

Weaving the Word

Woe, Woe, Woe

Part 61 – March 13, 2016

Welcome to where we're learning to trust our Savior and share our faith



Do you ever major in the minors? Ever desire man's approval over Gods? Ever scatter God's flock? Remember: *"He who does not gather with me, scatters."* (Luke 11:23) Woe. Woe. Woe. **If ever, whenever, we do, we're sitting on the wrong side of the table!**

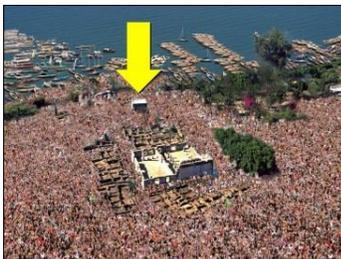
Jesus, *all by Himself*, is having lunch with the Pharisees (hostile, religious bullies) and the Scribes, (controlling, threatening, completely corrupt, experts in the minutia of scripture).



These thugs brandish all power over the Jews. They've come to Capernaum from Jerusalem (Mark 3:22) supposedly officially to examine Jesus' claims. But, **having already discussed His murder, after the showdown in the synagogue,** (Luke 6:7; Mat 12:14) they're not exactly ... *unbiased*. **They actually came to denounce His claims, to explain away His power (the devil), and to scatter His massive crowd of followers.** (Mat 12:23-24)



These mob bosses are never, ever, trifled with ... until Jesus calls 'em out, and declares 'em as evil sons of poisonous snakes, full of darkness and demons; adulterous, blasphemous, enemies of God's Spirit, *beyond repentance* and forgiveness and condemned to hell. (Mat 12:31-45; Luke 11:34-35)



And, now they're having brunch together. During which, He says, *"Woe to you Pharisees ..."* **"Woe" is a word of warning, that there'll be dire consequences if an action is continued.** The **1st Woe** concerns their fixation on religious fine points while ignoring justice and love. (Luke 11:42) **They majored in the minors.**



[For, the Prophet Isaiah said:] Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees ... and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people ... – Isaiah 10:1-2a NIV

The **2nd Woe** concerns their preoccupation with position, prestige, and praise. **They desired man's approval over God's.** (Luke 11:43)

[And, the Prophet Ezekiel said] Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel ... "This is what the Sovereign Lord says: 'Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves!'" – Ezekiel 34:2 NIV

The **3rd Woe** concerns their corruption of all who came in contact with ‘em. **They scattered God’s flock from the Shepherd.** (Luke 11:44)

[And, the Prophet Jeremiah said] “Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!” ... declares the Lord. – Jeremiah 23:1-2 NIV

But, what is it that’s *so especially evil* about these guys?

One of the **experts in the law** [in this Scribe syndicate] answered him, **“Teacher, when you say these things, you insult us also.”** – Luke 11:45 NIV

He knows that Jesus knows that He has offended them greatly. And, he can also see that Jesus is brilliantly versed in scripture, and these untrained, unqualified, Pharisees are simply no match. He can see what Jesus is doing. He knows the references. So, he clears his throat and says: **“Teacher, why don’t you pick on someone your own size?”**

Jesus replied, “And you experts in the law, woe to you, because you **load people down with burdens they can hardly carry,** [unlike the Messiah, whose “burden is light” (Mat 11:30)] **and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them.** [They’re heavy on added on rules, but light on love and grace] – Luke 11:46 NIV

Do you ease the burden of those around you, or add to it?

Just before lunch, Jesus had proclaimed to these scribes, that He was the Finger of God (Luke 11:20) ushering in the Kingdom of God. **His burden is light because He’s the Finger of God; and, He does all the heavy lifting.** In fact, **the One and only Finger they’ll lift is Him,** which *allows Him* to carry *our* burden to the cross.

Jesus said, [to them, on a later occasion] “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the one I claim to be ...” – John 8:28 NIV



Zechariah’s Tomb, Jerusalem

Who does He *claim* to be? *Woe, woe, woe; hold your horses.*

“Woe to you, because you build [new] tombs for the prophets, and it was your forefathers who killed them. So **you testify that you approve of what your forefathers did; they killed the prophets, and you build their tombs.** – Luke 11:47-48 NIV

How would building tombs in their honor approve of their *murder*? Well, *first:* why did their forefathers kill the prophets? *To silence them.* And, these are the prophets who spoke of the coming Messiah.

And, these experts know every detail they wrote, and how **Jesus is fulfilling them.** But, they **reject them,** so they **silence them,** by **not sharing them,** while deviously **pretending to honor them.** They not only re-buried the prophets, but their message as well.

Just before Jesus called ‘em out, He healed a blind, deaf, mute.

