



HOLY WEEK TUESDAY

TEACHING BY DAY

- **Lk 21:37** - Luke documents that Jesus would teach in the Temple area by **day**, and that at **night** He would leave and stay at the place called the Mount of Olives. cf Mk 11:19 *(Though on Palm Sunday and/or Monday He went to Bethany for the night. Mk 11:11)*
- **In fact Lk 21: 38** - records that people would get up early in the morning to listen to Him in the Temple area.



This pattern was known to Judas Iscariot

AUTHORITY QUESTIONED

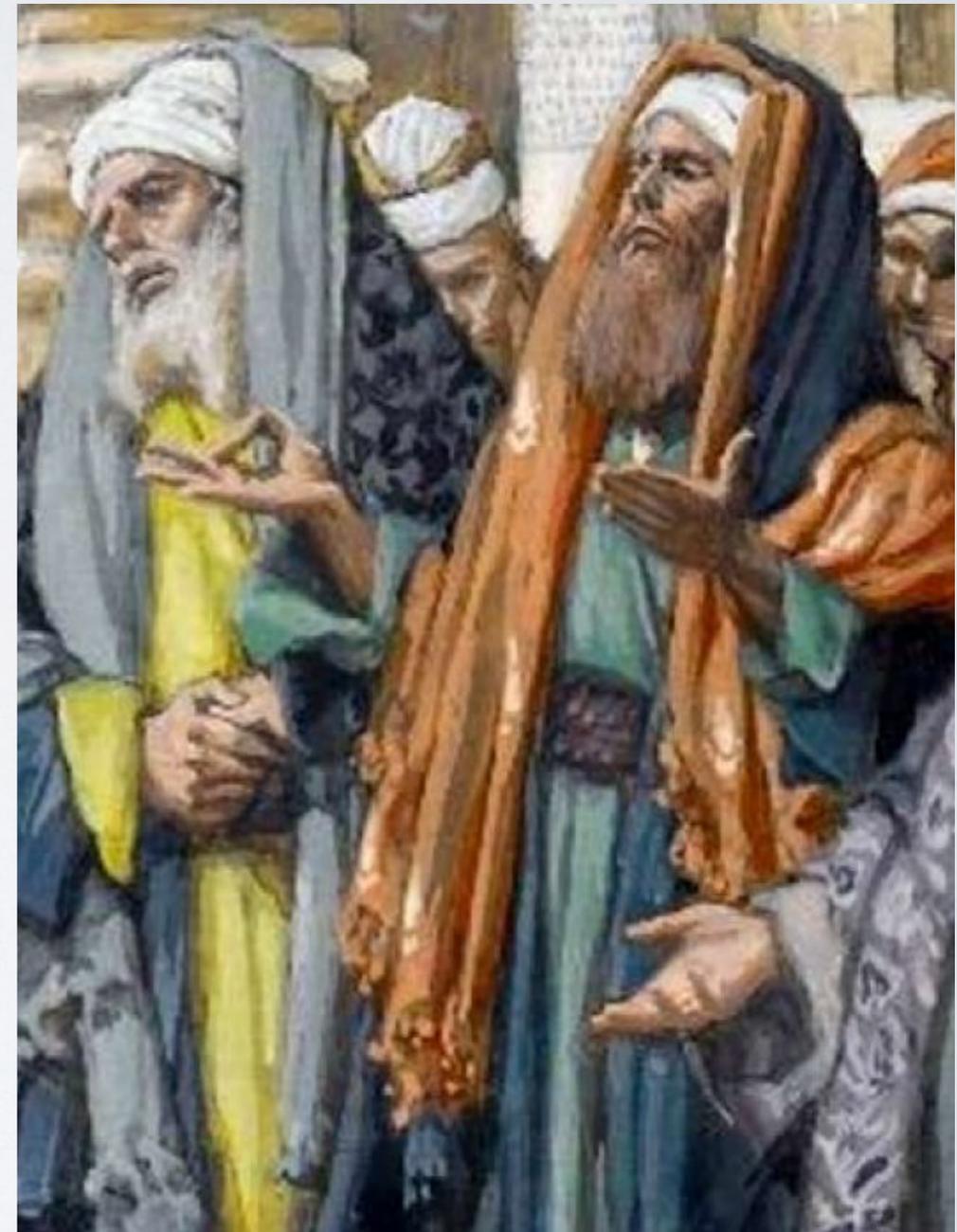
- **Mt 21: 23-27*** Clever logic play by Our Lord.
 - What is imputed via John the Baptist, is implicitly stated as the Chief Priests' view of Jesus.
- CONTEXT - *Cleansing of the Temple, Healing the lame and sick, accepting the ovation of Children* (Mt 21: 14-15)
- **Same Dilemma as John.** If Jesus ministry is **earthly**, the context of the Triumphal Entry is undermined, and the crowd is angered. If **heavenly**, why not believe Jesus?

AUTHORITY QUESTIONED

- The Chief Priests could not detract from Jesus' miracles, nor his cures of the lame and sick and even raising Lazarus from the dead, so they focus on the Temple cleansing.
 - It is as if they say, "Who do you think you are, that you can forbid selling in the Temple" They believe Jesus has usurped the authority of the Priests who manage the Temple.
 - "You aren't a priest! By what authority do you presume to exercise this power?"

AUTHORITY QUESTIONED

- The attack by the **Chief priests and elders** was not without some knowledge of the signs asserted by the Triumphal Entry riding on a donkey and Cleansing of the Temple.
- **The leaders understood that Jesus was claiming authority as Messiah, and they wanted to know ‘Where He got such an authority?’**
- **NOT from them! ... perhaps from Beelzebub? (cf Mt 12:24)**



PARABLE - TWO SONS

- **Mt 21: 28-32** The Parable of the Two Sons
- **Many** ancient interpreters understood the two sons to be the **Public sinners** and the **Pharisees and elders**.
- The **Public sinners** who would not at first worship or serve the true God, but being converted became **faithful servants**.
- The **Pharisees and elders** who were understood to have **promised obedience, instead rejected the Messiah**, such that even converted tax collectors and prostitutes would enter the kingdom first.

PARABLE - TWO SONS

- **Others**, including **St John Chrysostom**, understood the parable of the two sons to be also a **prophecy** regarding the future of the **Gentiles** and the **Jews**.
- The **Gentiles** who though had never heard the law, nor promised obedience to it, **showed submission to the Messianic message** as communicated by the Apostles.
- The **Jews** who having historically **promised obedience**, **rejected the Messiah**, such that even **converted tax collectors & prostitutes** would enter the **kingdom** first.

PARABLE - TENANTS

- **Mt 21: 33-6*** The Parable of the Tenants
 - This parable flows naturally from the previous two sections regarding the origin of Jesus' authority and the Parable of the Two sons.
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- Recall - **Isaiah 5: 3-5*** and **Jer 2:21***:
 - The **Landowner** is **God**,
 - The **Vineyard** is **Israel** - *particularly as expressed by its leadership.*
 - The **Tenants** are the **Chief Priests and Elders**

PARABLE - TENANTS

- This parable portrays the history of Israel - **Killing all the prophets who come in the name of the Lord God.**
- Seeking for itself that which belongs to God. **The inheritance** - here represented by the Temple and the Law, which they have turned into a den of thieves.
 - A revelation that God has a Son, and that He comes to render an accounting of the **FRUIT** produced.
 - The **Tenants** (priests and religious) **KILL** the Son - to keep their status as inheritors of God's promises.

PARABLE - TENANTS

- The absence of the Owner makes it clear that God really and substantially entrusted Israel to its leaders.
- The Owner sent his servants - The Prophets - from time to time to collect the fruit of His Vineyard.
- The Tenants needed to render an accounting of their leasehold. Knowing they had not produced fruit and unwilling to change their ways, they killed the Prophets.
- Finally God sends “His son.” A distinction not lost on an assertion of His divinity. He is neither servant nor merely a prophet, nor just a son — He is The Son.

PARABLE - TENANTS

- They cast Him out of the vineyard and killed Him - is a clear allusion to the fact that Jesus was taken outside of the walls of Jerusalem before being crucified.
- *“He will put those wretched men to a wretched death and lease his vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the proper times.”* They answered signifying knowledge of what was just - **thereby foreshadowing 70 AD** - the destruction of the Temple by the Romans.



PARABLE - TENANTS

- Jesus then quotes **Ps 118: 22-23*** one of the Psalms sung during the **Passover meal**, after the **Third Cup**.
- The Priests knew He was speaking about them! **v. 45**
- St Peter remembers it later **1 Ptr 2:1-8***

PARABLE - TENANTS

- For the building to be well built it must rest on its **cornerstone**. Woe to him who trips over it!
- Christians should see this parable as exhorting to **build faithfully upon Christ** and not fall into the sin of the Jewish generation.
- Christians should also be **filled with Hope and a sense of security**, for although the building (**The Church**) at times seems to be breaking up, **its sound construction with Christ as the cornerstone** is assured.

AN OBSERVATION

- Matthew 21:41 “ They answered him, He will put those wretched men to a wretched death ...”
 - See also Matthew 21:26 “But if we say, of human origin, we fear the crowd, for they will regard John as a prophet.”
- Contrast with Mark 11:32 - “... they feared the crowd for they all thought John was really a prophet.”
 - Matthew lets the actors pronounce their own judgment rather than record it as an observation by the Gospel narrator as Mark tends to do.

PARABLE - WEDDING FEAST

- **Mt 22: 1-14***
 - This parable has striking similarities with **Luke's parable of the Great Feast (Lk 14: 15:24)**
 - The distinctions indicate two different teachings at two different times in Jesus' ministries as the Gospels chronologies seem to indicate.
 - **Luke speaks during the LTN.**
Matthew is eschatological during Holy Week.

