



A just weight
and balance

are the
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- If a man is characteristically and temperamentally an irritable, ill-tempered and notoriously given to uncontrolled outbursts of passionate anger, his anger is neither effective nor impressive.
- Nobody pays any attention to the anger of a bad-tempered man.

- But when a person who is characteristically mEEK and lowly,
gentle and loving,
- Suddenly erupts into blazing wrath, even the most thoughtless person is shocked into
taking thought.

- That is why the anger of Jesus is so awe-inspiring a sight.
- **Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?**
(Matthew 23:33)

- It is one of the plainest doctrines in the Bible,
that the
seed of the woman
and the
seed of the serpent,
are locked in a death
struggle.

- It is seldom in literature that we find so unsparing and sustained an indictment as we find in Matthew 23 when the wrath of Jesus is directed against the Scribes and Pharisees.

- The Jews had a saying,
- "Moses received the Law and delivered it to Joshua;
- and Joshua to the elders;
- and the elders to the prophets;
 - and the prophets to the men of the Great Synagogue."

- To them the Law was the very word of God, the greatest and most precious possession in the world.

- **The study of the Law**
became the
greatest
of all professions;

- And that study of the Law
was committed to
the men of the
Great Synagogue,
the Scribes.

- The Pharisees whose name means "The Separated Ones"
- Were the men who dedicated their whole life to the careful and meticulous observance of every rule and regulation which the Scribes had worked out.

- They were men who accepted the ever-increasing number of religious rules.
- The great principles of the Law were broken up into thousands upon thousands of little rules and regulations.

- We have seen,
for instance,
how the Law said:
 - That a man must **not**
work on the Sabbath day,
 - And how the Scribes
labored to define work.

- How they laid it down
how many paces
a man might walk
on the Sabbath,
- How heavy a burden
he might carry,
- The things he might
might not do.

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- **Matthew 23:4**
For they bind
heavy burdens

**and grievous to be borne,
and lay them on men's
shoulders; but they
themselves will not move
them with one of their
fingers.**

- The Pharisees then were two things.
 - First, they were dedicated legalists;
 - Religion to them was the observance of every detail of the Law.

- Second they were desperately earnest about their religion.

- For no one would have accepted the impossibly demanding task of living a life like that unless he had been in the most deadly earnest.

- They could, therefore, develop at one and the same time
- all the faults of legalism and
- all the virtues of complete self-dedication.

- A Pharisee might either be
- an arrogant legalist,
- or
- a man of burning devotion to God.

- In Matthew 23:1,
the Lord gives
His last sermon
to the people of Israel.
- One would think it would be
about love & forgiveness.
 - But it against these
pious, holy, and arrogant
religious leaders.

- It is a **denunciation** and **a warning** for the people to stay away from them.
- And **why** is that?

- They are false shepherds,
- Wolves in sheep's clothing,
 - And they must be avoided.
 - And our Lord pulls no punches in making that abundantly clear.

- 2 Peter 2:1
- 2:1 False prophets were among God's people the past,
 - as false teachers will be among you.
- They will secretly bring in their own destructive teachings.

- Is there a more serious crime than falsifying the truth of the Word of God?
- Is there anything worse than lying about the meaning of Scripture?

- Is there a more severe crime teaching the devil's lies as if they were God's truth?

- Is there anything that angers God more than misrepresentation of His Word?
- We shall find out!

- Is there a worse hypocrisy than saying you speak for God to the salvation of souls when in reality you speak for Satan to the damnation of souls?

- Can there be a more heinous deception than being a false teacher in the church?
- And there are many of them!

- Jesus answers with a resounding "no" to all those questions.
- Satan has always endeavored to infiltrate God's people with those who say they speak for God but in reality speak for Satan.

- **Many preachers claim**
to speak the truth
who in fact speak error.
- They may be sincere about it
but it is still error.
- It is an age-old **tactic** of Satan,
 - God has repeatedly
warned His people
about such false teachers.

- If you were to go back to Deuteronomy 13:1-18
- The Word of God says that any prophet who misrepresents God's truth was to be killed instantly.
- Now, you think that is severe?

- Such a death penalty was even to be applied to any family member.
- Love for your family did not take the priority over devotion to God.
- So that chapter says if you find a false prophet, kill him, even if he's is your most loved one.

