that, the people became humility of killing the rejecting and killing the

prophets, **particularly the ones who spoke directly of the coming Messiah.**

None of the following prophets were heeded by the people: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Amos, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Malachi. Revival and national repentance did not follow the ministry of any of these prophets. Some of them were heed by individuals, like those rebuilding the Temple (Ezra 6:14). But for the most part, their ministries were rejected, including Jeremiah (Jer 38:6), and Zechariah (2 Chron 24_20-22; Lk 11:51).

Those with faith always traced their origin back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – "the fathers" (Gen 48:15; Ex 3:15-16; 4:5; Deut 1:8; 1 Chron 29:18; Acts 3:13). **But the people to whom Jesus is here speaking, considered that unbelieving generation as their "fathers."** Jesus affirmed they said, hey said, *"If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets"* (Matt 23:30)

I WILL SEND THEM PROPHETS AND APOSTLES

"⁴⁹ Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of

them they shall slay and persecute."

THE WISDOM OF GOD SAID

"Therefore also said the wisdom of God . . ."

As Jesus nears the time of His appointed death, the animosity of the Jewish leaders begins to accelerate – Given O. Blakely

Other versions read, *"God in His wisdom said,"* ^{NIV} *"the Wisdom of God said,"* ^{RSV} *"God's wisdom has said,"* ^{CEB} *"the wisdom of God has said,"* ^{DARBY} *"God in his wisdom said about you,"* ^{NLT} and *"This is what God says about you."* ^{LIVING}

This is not a direct quotation. Rather, Jesus is expressing the spirit of a passage found in the Chronicles. The expression "the Wisdom of God" doubtless refers to Christ Jesus Himself, whom Paul expressly says is *"the wisdom of God"* (1 Cor 1:24).

In other words, this was an inspired statement of the circumstance—a condition in which the message of God is summarily rejected, just as the scribes, Pharisees, and Lawyers were responding to Jesus.

I WILL SEND THEM PROPHETS AND APOSTLES, SOME OF THEM THEY WILL SLAY AND PERSECUTE

" . . . I will send them prophets and apostles and some of them they shall slay and persecute."

The passage to which Jesus alludes is Second Chronicles 36:15-16. *"And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because He had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy"* (2 Chron 36:15-16).

The "prophets" were not merely godly men who made comments about their generation. They were sent by God in a timely manner. As it is written:

⇨ *"Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, . . . which I sent to you by My servants the prophets"* (2 Kgs 17:13).

⇨ And again, *"the words of My servants the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending them, but ye have not*

hearkened" (Jer 26:5).

⇨ And again, *"Because they have not hearkened to My words, saith the LORD, which I sent unto them by My servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but ye would not hear, saith the LORD"* (Jer 29:19).

⇨ And again, *"Howbeit I sent unto you all My servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods."* (Jer 44:4-5).

How serious is it to reject someone who is sent from God – and He does send ministers *"to every man"* (1 Cor 3:5). Such rejection is never treated with indifference by the *"God of all flesh"* (Jer 32:27). By creation, and by redemption, God has a right to command and direct all men. To question that right always wrong.

GUILTY OF SHEDDING BLOOD

" 50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; 51 From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation."

THE BLOOD OF ALL THE PROPHETS

"That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you . . ."

Matthew reads, *"all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood*

of Zacharias son of Barachias" (Mat 23:35).

The length of time between Abel and Zecharias is approximately 3,300 years. We do not know how many prophets were slain, or the number that comprised *"all the righteous blood shed upon the earth"* during those first 3,300 years. Jezebel killed a great number of prophets (1 Kgs 18:4,13). Nehemiah mentioned the slaying of *"prophets"* (Neh 9:26). Jeremiah also mentioned this kind of slaughter (Jer 2:30; 26:20,23).

However, a strict record was kept in heaven of all of this bloodshed. We know from the Revelation that the blood of martyrs will be avenged (Rev 6:9-11). It may look as though such bloodshed has gone unnoticed, but that is not the case at all. What Jesus says of this is most arresting. Something of

the Divine nature is now revealed. It is important to remember who is speaking. This is the Lord Jesus Christ, who knew, and knows, all things.