PARABLE - WEDDING FEAST

- Refreshing our memory of [Luke 14: 15:24](#)
 - **Context:**
 - Home of a Pharisee. Regarding places of honor and the need for humility (v. 7-13)
 - A man gives a banquet. The guests make excuses not to come. The poor and lame are invited.
 - Go out and make people come. Followed by the rules of discipleship for those who will go out and invite even Samaritans to come. (v. 25-33)

PARABLE - WEDDING FEAST

- **Matthew** begins with “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a king who gave a wedding feast for his son...”
- **Context:**
 - The theme is: God as a king and Jesus as a bridegroom Messiah.
 - See **Rev 19: 6-9***
 - At the end of time, Heaven will be a celebration as a feast that a King gives for His son, the Lamb of God.

PARABLE - WEDDING FEAST

- **Matthew** recording Jesus' eschatological teaching notes the following:
 - The mistreated servants are again the **Prophets**, whose warnings are not heeded.
 - The king destroys the invited guests' city burning it with fire 🔥 - foreshadows the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD. The Romans "**sent their troops**" and destroyed the Temple by setting it on fire.
 - Others then are invited and gathered for the wedding, good and bad alike. Salvation is available to all.

PARABLE - WEDDING FEAST

- As the **good and bad** are invited, we then come to the portion of the Parable that causes some to pause:
- **Verse 11-14 - *The rejection of a man who comes in without a wedding garment and is thrown out.***
 - See Mt 13:47-50* 🔥
 - See also Mt 13:24-30* 🔥
(Explained v.36-43)



PARABLE - WEDDING FEAST

What color are the wedding garments of the Bride and Groom in the Jewish tradition even today?

- What does WHITE at a wedding usually portray?
- When is the only other time an orthodox Jew wears WHITE?

★ Yom Kippur - *Recall Why?*



PARABLE - WEDDING FEAST

- Here Jesus points out **two distinct groups** who **will not remain** in the Kingdom of God at the end of time:
 - **Those who reject the invitation** being preoccupied with the demands and distractions of the world
 - **Those who presume to be worthy**, fully aware of the invitation, yet do not then repent or make the required change of heart. 

See, Hebrews 12:14 + Mt 5:*

- *The garment testifies the disposition of the person's heart!*



A thought on the “bad and the good alike” of **Mt 22: 10**

- Reflection by **St John Chrysostom, the Patriarch of Constantinople**

(Hom LXX on Mt 22:10-14)

"Good and bad, these are persons of every tribe, tongue, people, nation, sex and profession without any exception of persons or conditions. Hence it is evident that the Church of God does not consist of the elect only; and that faith alone, without the habit of charity and good works, will not suffice to save us." ± 400AD



- A final Reflection on this topic by **St Augustine of Hippo, Bishop**

(Hom XL on Mt 22:10-14)

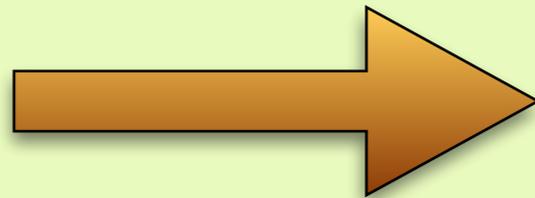
“All who excluded themselves from this feast are evil; but not all those who entered in - are good.

You therefore who seek to be the ‘good’ guests at this feast, remember the words, “He that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks judgment to himself.”

- * St Augustine equated admission to the heavenly **Wedding Feast of the Lamb**, as the same for the **Earthly Eucharistic Banquet. I Cor 11:29***

TAXES TO THE EMPEROR

- A complete discussion of this event in **Mt 22:15-22** is found at my website: www.catholicjerry.com at the **Gospels** link for **prior lessons**.



ZACCHAEUS
THE CHIEF TAX COLLECTOR

RESURRECTION



- *Read Matthew 22: 23-33**
- Here, we will reflect on the emerging belief in a **Resurrection of the Body.**
- This belief began to grow during the **Babylonian exile** around 520 BC.
- **But when would this Resurrection take place?**

RESURRECTION



- The **Sadducee** and **Pharisee** belief at time of Jesus
- **Eternal life and Hell in the Jewish Scriptures**
- **Like Angels - no marriage**
- **Levirate Obligation**
- **I AM and the Patriarchs**

RESURRECTION

- As we have covered before the Jewish sects had different beliefs as to what constituted Scripture
 - The **Sadducees** believed only the **Torah** - the books of Moses were canonical. The **Torah** consists of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.
 - The **Sadducees** found the Writings and Prophets and Psalms *profitable for reflection and prayer* but these were not regarded on the same level as the Torah.

RESURRECTION

- **The Torah**, contains **no promise of a Messiah** and **no mention of Sheol, the abode of the Dead.**
- Nor did the Torah speak of any kind of **resurrection or life after death.**
- However, the Torah did contain a curious passage regarding **Enoch** who walked with God, but who one day God came and took away.
- **What happened to Enoch?** No one knew then and still no one really knows what happened.

RESURRECTION

- **As such the Sadducees did not believe in any kind of resurrection, since it was not Scriptural according to the Torah.**
 - They thought the concept - ridiculous.
- Because of this, the **Sadducees** give a **sarcastic hypothetical** to Jesus, seeking not to learn about Our Lord's view - but instead to show it as mere fantasy.
 - **Whose wife will she be?**

RESURRECTION

- The **Pharisees** believed in what we see today as the **Old Testament**. All of it was Scripture - the **Prophet** literature, the **Historical** books, the **Psalms** and **Proverbs**. What is called the **Tanakh**
 - There one can find **Sheol**, the abode of the dead as well as prophecies regarding a **Messiah**. Also the resurrection (*in early form*) is suggested.
- To believe in a **Messiah** - a **Sadducee** needed to look for **another Moses** as prophesied in **Dt 18: 15-18**

RESURRECTION

- Interestingly enough, the books of 1 Maccabees and 2 Maccabees, as listed in the LXX, were part of the Alexandrian canon read by all Jews outside of Judea.
 - *The Jerusalem canon did not contain Maccabees.*
- Yet, only 1 Mac 4 contains the eight day account of the Hanukkah menorah and the requirement for its celebration every year on the 25th of Chislev.
- And, only 2 Mac 7 contains the martyrdom of 7 brothers and their mother, the inspiration for this Sadducee hypothetical question. Look at **2 Mac 7:14***

RESURRECTION

- Finally, 2 Mac 12 contains the Scriptural reference to almsgiving for the sake of the dead to “make atonement for them” for the punishment in Sheol, with the understanding that it would be consistent with having in mind the **Resurrection of the Dead**, and otherwise “useless and foolish.” **2 Mac 12: 43***
- Previously **Daniel** had prophesied *as much for the first time* in his apocalyptic description of a **future event** where eternal life and eternal punishment would be decreed for those who are dead. See **Dan 12: 1-3***

RESURRECTION



- The Relevant point is that *while 1 and 2 Maccabees were not part of the Jerusalem canon*, the stories and principles therein were indeed known to the Sadducees and Pharisees.
- Equally importantly, the teachings and stories contained therein were also known to Jesus - and He taught consistent with them.

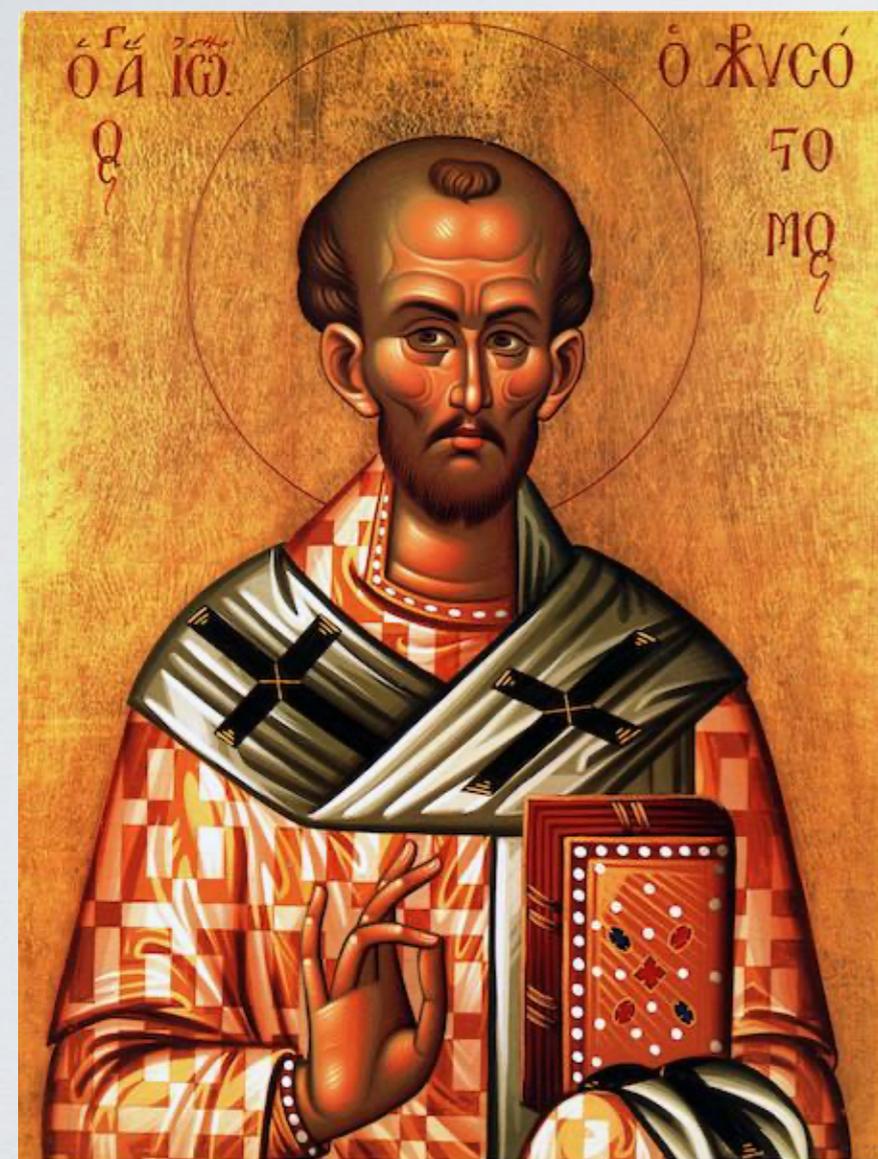
RESURRECTION



- That **Maccabees** is not in some canons of the **Old Testament** becomes important in light of the dialogue:
 - **See verses Mt 22: 27-29***
 - **The Sadducees did not consider 1st or 2nd Maccabees to be Scripture.**
- **Jesus says: “You are misled because you do not know the scriptures or the power of God.” v. 29**

RESURRECTION

- St John Chrysostom (347-407 AD) observes that Our Lord does not reproach the Sadducees in Mt 22: 29 as He did the Pharisees in Mt 22: 18 - who He called malicious hypocrites.
 - The Sadducees though not free of sarcasm, — ignorance and misunderstanding — is their predominant failure.
 - Here, their ignorance apparently comes in part from rejecting the revelation contained in Maccabees.