All the people were astonished and said, "Could this be the Son of David?" – Matthew 12:23 NIV

Who are they asking? Not their neighbor ... *their neighbor can't read*. The vast majority was illiterate. And most have never even *seen*, let alone *studied*, a complete set of Scripture scrolls. So, **they turn to the only trusted experts**, the Scribes who've come 88 miles from Jerusalem, (Mark 3:22) supposedly for this *very purpose*. **But, they withheld what they knew from those in need ... do you? They refused to reveal the One who relieves the burden ... do you?**



If you're watching someone search for a lost key, and you happen to find it, could you imagine *not lifting a finger* to show it? **If you're watching someone search for truth, meaning, and relief from the burden of sin and death and shame, and you happen to find it, could you imagine *not lifting a finger* to share it?!**

They could've said: "*We've not reached a conclusion yet; but, what we have just witnessed does fulfill what was spoken through the Prophet Isaiah, concerning the Christ.*"

... your God ... will come to save you. Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. ... and the mute tongue shout for joy. – Isaiah 35:4-6 NIV

But, instead, they said, "*He's the devil!*" (Mat 12:24)

These wicked sons of snakes are not only holding the key, they're hiding it!



[Isaiah writes] "I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David; **what he opens** [the New Covenant] no one can shut, and **what he shuts** [the Old Covenant] no one can open." – Isaiah 22:22 NIV

The people ask 'em point blank if they've *seen* the key of the *Son of David*. But, they won't lift a finger to the scroll.

Because of this, **God in his wisdom said**, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and others they will persecute.' Therefore *this generation will be held responsible for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world, from the blood of Abel* [the first recorded murdered prophet in the OT] to the blood of **Zechariah**, [the last recorded murdered prophet] who was killed between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, this generation will be held responsible for it all. [A to Z] – Luke 11:49-51 NIV

By muffling God's Word and gagging His spokesmen, they've become *accomplices to every murder of every prophet from A to Z!* 850 years before, the Prophet Zechariah asked, "*Why do you disobey the Lord's commands?*" and said, "*Because you have forsaken the Lord he has forsaken you.*" So, they killed him. But, *Zechariah*, as these scribes know ...

... said as he lay dying, "May the Lord see this and call you to account." [And, *Jesus just did!*] – 2 Chronicles 24:20-22 NIV

“Woe to you experts in the law, because **you have taken away the key to knowledge.** [The voice of the prophets; this is how they “testify” that they approve of what their forefathers did to them] **You yourselves have not entered,** [Why?! Because they don’t believe it; don’t respect it; they only use it for power, prestige, and personal gain] and **you have hindered those who were entering.**” – Luke 11:52 NIV

Are you withholding key evidence God has given you to share? You don’t want to be on that side of the table! **Do you see people searching? Do you hold the key? That’s not by accident; that’s by the will of God and your created purpose.**

When Jesus left there, the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to oppose him fiercely and to besiege him with questions, waiting to catch him in something he might say. – Luke 11:53-54 NIV

These guys don’t know who they’re messin’ with! *Who* does He claim to be? Let’s go back to the woe, where Jesus says that ...

God in his wisdom said, [*eipon: speaks* (It’s not necessarily past tense)] **‘I will send them prophets and apostles,** some of whom they will kill and others they will persecute.’ Therefore this generation will be held responsible for the blood of all the prophets that has been shed since the beginning of the world ...’ - Luke 11:49-50 NIV

These Scribes recognize Jesus’ incredible grasp of Scripture. They know all the references; *but*, these *know-it-alls don’t know this one!* And, it *would’a really got under their Scribey skin!* “Where did God say that? When did God say that? Why would He say that God said that?”



They would’ve searched the scriptures diligently, (John 5:39) but they wouldn’t have found it; because, God hadn’t said it ... *yet.* **What’s the last thing Jesus teaches, publically, in the Temple?** What He had said privately, a year-and-a-half before, at lunch. Two days before the cross, He repeats these woes of warning, *not* to the Scribes and Pharisees, but to the people, *regarding ‘em.* Then, He turns to these men, who are still holding and hiding the key, and makes **His last public statement, before the cross.**

“You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? Therefore **I am sending you prophets and wise men and teachers.** Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town. And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah ...” – Matthew 23:33-35a NIV

He was quoting himself, a year-and-a-half before He said it! Where? In the Temple. When? Two days before the cross. Why? **To reveal what they refused to share: *He’s the Great I Am!***

This is the key that we hold in our possession. Correction: He is the Key that we hold in our heart. So, you ready to major in the majors? You gonna go for God’s approval over man’s?

Then, you got’a pour your heart into gathering His flock!