IT SHALL BE REQUIRED OF THIS GENERATION

" . . . It shall be required of this generation."

Other versions read, *"charged against this generation,"* ^{NASB} *"this generation will beheld responsible,"* ^{NIV} *"punishment may come on this generation for,"* ^{BBE} *"on this generation will fall the responsibility for,"* ^{CJB} *"the people living now will be charged with the murder of every prophet since the world was made,"* ^{GWN} *"will be exacted from this generation,"* ^{MIT} *"this generation will have to answer for,"* ^{NJB} and *"may be charged against and required of this age and generation."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

As Jesus nears the time of His appointed death, the animosity of the Jewish leaders begins to accelerate – Given O. Blakely

The generation of the ungodly – called “*the wicked*” (Matt 13:49; 2 Pet 2:7; 3:17), “*the children of the wicked one*” (Matt 13:38), “*tares*” (Matt 13:40), and “*goats*” (Matt 25:32-33), will be held responsible for “*all the righteous blood shed upon the earth.*”

The same thing is said of Babylon the Great, which is also in that “generation.” “And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of

every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird . . . And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth” (Rev 18:2,24).

Just as there are only two Masters, so there are only two generations – the progeny and followers of those masters. Both groups will share in the totality of what is reserved for them. There will be differing measures, whether blessing or cursing, but it will be of the same substance.

Just as all of the benefits resulting from the sacrifice of Christ will accrue to all of the saints in appropriate measures, so all of the results of wickedness will be allotted to the wicked in appropriate individual measures. In this way, just as the saints of God are laying up treasures in heaven, so the wicked are heaping up wrath (Job 36:13), and treasuring up wrath “*against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to ever man according to his deeds*” (Rom 2:5).

TAKING AWAY THE KEY OF KNOWLEDGE

^{52a} ***Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge . . .***

WOE TO YOU LAWYERS

“Woe unto you, lawyers! . . .”

Other versions read, “*Woe to you experts in the Law,*” ^{NIV} “*A curse is on you, teachers of the law!*” ^{BBE} “*How terrible for you legal experts!*” ^{CEB} “*Woe unto you, the doctors of the law,*” ^{DARBY} “*How horrible it will be for you experts in Moses' Teachings,*” ^{GWN} “*Judgment awaits you law experts,*” ^{MIT} “*Woe to you, scholars of the law,*” ^{NAB} “*What sorrow awaits you experts in religious law!*” ^{NLT} “*Woe to you experts in religion!*” ^{LIVING} and “*Alas for you expounders of the Law!*” ^{WEYMOUTH}

This is the roar of the “*Lion of the Tribe of Judah*” (Rev 5:5). This is the One out of whose mouth “*a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God*” (Rev 19:15).

He does not speak to these men as “the Lamb of God” (John 1:36), or the One who does not “break a bruised reed, or quench a smoking flax” (Matt 12:20). He does not address them as He who is “*meek and lowly of heart*” (Matt 11:29). It is the same Lord, to be sure, but He is now speaking to His

enemies, and He has no comfort for them. They have disadvantaged His “*brethren*” (Heb 2:11,17), and He will not overlook it!

YOU HAVE TAKEN AWAY THE KEY OF KNOWLEDGE

“ . . . for ye have taken away the key of knowledge . . . ”

THE KEY OF KNOWLEDGE

“THE TALMUD GIVES US THE CLUE TO THE MASTER’S WORDS OF BITTER REPROACH HERE. THERE WERE VERY MANY, IN THAT RESTLESS AGE OF INQUIRY, WAITING FOR THE CONSOLATION OF ISRAEL, WHO LONGED TO ENTER INTO THE REAL MEANING OF PSALM AND PROPHECY; BUT THE SCRIBE, THE LAWYER, AND THE DOCTOR, WITH THEIR STRANGE AND UNREAL INTERPRETATIONS, THEIR WILD AND FANTASTIC LEGENDS, THEIR OWN OFTEN MEANINGLESS ADDITIONS, EFFECTUALLY HINDERED ALL REAL STUDY OF THE DIVINE ORACLES. THE TALMUD — IN THE FORM WE NOW POSSESS IT — WELL REPRESENTS THE TEACHING OF THESE SCHOOLS SO BITTERLY CENSURED BY THE LORD.” ^{PULPIT COMMENTARY}