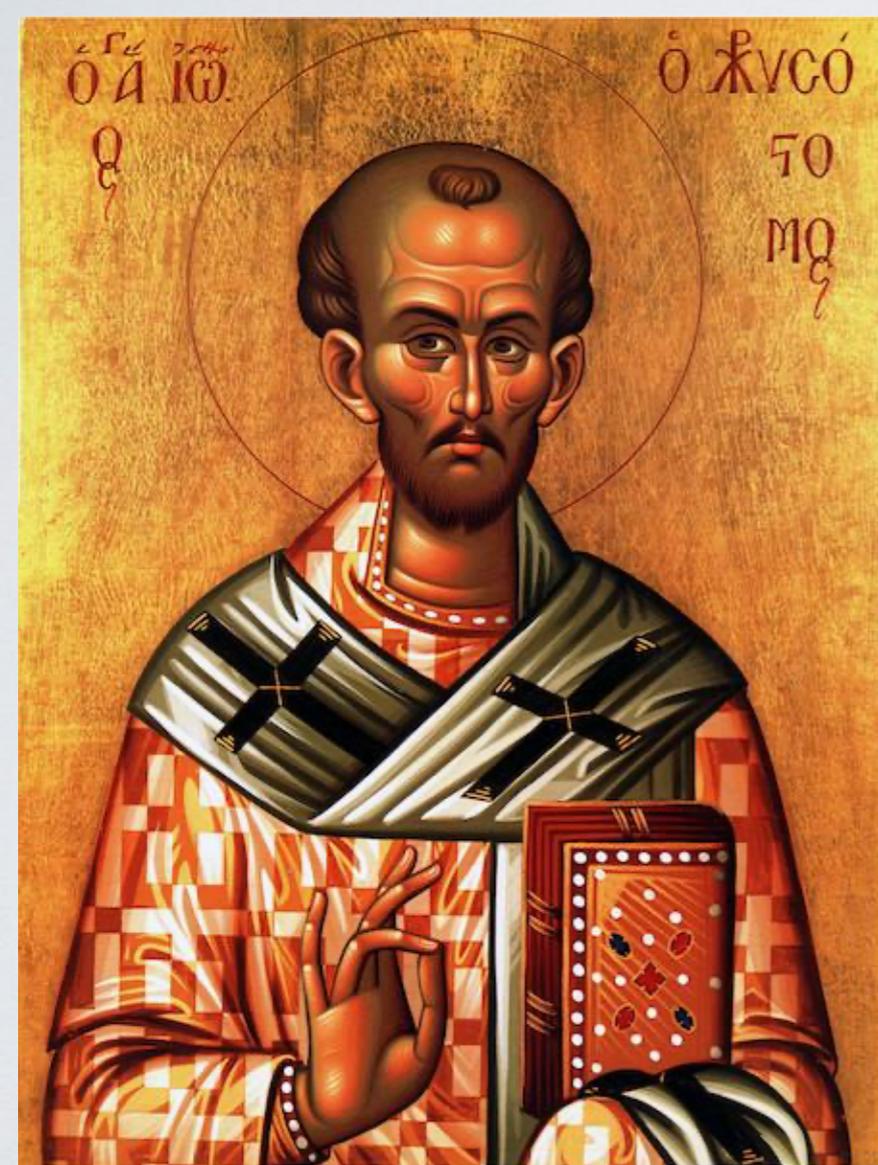


RESURRECTION

- First, St John Chrysostom suggests they do not know the Scriptures:
 - Maccabees, Daniel, Ezekiel 37, Isaiah 26: 18-19 and others,
- Second, St John Chrysostom observes that the Sadducees *seem unable to conceive how the same bodies could be resurrected after putrefaction, looking merely to natural and observable causes, thereby ignoring God's Providence and Almighty Power as a God of the Living!*



RESURRECTION



- St John Chrysostom goes on to conclude:
 - “They [The Sadducees] believe in a Resurrection, at best, in a *metaphorical* sense, like those *heretics* referred to by St. Paul.”
 - St John then goes on to **direct** his listener to read St Paul’s **second letter to Timothy** citing the passage in **2 Tim. 2:14-19***

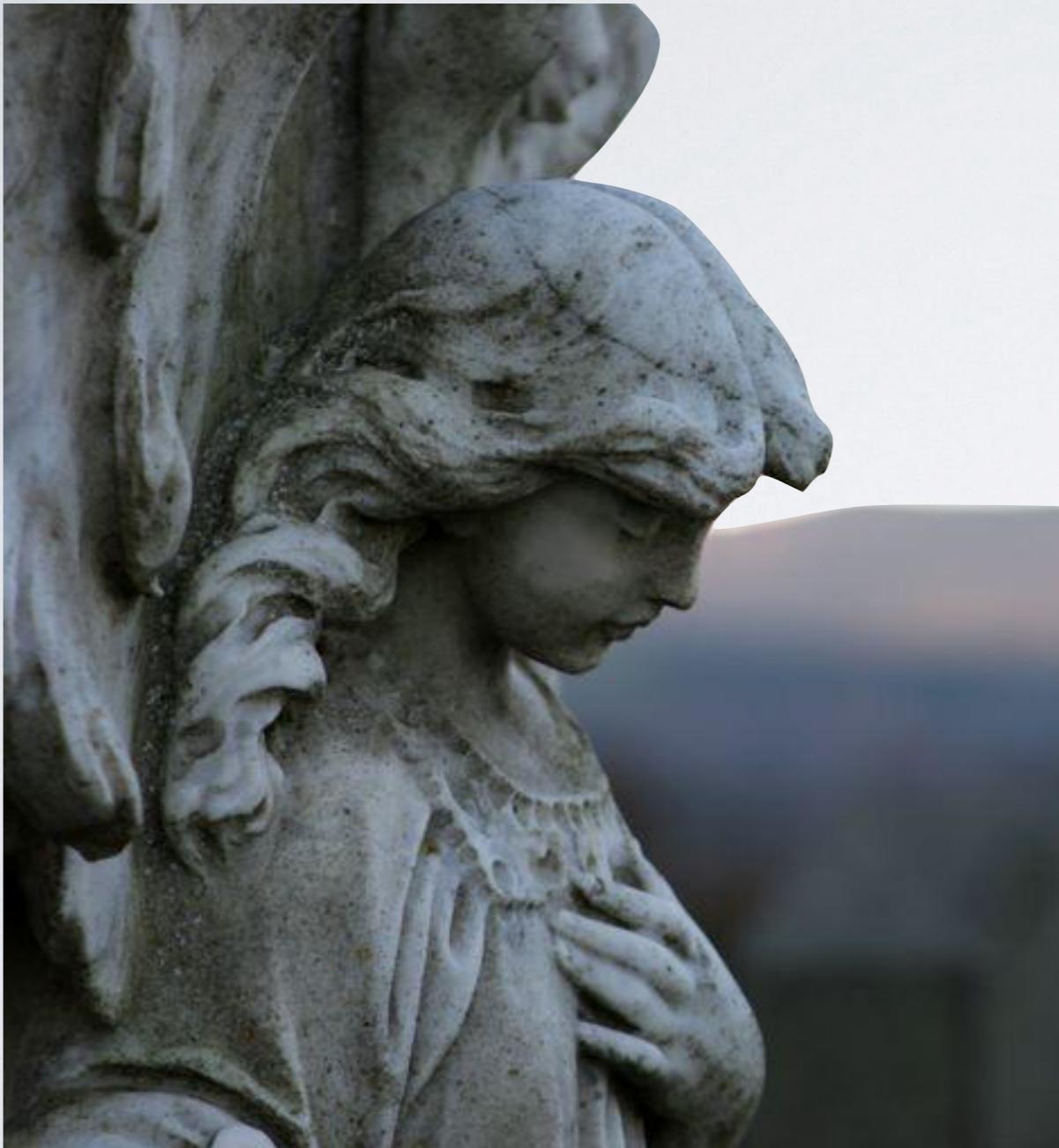
RESURRECTION



- **If** Martin Luther **was right to remove the Maccabee books** *I think one must then consider* the existence of a **binding Jewish oral tradition** that still today commands Jews to celebrate **Hanukkah**.
(Required - under penalty of sin!)
- The idea of **Scripture and Tradition as Divine revelation is very Jewish** and its principle, as properly observed by Jesus and St Paul is **also very Christian**.

- cf **Mt 28: 19-20**; **2 Th 2:15**; 1 Cor 11:2, 34, **2 Tim 1:12-14**
2 Tim 2:2 among others

RESURRECTION



- **Angels & Marriage - Mt 22:30**
- The primary **aim** of marriage — **the procreation and education of children** — *no longer applies because once immortality is reached there is no need for procreation to renew the human race.*

St Thomas Aquinas, Commentary
on St Matthew, 22:30.