- Deuteronomy 13:6

If your brother, the son of your mother, or your son or your daughter or the wife of your heart, or the friend who is as dear to you as your life,

- 13:8 have no pity on him or mercy,
- 13:9 But put him to death without question;
- let your hand be the first stretched out against him to put him to death,
- 13:10 Let him be stoned with stones till he is dead;

- That chapter also says that any city influenced by lying prophets who in the name of God lead people away from the true way is to be destroyed, the whole city.
- God is very serious about this.

- In the **2 Corinthians 11** there is a warning for us today.

- **11:13** For such are **false apostles,**
deceitful workers,
transforming themselves
into the apostles of Christ.

- **11:14** And no marvel;
for Satan himself
is transformed
into an angel of light.

- Sin never approaches us as sin,
 - Satan never comes to us as Satan,
 - Satan always comes to us in the name of Christ.
- Error never comes to us as error, error always comes to us as truth, but it isn't.

- **False teachers are**
always disguised as
righteous and truthful
servants of God.
- **They are the most dangerous**
who name the name of God
and who pervert
the truth.
- **Satanic demons**
espousing
demon doctrine.

- And in the Scripture they are never tolerated.

- They are totally denounced, condemned to eternal damnation.

- The power behind these false teachers is Satan.

- He was, he is and he always will be working to destroy the plan of God until his final end.

- **Speaking to the Pharisees**

Jesus said:

- **John 8:44**

Ye are of **your father** the devil,

- and the lusts of your father **you will do.**

- He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth,

- because there is **no truth** in him.

- Many today have become **a bit witless** on these matters.
 - Becoming too **tolerant of error.**
 - There is a cry today **for everyone to agree** with everyone.

- To tolerate everyone
who names the name of Christ
no matter what he teaches.
- This sort of endless tolerance
has produced
indifference to truth.
 - Jesus never
tolerated tolerance.

- Jesus addressed the Pharisees as they were false teachers leading the people astray.
- But they are not the only false teachers,

- Knowing full well that His time on earth was drawing to a close, **our Lord no longer keeps back** his opinion of the leading teachers of the Jews.
- Knowing that He would soon leave His followers alone, **like sheep among wolves,**
 - He warns them plainly **against the false shepherds.**

- Are you heeding that warning?
- This same theme is found in the writings of Peter and Jude.
 - Both are almost a direct parallel to each other.
 - You might say, "That proves what?"

- It proves the urgency of the Holy Spirit in repeating the same thing twice.
 - Jude and Peter both inspired by the Holy Spirit.
- Say essentially the same thing about false teachers, because they are such a great danger to God's purpose.

- **2 Peter 2:1**

But there were false prophets among the people, as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly put forward wrong teachings for your destruction, even turning away from the Lord who gave himself for them; whose destruction will come quickly, and they themselves will be the cause of it.

- **2:2 And a great number will go with them in their evil ways,**

- **Jude 1:3**

**I felt the need of writing...
to encourage you to
fight on for the faith
which once and for all
God has given
to his people.**

- **Jude 1:4**
For some **godless** people
- **have slipped in unnoticed,**
- **who distort the message**
- **about the grace of our God**

➤ Our Lord now turns
‘to the multitudes and to his disciples’
(**Matthew 23:1**),

➤ **And without personal bitterness**
denounces these His enemies.

➤ **It is a part of His mercy,**
since it warns His sheep against
the coming of the wolf.

➤ The **Pharisees** were
the **leaders** of the people
and His greatest **foes**.

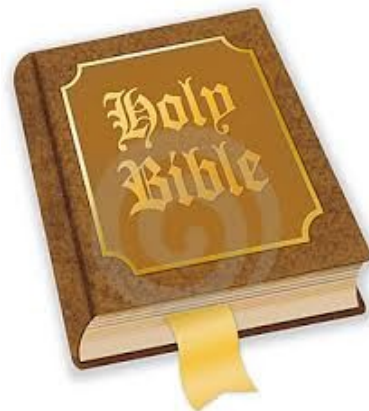
- The chapter which is before us contains the “**Woes**” of the King upon the Pharisees.
 - It is one of the most **solemn** discourses in the gospels.

- **Pharisaism**
is still
alive and well
on earth.
- We have **heard**
the Lord's warning.
- **Let us be on guard!**

**The doors of the church
are open.**

**The Spirit and the Bride
Say
“Come”.**

Revelation 22:17



- 11-04-2018