Other versions read, “*snatched away the key of knowledge,*” ^{CEB} “*hidden the keys of knowledge,*” ^{LEW} “*remove the key to knowledge from the people,*” ^{NLT} “*you hide the truth from the people,*” ^{LIVING} “*hidden the key to learning,*” ^{IE} and “*taken away the key to the door of knowledge.*” ^{WILLIAMS}

The “*key of knowledge*” was the correct manner of viewing the text of Scripture. In its most precise sense, this would be discerning that the overriding theme of Scripture was the coming

Christ. As Jesus said of the Scriptures, “*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me*” (John 5:39). An angel also testified to John, “*the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*” (Rev 19:10). Their traditions, however (as embodied in the Talmud), obscured the focus of the Scriptures.

In other words, “*the key of knowledge*” related to preparing the people to receive the Messiah, and thus to Him would be “*the gathering of the people*” (Gen 49:10). During the ministry of Jesus among men, a proper view of the Scriptures enabled believers to recognize Him, as illustrated in the words of Philip: “*We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets*” (John 1:45). To offset the effects of the obscurity caused by the “*Lawyers,*” God sent John the Baptist to “*prepare the way*” for the Christ (Isa 40:3-5). His message was focused on the Christ, and the preparation required to receive Him.

To believe John, one had to overcome the traditional teaching of the Jewish leaders. Their teaching did not prepare people for Jesus – either to recognize Him, or take advantage of His ministry during His interim in the world. They were a bottleneck to knowledge.

A SIMILAR THING HAS HAPPENED DURING OUR TIME

As Jesus nears the time of His appointed death, the animosity of the Jewish leaders begins to accelerate – Given O. Blakely

In our time *"the key of knowledge"* has a more clearly defined view of the Lord Jesus Christ within the context of God's *"eternal purpose"* (Eph 3:11), and the role of salvation as regards the preparation of men to participate in that purpose in the world to come. In that purpose WHY sins are remitted is delineated, as well as the objective of the redeemed in reigning with Christ in *"the world to come."*

However, as in our text, the "Christian" leaders have taken away that *"key of knowledge."* What is being generally declared in the Christian community has left the people in a state of spiritual ignorance. A modern Gentile version of "the Talmud" has been created. Scriptures are filtered through a theological system that has been developed by men, and therefore the Scriptures are read without the proper understanding. Some examples of these erroneous emphases are as follows.

⇒ **THE GREAT COMMISSION MENTALITY.** Although the expression "great commission" is not, in any form, found in Scripture, yet it is a universally recognized emphasis within "Christianity." It is said to be stated in Matthews 28:18-20, and Mark 16:15-16. The fundamental objective is affirmed to be the "winning of souls," which trumps all other theological stress. This

emphasis never stresses preparation for reigning with Christ in *"the world to come."* It does not emphasize WHY there is conversion, re-creation, and being born again.

⇒ **THE IDEAL HOME.** Here, family life is lauded as the preeminent body of people. This is done, even though, in Scripture, the clear emphasis of a group of people is "the body of Christ" (1 Cor 12:27; Eph 4:12), referred to as *"the brethren"* (Col 4:15; 1 Pet 1:22; Heb 2:11,12,17), or *"the church"* (1 Cor 12:28; Eph 1:22; 3:10,21; Col 1:18; 1 Tim 3:15).

⇒ **PERSONAL HEALTH AND WEALTH.** This is a recent emphasis, and is now very prominent in the United States. This body of teaching emphasizes life in this present world, and speaks in an accommodating way about "the world to come."

⇒ **A MORAL CODE.** In this approach, "how to live" in this world is the thrust of the teaching. A clear point is not made of the fact that this is in order to participation with Christ in "the world to come." Morality is depicted as an end of itself.