RESURRECTION

- Our marital joy - will be spiritual in our glorified body.
- While we will not have the need to procreate, we will continue to have the social need to associate and to be intimate. We are still “us.”
- That need is fulfilled more perfectly by the completion of our destiny, where we will be spiritually wed to Our Lord, our Bridegroom.

cf. Rev 19: 6-9



RESURRECTION

- To the Sadducees the resurrection was ridiculous because they believed death ended man's existence.
- In Fact, St Paul tells us more in Acts 23:8:
 - *“For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit ...”*
- Neither did they receive any books but the books of Moses (The Torah) as we have seen before.



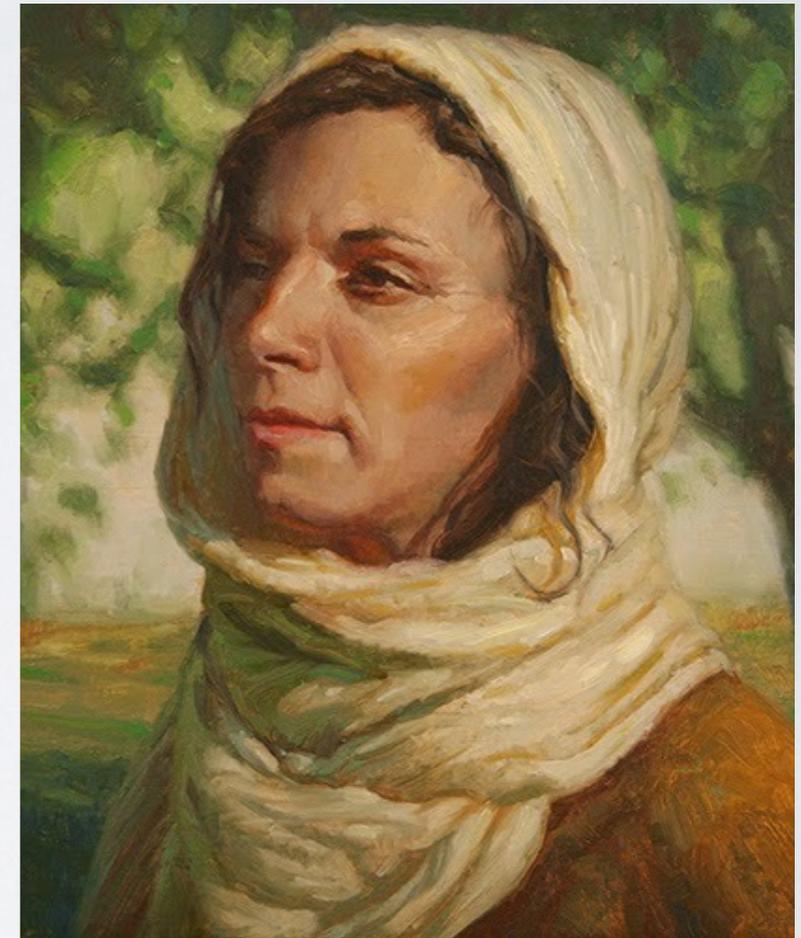
RESURRECTION

- So Jesus knowing this — quoted a statement God made directly to Moses at the burning bush:
- “I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” (Ex. 3:6).
- If the Sadducees were correct and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had died and were no longer alive, then God would have spoken differently to Moses:
 - “I am” would have been “I was.”



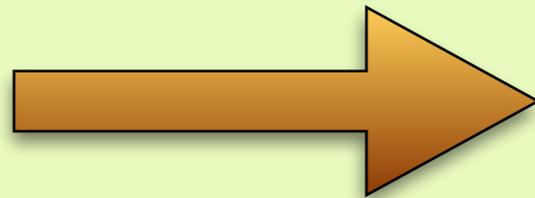
RESURRECTION

- Levirate Rite - The obligation to a widow
- If a **Husband died**, not leaving any **male children** - and if the new **widow's father had also died**, then the widow had no means to sustain herself. The deceased Husband's property would escheat to the Husband's brother.
- **Levirate marriage** - It then fell to that brother the duty to marry the widow, to produce a male son to take the dead Husband's property. **Dt 25:5-10***
 - Abuse of rite - **Gen 38:9-10***



STATUS OF A WIDOW

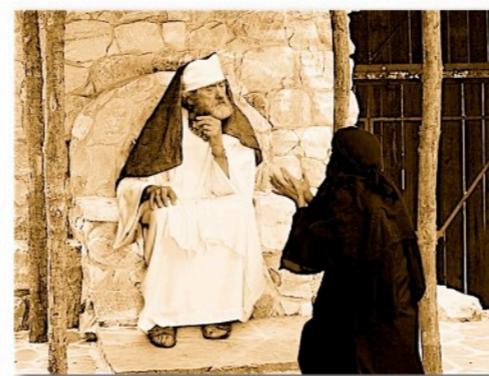
- A complete discussion of this topic (**including the Levirate obligation**) is found at my website: www.catholicjerry.com at the **Gospels** link for **prior lessons**.



PERSISTENT WIDOW

Lk 18:1-8

The necessity of persisting in prayer



- The culture of a widow at the time of Jesus
- Undaunted Judge who yields - bothered by persistence
 - *Why persist?*
Can't God can hear the first time!

RESURRECTION

- **Jesus** here **proves** the resurrection of the body by the immortality of the soul; because in effect these two tenets are inseparable. Mt 22:32
- **By this text St Jerome refutes the heretic Vigilantius**, and in him many others, who diminish the honor Catholics pay to the saints, calling them designedly dead men. **But the Almighty is not the God of the dead; of consequence these patriarchs then, dead as they are in our eyes *as to their bodies*, are still alive in the eyes of God *as to their souls*.**

[Haydock Bible Commentary on Mt 22:32]

RESURRECTION



- **Mt 22: 33** — “When the crowds heard this they were astonished at his teaching.”
- Same exact words used by Matthew at the conclusion of the **Sermon on the Mount in Mt 7:28:**
 - “And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for He taught them as one who had authority, *and not as their scribes.*”

GREATEST COMMANDMENT



- Lets READ - Matthew 22:34-40*
- Compare - Luke 10:22-28
- Who is Jesus' audience in each account?
- What are different audiences in the Gospel accounts? Who are Matthew and Luke's audiences?

GREATEST COMMANDMENT

- We note that **Luke** records the answer on the *lips of the Scholar of the Law* - who though a Pharisee finds himself in Samaria.
- **Matthew** also records a scholar of the law asking the question, but *Jesus answers this time.*
- **These are two different events. It is not necessary to think similar events only happened once.**



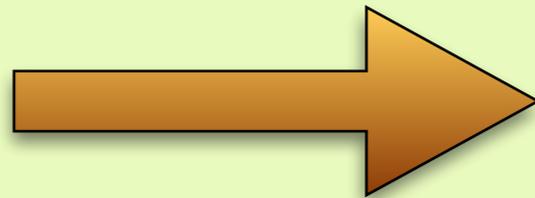
GREATEST COMMANDMENT

- In previous study of Luke we saw:
 - Hillel's addition approved by Jesus
 - The concept of **Love of God and neighbor** being necessary - in addition to Faith for justification
 - **Who is our neighbor?**
 - What a person might have to do to fulfill the commandment to love - The **parable of the Good Samaritan.**



GREATEST COMMANDMENT

- A complete discussion of this event in **Lk 10:25-37** is found at my website: www.catholicjerry.com at the **Gospels** link for **prior lessons**.

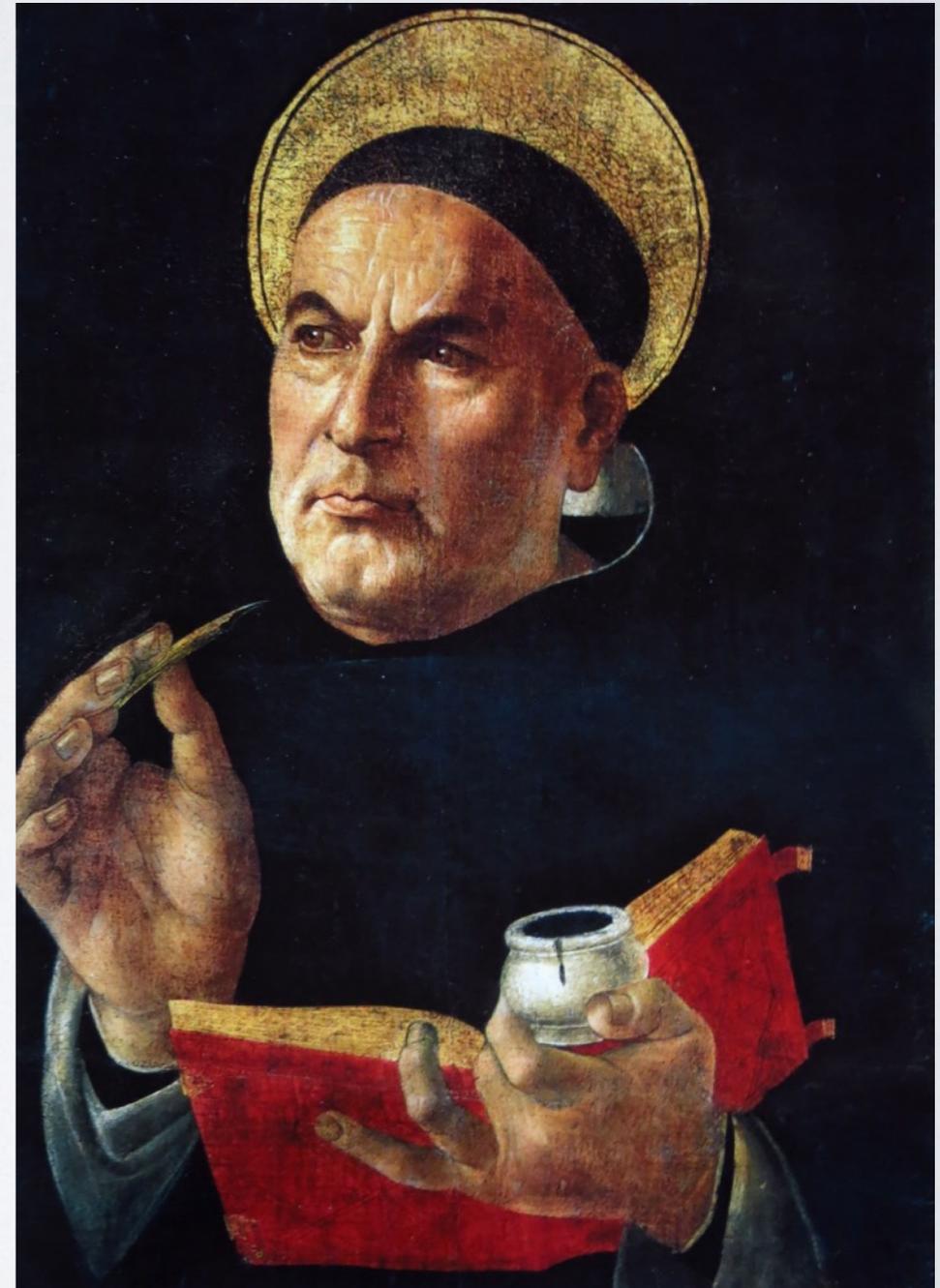


St John Chrysostom observes the following tactic used by the Pharisees *against* Jesus:

- “The Pharisees assembled themselves together, that they might confound him by their numbers, to the extent they could not by their arguments.
- Wherefore they said one to another: *Let only one speak for all, and all speak by the one, that if one be reduced to silence, he alone may appear to be refuted; but, if he is victorious, we may all appear conquerors.*
- Hence it is written, “*And one of them, a scholar of the law, asked Him, testing Him ...*””

GREATEST COMMANDMENT

- St Thomas Aquinas says,
 - “Our Lord points out that the whole law can be condensed into two commandments:
 - The **first** and more important consists in **unconditional love of God**;
 - The **second** is a consequence and result of the first, because **when man is loved, God is loved, for man is the image of God.**”



GREATEST COMMANDMENT



- Likewise, **St John the Apostle declares in his first Epistle:**
 - “Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar.
For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.”

I John 4:20

GREATEST COMMANDMENT



- However, if we love man for man's sake without reference to God, this love will become an **obstacle in the way of keeping the first commandment**, and then it is *no longer genuine love of our neighbor*.
- But love of our neighbor for God's sake is clear proof that we love God: “If anyone says, ‘I love God’, and hates his brother, he is a liar” (1 Jn 4:20).

GREATEST COMMANDMENT

- “The commandment of love is the *most* important commandment
- *because by obeying it man attains his own perfection.”*

St John of the Cross

cf. Col 3:14*





PSALM 110

WHOSE SON IS THE CHRIST?

DIVINITY
of
YESHUA

DAVID'S SON - LORD

- Read Mt 22: 41-45*
- This Passage is a big deal!
- Jesus explicitly asserts that —
IF - the Messiah is more than just a human Son of David,
- **THEN** - as Messiah,
He is *Divine* because
David's Lord was God.



DAVID'S SON - LORD

- God promised King David that one of his descendants would reign forever.



- 2 Sam 7:12-13 — “... I will raise up your heir after you, sprung from your loins, and I will make **his Kingdom** firm. It is he who shall build a house for my name. And I will make his royal throne firm forever.”
- An obvious **reference to the Messiah**, and it was **interpreted as such by all Jewish tradition**, which then gave the **Messiah** the title of “Son of David.”

DAVID'S SON - LORD



- In Jesus' time this Messianic title was understood in a very **Nationalistic** sense:
- The Jews were expecting an **earthly king**, a great king like David,
 - A descendant of **David**,
 - **Who would save them from Roman rule.**

Hosanna, Blessed is He ...Mt 21:9



DAVID'S SON - LORD

- In this passage Jesus shows the Pharisees that the Messiah has a higher origin - **“Whose son is he?” v.42**
- He is not only “Son of David,”
- His nature is more exalted than that, for He is Lord and thereby transcends the purely human level,
- Jesus thus says He is Lord as well as a Son David.





- Another affirmation that the Psalms are Scripture in Jesus' preaching. He is speaking to the Pharisees who would not object to the Psalms as Scripture, and therefore inspired.
- Therefore He says: “How then does David, inspired by the Spirit, call him ‘Lord.’” (v.43)

DAVID'S SON - LORD

- The reference to **Psalm 110:1** which Jesus uses in His argument explains that **under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit** it has already been revealed that the **Messiah is Son of the Lord. [God]** cf. Mt 22:42



- Which is **why David calls him Lord**—and **why He is seated at the right hand of God**, and is **equal in power, majesty and glory**.
- See also the testimony of Stephen as he is martyred. **Acts 7: 54-57***

DAVID'S SON - LORD

- So the Messiah - Son of David by human lineage and Son of God by Divine nature - will sit at the right Hand of the Father.



- I wonder how the Pharisees might have processed the portion of the prophecy that says:
 - “Sit at my right hand, until I place your enemies under your feet.”
 - His enemies would no doubt include those plotting to kill Him.

PSALM 110

- Jesus quoted this Psalm.
- Psalm 110 would create a further problem for the Priestly Clan ...
- ... One additional worry 🥲



A NEW PRIESTHOOD



- Psalm 110:4 - The Lord has sworn an oath and will not waver:
 - “Like Melchizedek you are a priest forever.”
- With the new Messiah, there would come a new priesthood.
 - *More on this later!*

WOE



- **Matthew 23 - Denunciation**
- **WOE to you, scribes and Pharisees.**
- **This is the harshest denunciation yet.** It precedes His passion by only a few days.
- **Matthew 23 - needs to be read in separate sections.**

WOE

- This denunciation address may be divided into Two parts:
 - in the First (vv. 1–12) Jesus identifies their principal vices and corrupt practices;
 - in the Second (vv. 13–36) Jesus confronts them and speaks his famous “woes”, which in effect are the reverse of the beatitudes he preached. No one can enter the Kingdom of heaven—no one can escape condemnation to the flames—unless he changes his attitude and behavior.

WOE



Seat of Moses in Chorazin

- **Matthew 23: 1-12***
- A warning against hypocrisy
 - **Seat of Moses**
 - Do not be called **Rabbi**
 - Call no man on earth your **father**
 - Do not be called **Master**

MOSES SEAT

- Exodus 18 is helpful in understanding “the seat of Moses.” Ex 18:13. In Hebrew tradition - Judging and Teaching - were done from a seated position.
- Moses sat in judgment of the people, regarding the law.
 - In that capacity he would often have to decide what the law was, before it could be applied to a particular case.
 - A great example of this is described in Numbers 15: 32-36.*



MOSES SEAT

- **The example of Numbers 15 seems very harsh!** - but remember it has **nothing** to do with the poor man's state at the final judgment.
 - **God** holds us eternally responsible for sin that we **know or should have known** - *and* then **do or fail to do with that knowledge**.
- These things were written so the Israelites would know what **God wanted regarding the Sabbath**.
 - St Paul adds this was also written for our instruction. **cf Rom 15:4**. Hence it applies in *some form* today.

MOSES SEAT

- Continuing to read **Exodus 18** we find the demands of knowing and applying the law to the Israelites, took all of Moses time from morning until evening.
- Thus others were appointed by Moses, at the suggestion of Jethro **to sit in judgment of more minor cases** - where the law was certain in application.
 - “The Seat of Moses” came to apply to those who, appointed by Moses, also spoke for Moses, and decided cases with the authority of Moses.
 - *Moses could now focus more on major matters.*

MOSES SEAT

- An important distinction between Moses and the lesser judges could be lost here - if not explained.
 - **Moses acted much like our Supreme Court.**
 - **He announced what the LAW of God was, where uncertainty existed.**



- God had provided the framework, but “what was considered “work” on the Sabbath?” for instance — was the subject of honest debate and inquiry.

MOSES SEAT

- The lesser ‘judges’ were like our modern Superior courts, whose only job was to “make findings of what facts are true” and *then* to apply the law.
 - As such, only Moses could declare what the law was, in the event of dispute.



- Once the law was clear, the ones who sat in “The Seat of Moses” could then apply the law to a particular case.

MOSES SEAT

- Rabbi R.Aha, in a 4th century Midrashim called the "*Pesikta De-Rab Kahana*," describes Solomon's throne "*like the Kathedra of Moses*"
- Matthew in 23:2 also describes the 'seat' of Moses with the Greek word **Kathedra**.



- Does this expression bring any Catholic principles to mind?

CALL NO MAN ...



- Conte**x**t provides the true meaning of any Content.

- CONTEXT,
CONTEXT,
CONTEXT ...
- Reading
Mt 23: 1-12*
again.

CALL NO MAN ...

- What is the Conte**X**t of the following?
 - Do not be called **Rabbi**;
 - Call no man on earth your **Father**;
 - Do not be called **Master**.
- **To some**, it means Catholics violate Scripture when Catholics call Priests, by the title of Father.
 - Yet, Catholics see these **same folks**: Call their children's educators - "Teachers," Their earthly dad as "Father," and the Man next door "Mister."
- **Are these folks then, hypocrites, like the Pharisees?**
Of course NOT. Maybe we need to understand this better.

CALL NO MAN ...

- The question remains, What did Jesus mean?
 - Who is the audience? **Crowds and His Disciples**
 - Who is he talking about? **Scribes and Pharisees**
 - What is the conteXt regarding the comments?

The **Scribes and Pharisees** are false teachers laying burdens on the people. They like the **title of father** because it gives them places of honor. Finally they act like masters not servants, **perverting the title** as used in the **Old Testament**.

CALL NO MAN FATHER



- Let us first look at the context of father from tradition in the **Old Testament**.
- **When God established or described fatherhood relationships, HOW were they supposed to function?**

CALL NO MAN FATHER

- There are several passages in the Old Testament where fatherhood, is properly understood:
 - For example, **Patriarch Joseph** tells his brothers of a special **fatherly relationship** God had given him with the king of Egypt:
 - “So it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He **[God]** has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.” (**Gen. 45:8**).