Approaches like this do the same thing the Lawyers did – they *"take away the key of knowledge,"* leaving

the people in abject ignorance about the purpose for Christ Jesus. All such emphases neglect the exposition of Christ's present ministry – His intercession, mediation, and global reign. They do not stress fellowship with Christ (1 Cor 1:9), living by faith (Heb 10:38), walking in the Spirit (Gal 5:16), hearing what the Spirit is saying to the churches (Rev 2:7), edification (1 Cor 14:26; Eph 4:12), and WHY men are to be holy (Rom 12:1; Eph 1:4; 2:21; 5:27; Col 1:22; 1 Pet 1:15-16).

When it comes to the revealed requirement of being *"filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding"* (Col 1:9), and being *"able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God"* (Eph 3:18-19), **why is there such a high level of ignorance within the professed church?**

It is because its leaders, as a whole, have *"taken away the key of knowledge."* They have propagated a system of religion that has left the people fundamentally ignorant of God, Christ, salvation, and God's eternal purpose. The words of Jesus in our text confirms the absolute seriousness of such an action. Our Lord's words and their mature speaks of serious matters.

NOT ENTERING AND HINDERING ENTRANCE

"^{52b} . . . **ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.**"

Jesus continues His blistering rebuke. He does so because of the effect of their misplaced emphasis. When it comes to preaching and teaching, it is serious business to be wrong, and men need to know this. When it comes to teaching people the things of God, those who are fundamentally wrong in what they are in no way acceptable to God. In the past, the Lord has made this sufficiently

clear. He spoke of teachers and professed prophets among the Jews in this manner: "The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart . . . I sent them not" (Jer 14:14-15); *"Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall*

not profit this people at all, saith the LORD" (Jer 23:32). Jesus warned about *"false Christs"* (Matt 24:24) and *"false prophets"* (Matt 7:15). The apostles did the same (2 Pet 2:1; 1 John 4:1). There is no acceptable reason for ignoring these warnings.

THEY ENTERED NOT THEMSELVES
"...ye entered not in yourselves..."

Other versions read, *"you yourselves have not entered,"* ^{NIV} *"you did not go in yourselves,"* ^{BBE} *"You haven't gained entrance into knowledge*

As Jesus nears the time of His appointed death, the animosity of the Jewish leaders begins to accelerate – Given O. Blakely

yourselves," ^{GWN} "You don't enter the Kingdom yourselves," ^{NLT} "You won't accept it for yourselves," ^{LIVING} and "You yourselves would not learn." ^{IE}

Jesus explains why these Lawyers had taken away the key of knowledge, and why they taught the way they did. He did not spread the cloak of tolerance over His words.

Behind this word is the fact that the Scriptures themselves are designed to awaken a holy interest to pursue their meaning. By saying the Lawyers did not enter themselves, Jesus is exposing their fundamental disinterest in the things of God. They did not read the Scriptures with proper intention,

therefore what they were designed to did not do it in them. What further complicated the situation is that their teaching passed along their spirit and attitude in those who received what they said.

If any person questions the reality of what I have just said, consider the aggressiveness with which disciples of false teachers contend for their incorrect views.

THEY HINDERED THOSE WHO WERE ENTERING

" . . . and them that were entering in ye hindered."

There were some seeking souls

among the people. When the Holy Child Jesus was dedicated, there were people in Jerusalem that *"looked for redemption"* (Lk 2:38). When John the Baptist started preaching, *"the people were in expectation"* (Lk 3:15). However, until that time, the people had been hindered by the teachers of the Law – men who should have been preparing the people to expect the Messiah.

This transgression had not gone unnoticed by the Lord. Heaven knew of this circumstance, and would provide a way for the people to enter. This will be accomplished by sending messages to declare the Christ, then drawing men to Him (John 6:44,65).

URGING AND PROVOKING JESUS

"⁵³ And as He said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge Him vehemently, and to provoke Him to speak of many things."

AS HE SAID THESE THINGS

"And as He said these things unto them . . ."

Other versions read, *"when He left there,"* ^{NASB} *"when He went outside,"* ^{NRSV} *"when He went away from there,"* ^{RSV} *"when he had come out of that place,"* ^{BBE} *"As he left there,"* ^{CEB} *"as he said these things to them,"* ^{DARBY} *"as he was saying these things to them,"* ^{DOUAY} *"while he spoke these (words) to them,"* ^{ETH} *"as he said these things against them in the sight of all the people,"* ^{LEW} *"when he had said these things to them,"* ^{MRD} *"in his speaking these things unto them,"* ^{YLT} *"from that time on,"* ^{LIVING} *"Jesus was about to leave, but the teachers and the Pharisees wanted to get even with him,"* ^{CEV} *"As Jesus was leaving,"* ^{ISV} *"As soon as Jesus left the table,"* ^{MESSAGE} *"And in his speaking these things unto them,"* ^{YLT} *"As He left there, the scribes and the Pharisees [followed Him closely."]* ^{AMPLIFIED}

There are differing views reflected in the various translations, with the infamous appeal to varying manuscripts.

⇒ While Jesus was speaking, the scribes and Pharisees sought to confront Him publicly, as He had rebuked them publicly.

⇒ The Lord abruptly leaves after rebuking the scribes and the Pharisees, and they follow Him seeking to entrap Him in His words.

⇒ The Lord outside of the house after eating, and the scribes and Pharisees followed him, arguing against Him.

I prefer to see this as a public retort against Jesus while He was speaking to them, then pursuing Him with the intent to take His life. I cannot see Jesus as simply abandoning the fray, leaving the people to further exposure to these men.

THEY BEGAN TO URGE HIM

" . . . the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge Him vehemently . . ."

Other versions read, *"assail Him vehemently"* ^{NKJV} *"began to be very*

hostile," ^{NASB} *"began to press Him hard,"* ^{RSV} *"came round him angrily,"* ^{BBE} *"began to resent him deeply,"* ^{CEB} *"began violently to urge him,"* ^{DOUAY} *"became hostile,"* ^{IE} *"began to give him a lot of trouble" and "commenced a vehement attempt to entangle Him."* ^{WEYMOUTH}

Jesus had exposed these hypocrites, and now they attempt to justify themselves before men, pitting their knowledge against His. Although this was a hopeless attempt, they are not aware of it. The flesh blinds men to their own depravity, and leads them to think they can successfully oppose what is said to come from God – like the words that Jesus spoke (John 3:34; John 12:47-48; John 14:21).

THEY BEGAN TO PROVOKE HIM

" . . . and to provoke Him to speak of many things."

Other versions read, *"assail Him vehemently and to cross examine Him,"* ^{NKJV} *"began to be very hostile and to question Him closely on many subjects,"* ^{NASB} *"began to press Him hard, and to provoke Him to speak many things,"* ^{RSV} *"came round him angrily, questioning him about more*

things," ^{BBE} "began to resent him deeply and to ask him pointed questions about many things," ^{CEB} "began violently to urge him, and to oppress his mouth about many things," ^{DOUAY} "became hostile and tried to provoke him with many questions," ^{NLT} "began fearfully to urge and to press him to speak about many things," ^{YLT} "plied him fiercely with a host of questions, trying to trap him into saying something for which they could have him arrested," ^{LIVING} "began to give him a lot of trouble. They asked Jesus questions about many other things," ^{IE} and "commenced a vehement attempt to entangle Him and make Him give off-hand answers on numerous points." ^{WEYMOUTH}

Many times we read of Christ's opponents, as well as others, asking Him questions.

⇒ "Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, **Master, which is the great commandment in the law?**" (Matt 22:35-36).

⇒ "And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, **seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him.**" (Mark 8:11)

⇒ "Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him, **Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die,**

having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children. And the second took her to wife, and he died childless. And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife?" (Luke 20:33)

⇒ "And they asked him, saying, **Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days? that they might accuse him**" (Matt 12:10).

⇒ "Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, **Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?**" (Mark 7:5)

⇒ "And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, **Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.**" (Mark 10:2)

⇒ "And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, **Which is the first commandment of all?**" (Mark 12:28)

⇒ "And a certain ruler asked him,

saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (Luke 18:18)

⇒ "And they asked him, saying, **Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly: Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no?**" (Luke 20:21-22)

Most of the questions were asked to trick Jesus into saying something the askers could condemn. One questioner, "a certain ruler," asked an apparently honest question: "Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (Lk 18:18). However, when the Lord Jesus answered his question the man "was very sorrowful: for he was very rich" (Luke 18:22-23). Mark' record of that incident reads, "And he was sad at that saying, and **went away grieved: for he had great possessions**" (Mark 10:22).