CALL NO MAN FATHER

- Job indicates he played a fatherly role with the less fortunate: “I was a father to the poor, and I searched out the cause of him whom I did not know” (Job 29:16).
- And God himself declares that He will give a fatherly role to Eliakim, the steward of the house of David: “In that day I will call my servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah . . . and I will clothe him with [a] robe, and will bind [a] sash on him, and will commit . . . authority to his hand; and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah” (Isa. 22:20–21).

CALL NO MAN FATHER

- **Joseph** was a secular father to Pharaoh a gentile ruler. **Eliakim** was a father to God's people serving the Son of David and king of Israel. **Job** was a father as to the poor and marginalized. **All these served others.**
- This type of Fatherhood applied also to those who would have a fatherly spiritual relationship.
 - For example, **Elisha** cries, "My father, my father!" to **Elijah** as Elijah is carried up to heaven in a whirlwind. **(2 Kgs. 2:12)**. Later, **Elisha** himself is called a **father** by the king of Israel **(2 Kgs. 6:21)**

CALL NO MAN FATHER

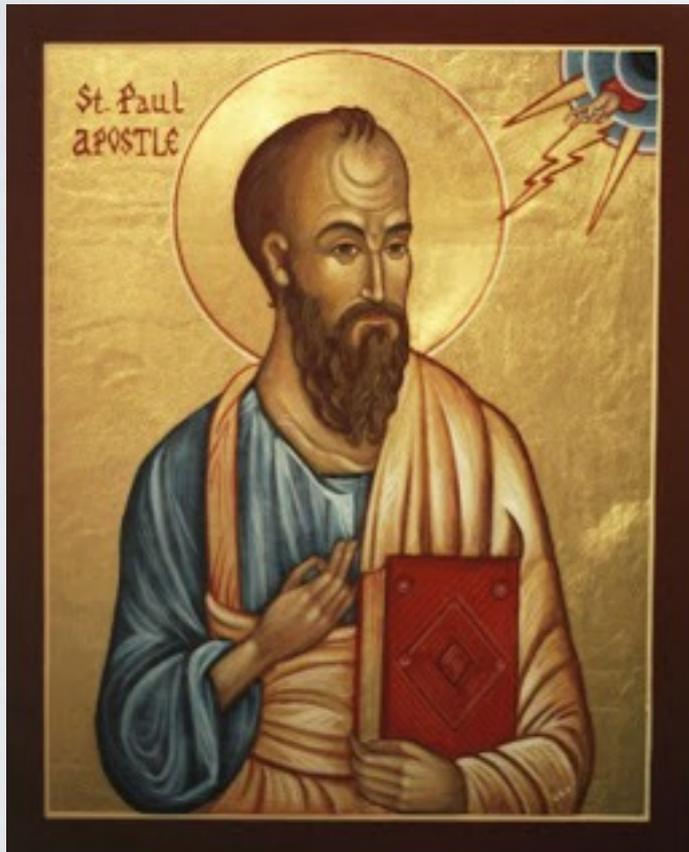


- God was protective of the word Father, and fatherhood relationships in the **Old Testament**, because *earthly fatherhood was meant to point to something even greater: God as Father to his people.*
- Perversion of fatherhood - was like sticking a sword into our God's heart.

CALL NO MAN FATHER

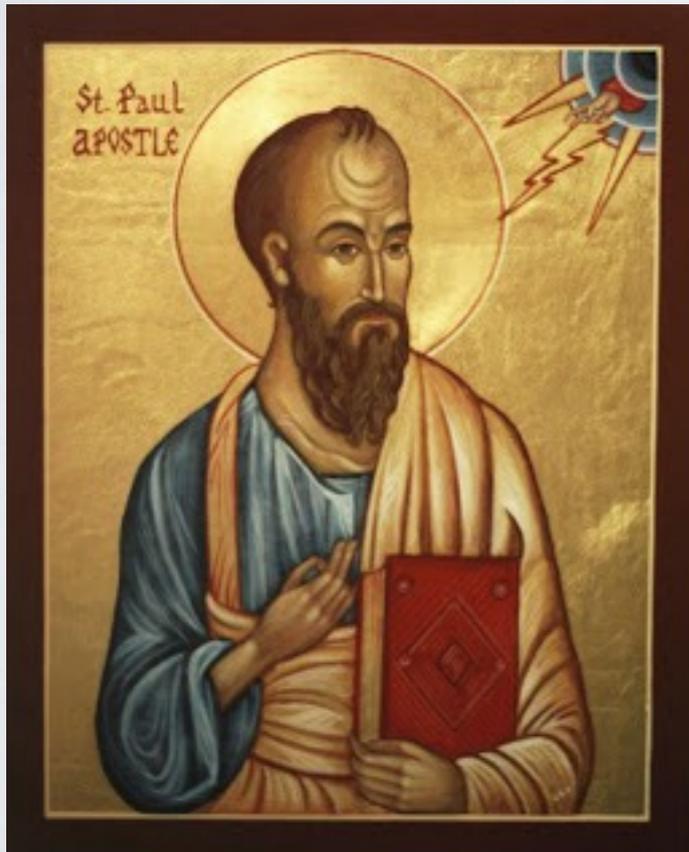
- In Matthew the context of JESUS' comment is **false pride**, the Pharisees and scribes seek only the title.
 - v. 11-12 - “The greatest among you must be your servant. **Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, but whoever humbles himself will be exalted.**”
- Perhaps, looking at the **New Testament** a little closer will tell us more about Jesus' disciples understood the teaching, as confirmed by the **Holy Spirit** in Scripture.

CALL NO MAN FATHER



- **St Paul** regularly referred to Timothy as his child:
- “Therefore I sent to you **Timothy, my beloved and faithful child** in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ” (1 Cor. 4:17);
- “To Timothy, **my true child** in the faith: grace, mercy, and peace from **God the Father** and Christ Jesus our Lord” (1 Tim. 1:2);
- “To Timothy, **my beloved child**: Grace, mercy, and peace from **God the Father** and Christ Jesus our Lord” (2 Tim. 1:2).

CALL NO MAN FATHER



- **St Paul** also referred to Timothy as his son:
- “This charge I commit to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophetic utterances which pointed to you, that inspired by them you may wage the good warfare” (1 Tim 1:18);
- “You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 2:1);
- “But Timothy’s worth you know, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel” (Phil. 2:22).

CALL NO MAN FATHER



- **St Paul** also referred to other of his converts in this way:
- “To Titus, my true child in a common faith: grace and peace from **God the Father** and Christ Jesus our Savior” (Titus 1:4);
- “I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus, **whose father I have become** in my imprisonment” (Philem. 10).
- Paul is emphasizing his **Spiritual Fatherhood** over them.

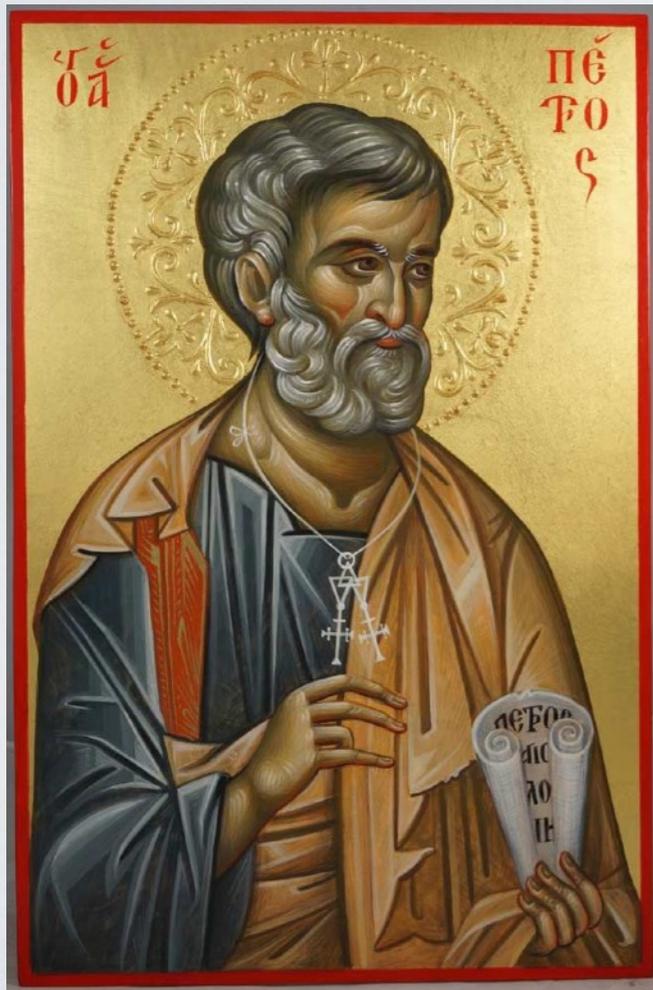
CALL NO MAN FATHER



- The most pointed New Testament reference to the spiritual fatherhood of priests is **St Paul's** statement,
 - “I do not write this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my **beloved children**.
 - For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. **For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel.”**