THE DRAWING POWER OF JESUS

Jesus was unique in this respect, drawing out questions and inquiries, whether honest or dishonest. I doubt that any of the scribes and Pharisees were followed by throngs of people, many of them asking questions of those Jewish leaders. They apparently did not make themselves available for inquiry and dialog. They were content to be saluted with surface honor in the marketplace, but no one expected any kind of advantage to come from them.

LAYING WAIT AND SEEKING TO CATCH HIM

" ⁵⁴ **Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.**"

Now, we will behold Jesus in the crucible of trial. His enemies are stalking Him, and doing so with wicked intentions. How will He react?

LAYING WAIT FOR HIM "Laying wait for Him . . ."

Other versions read, "plotting

against Him," ^{NASB} "laying traps," ^{CJB} "enticed him on many (points)," ^{ETH} "watched him closely," ^{GWN} "They intended to ambush him," ^{MIT} "practiced many wiles upon him," ^{MRD} "They set traps for him," ^{NIRV} and "Secretly watching and plotting and lying in wait for Him." ^{AMPLIFIED}

Earlier in His ministry "the Jews sought the more to kill Him" (John 5:18). Later the chief priests and scribes will seek to kill Jesus (Lk 22:2).

On one occasion, forty Jews laid in wait for Paul, who "bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee" (Acts 23:21).

This, however, was not the intent of the scribes and Pharisees at this point. Now they were contending with Jesus the Teacher, not the one who worked miracles on the Sabbath day, violating their tradition. The average

As Jesus nears the time of His appointed death, the animosity of the Jewish leaders begins to accelerate – Given O. Blakely

person does not do well when they are aware people are carefully watching him. In view of this, Jesus distinguishes Himself from all other men by going about doing the Father's will while people are meticulously watching Him with wicked intentions.

SEEKING TO CATCH HIM

" . . . and seeking to catch something out of His mouth . . . "

Other versions read, *"catch Him in something He might say,"* ^{NKJV} *"seeking to lay hold on something from his mouth,"* ^{ETH} and *"seize upon something He might say."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

This tells you something about Jesus – He said a lot of things, revealed a lot of truth, couching the truth in well chosen words. Many religious leaders

are not at all noted for what they **say**. However, Jesus was noted for what He said and taught. There are fifty-one references to Jesus teaching in the Gospels. The twelve references to Jesus healing in the Gospels – *"He healed,"* and *"healing."*

This is why His enemies tries to catch Him in His words – He spoke so many of them. Sixty-five times the words *"Jesus said"* are mentioned in the Gospels. The words *"He said"* are mentioned two hundred and twenty-seven times in the Gospels. Jesus was a speaking Jesus, and all of His words were *"spirit"* and *"life"* (John 6:63).

THAT THEY MIGHT ACCUSE HIM

" . . . that they might accuse Him."

Other versions read, *"which might be used against him."* ^{BBE} This phrase is omitted in all of the later versions.

The word translated "accuse" is translated from a word meaning "TO SPEAK AGAINST IN COURT, IN THE ASSEMBLY OF THE PEOPLE." ^{THAYER}

The idea is that they wanted to publicly disgrace Jesus by showing where He had spoken in contradiction of either the Law. Of course, they had equated their own traditions with *"the Law,"* and were judging Him on that basis. However, even then, they could not withstand the wisdom with which He answered, or in any way disprove His affirmations. Their only response to this frustration would be to seek a means to have Him put to death, and any means would be acceptable to them.

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 7/8/16. In our next lesson, we will continue our series in the Gospel of Luke. The FORTY-SECOND lesson will cover verses 1 thru 21 of chapter 12: "THE PROPER PERSPECTIVE OF LIVING." Jesus emphasizes the tentative nature of life in this world, urging us to consider how our lives are to be spent. 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.