1 Cor. 4:14–15.

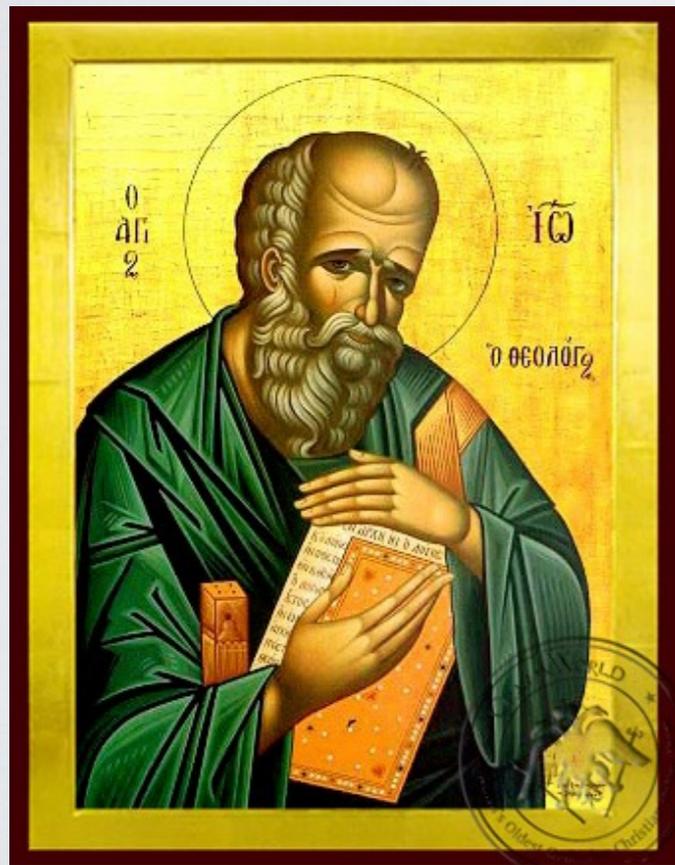
CALL NO MAN FATHER



- **St Peter** an eye witness to the events of Holy Week, followed the same custom, referring to Mark as his son:
- “She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings; and **so does my son Mark**”

I Pet. 5:13

CALL NO MAN FATHER



- **St John** understood no different, being there when Jesus spoke:
- “My little children, I am writing this to you so that you may not sin; but if any one does sin, we have an advocate with the **Father**, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1);
- “No greater joy can I have than this, to hear that my children follow the truth” (3 John 4).
- In fact, John also **addresses men in his congregations as “fathers”** (1 John 2:13–14).

CALL NO MAN FATHER

St John was not alone in referring to churches or congregations as children:



- **St Paul** writes, “Here for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be a burden, for I seek not what is yours but you; for children ought not to lay up for **their** parents, but parents for their children” (2 Cor. 12:14);
- “My little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you!” (Gal. 4:19).

- It is obvious that given the **testimony of St Paul, St Peter and St John** - that the **usage of father was *not changed*** in the New Testament, as some might argue.

- To entertain a change in usage, is to ***miss Jesus' point on the subject***, and embrace the inevitable conclusion that ***three Scripture Authors also missed it.***

- It is no accident this passage follows closely the previous passage about **“loving our neighbor as we love ourselves.”**
- **We are called to serve in humility. It is that simple!**

CALL NO MAN RABBI

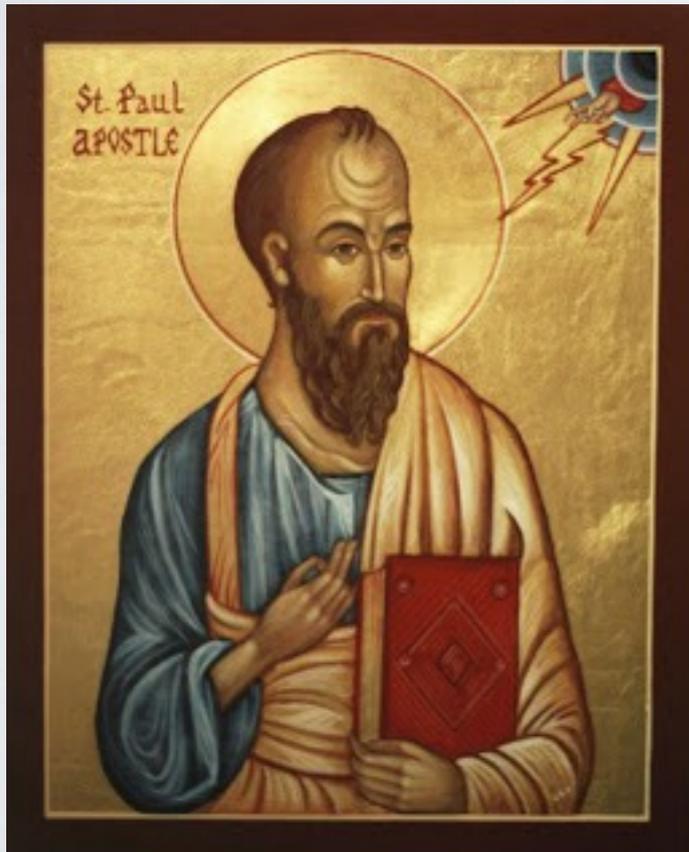


- Is the analysis different for not being called “rabbi?” [teacher]
- Again the immediate context of hypocrisy coupled with how the Disciples handled the teaching in the Apostolic Age - provides a clear answer.

CALL NO MAN RABBI

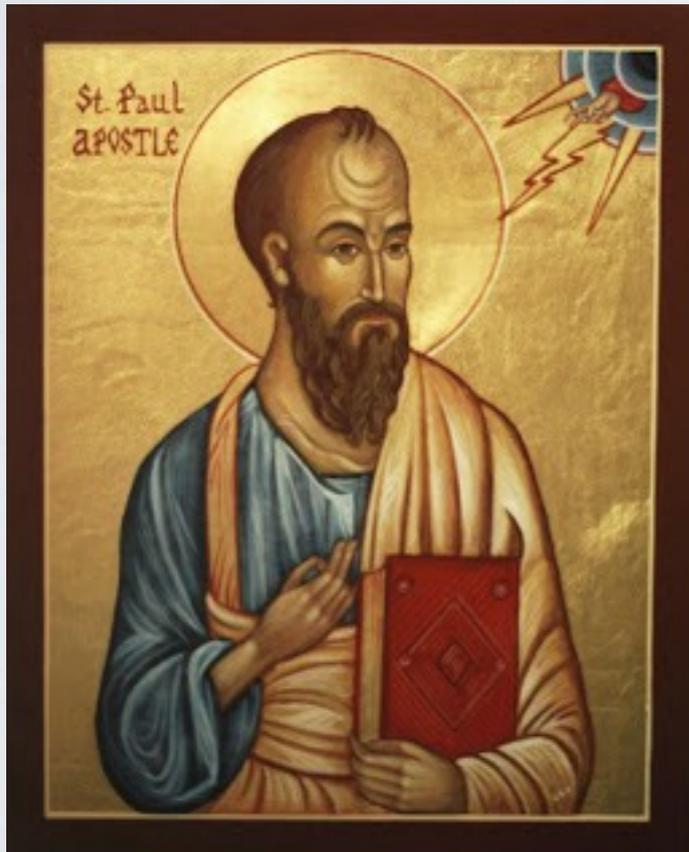
- The first problem if the teaching is taken out of context, is that **although Jesus seems to prohibit the use of the term “teacher,”** before ascending to Heaven, in Matthew 28:19–20,
 - **Christ himself appointed certain men to be spiritual teachers in His Church:**
 - **“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”**

CALL NO MAN RABBI



- St Paul speaks of his commission as a **teacher**:
 - “For this I was appointed a preacher and apostle . . . a **teacher** of the Gentiles in faith and truth” (1 Tim. 2:7);
 - “For this gospel I was appointed a preacher and apostle and **teacher**” (2 Tim. 1:11).

CALL NO MAN RABBI



- St Paul also reminds us that the Church has an office of **teacher**:
 - “God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third **teachers**” (1 Cor. 12:28);
 - **and** “his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and **teachers**” (Eph. 4:11).

CALL NO MAN RABBI

- Those who misunderstand Jesus' teaching, **trip up** among themselves on this point by **calling all sorts of people "doctor"**;
 - for example, **professors and scientists who have Ph.D. degrees** (i.e., doctorates).
- **What they fail to realize is that "doctor" is simply the Latin word for "religious teacher."** (*doctour - Old French*)
- from "docere" - teach. **Interestingly "docile" comes from the same root, because docile people are easy to teach!**

... MASTER?

- **Etymology** — **Mister**, usually written in its abbreviated form **Mr.** is a commonly used English honorific for men under the rank of knighthood.
- The title 'Mr' derived from earlier forms of **Master**, as the equivalent **female** titles **Mrs**, **Miss**, and **Ms** all derived from earlier forms of **Mistress**.
- So we see the English translation of the **Greek** “**Despotes**” - describes folks who were clearly gentlemen and ladies, who possessed some legitimate authority.
- Jesus did not condemn the use of these titles - for their sake alone, only when used by a hypocrite.

HYPERBOLE

- Christ used **hyperbole** often to *emphasize* his message. *For example*, when He declared:
 - “If your right eye causes you to sin, **pluck it out and throw it away**; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell” (Matt. 5:29, cf. 18:9).
 - Jesus certainly did not intend this to be applied literally, for otherwise all Christians would be blind amputees! (cf. 1 John 1:8).



HYPERBOLE



He is older than the hills

- You can find hyperbole in plenty of English idioms. It is the art of exaggerating to make a point:
 - She asked a million questions.
 - You could have knocked me over with a feather.
 - He was as quiet as a mouse.
 - Now I've seen everything.

HYPERBOLE

“I’m so hungry, I could eat a horse.”



HYPOCRITES

- **Matthew 23: 13-36*** continues the theme
 - Scribes and Pharisees are **HYPOCRITES**.
 - in what are called the “Eight Woes”
- *Not only do they fancy special titles and honors as described in verses 1 to 12, but ...*
 - ... their hypocrisy is particularly despised by Jesus, because as leaders their misconduct affects those who are entrusted to them.

HYPOCRITES



- In verses 13, 15, 23, 25, 27, and 29 - Jesus describes the Pharisees as **hypocrites**.
- What is their hypocrisy more particularly?

HYPOCRITES

- **Verses 13-14**
- **Lock access to the Kingdom of Heaven. They don't enter and prevent others from entering.**
- Many commentators suggest Jesus is addressing the Pharisees, who by **refusing to believe in Him**, and conspiring against Him, **deter those**, who would otherwise have believed in Christ, from professing his name and following Him, and thus **shut the gate of Heaven against not only themselves but those others they deter.**

HYPOCRITES

- Verse 15
- Acquire, but make converts into children of Satan.
 - Our Lord reproaches them not for converting, but because they were concerned only about vainglory.
 - The sad thing about these converts was that, after receiving the light of Old Testament revelation, they remained under the influence of scribes and Pharisees.
 - These new zealous converts then passed on to others their even greater narrow outlook.

HYPOCRITES

- Verses 16-22
- Finally a break for the Pharisees, they are now only blind 🕶️ guides!
- To illustrate the blindness our Lord chooses an example of their attitude to vows. On the annulment of these they were an ingenious court of appeal. The terms of the vow were closely scrutinized without regard to the original intention of the one who had made it.

HYPOCRITES

- Vows naming the **votive-offerings** ('gold') in the temple and vows naming **the sacrifice** ('gift') on the altar, are declared **'valid'** because **the Pharisees did not want to give the gold or sacrifice back.** Vows on the temple or altar itself are declared void because they did not attach to anything of \$\$\$ value, that a Pharisee could then keep.
 - But our Lord turns their hypocrisy against them. *If they are determined to make these distinctions* surely the house of God and his chosen altar are more sacred than man's possessions.

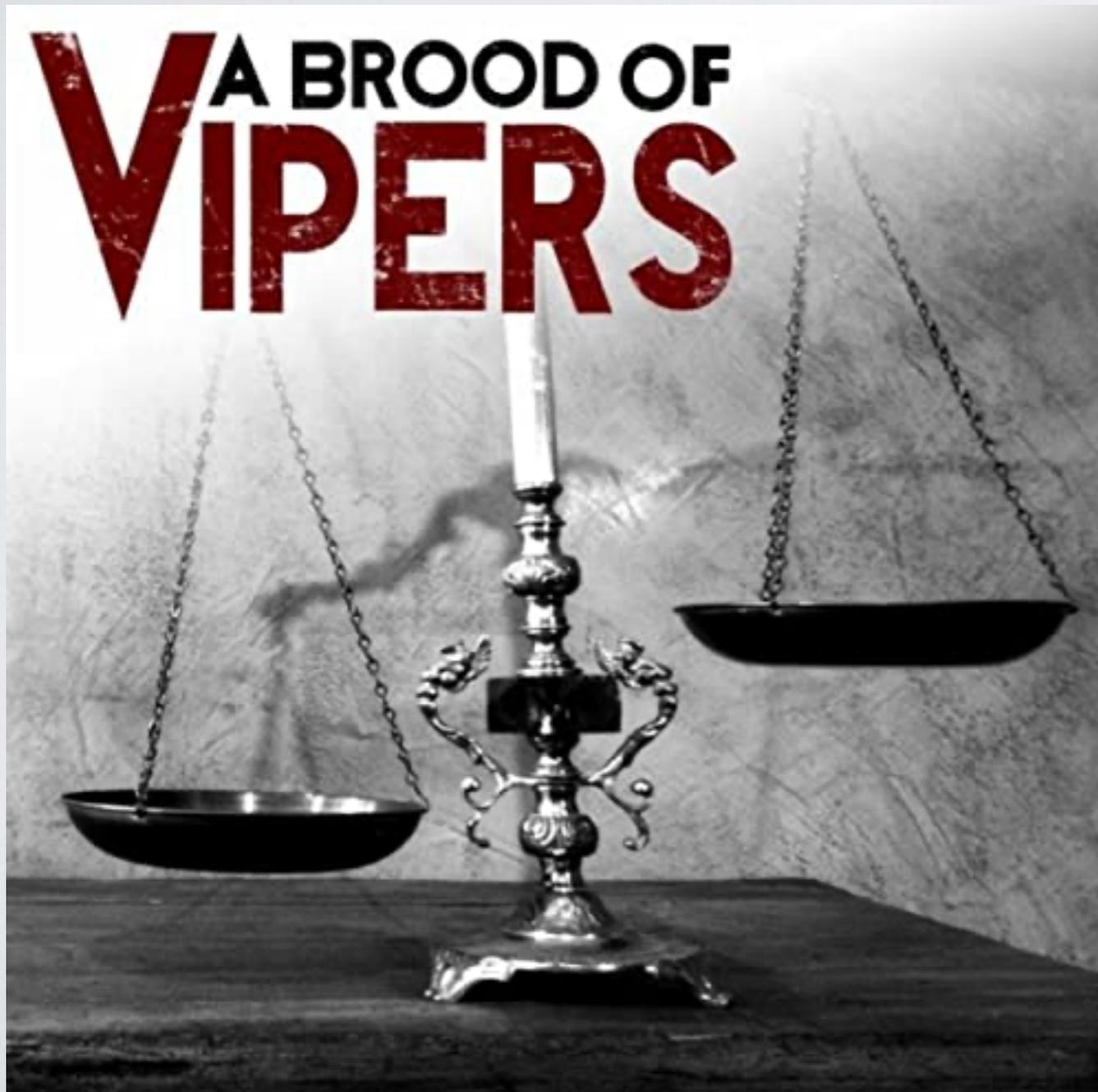
HYPOCRITES

- Verses 23-24
- Back to hypocrite - “strain out a nat,
but swallow a camel.” 
- Here Our Lord accuses the Pharisees for **missing the intent of the Law** - Judgment, Mercy and Fidelity.
 - **Instead they focus on minutiae.** They might wash their hands after touching a gentile, but think nothing of cheating him in the commercial transaction, through unfair practices. The temple money changers for instance are one example.

HYPOCRITES

- **Verses 25-33 - Personal attack continues**
 - **Hypocrite ... hypocrites, hypocrites ...**
- **Tithe** — but neglect weightier things of the law - judgment, mercy and fidelity.
- **Full of self-indulgence** — beautiful on the outside but full of every kind of filth on the inside.
- **Murderers** — following in the ancestry of those who murdered the prophets.

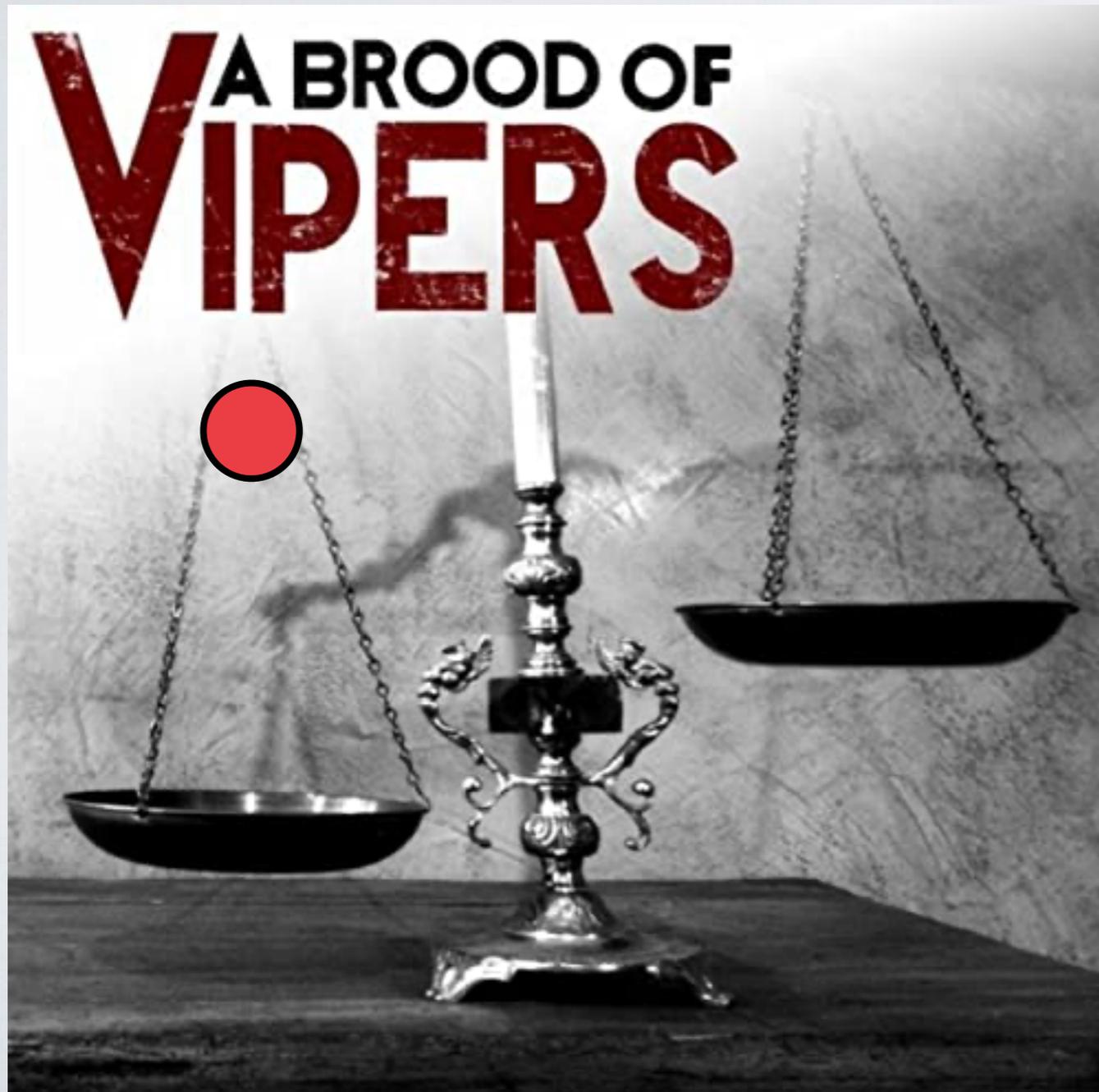
HYPOCRITES



“You serpents, you
brood of vipers,
how can you flee
from the **judgment**
of **Gehenna?**”

Mt 23:33

HYPOCRITES



“You serpents, you brood of vipers, how can you flee from the **judgment of Gehenna?**”

Mt 23:33

HOW CAN YOU FLEE?

- **Verses 30-36**
- Interesting comment regarding the Pharisaic belief, that *if they had lived at a prior time they would not have killed the prophets.*
- Jesus condemns them (v.32) because when He is crucified, the **Pharisees will fill up by killing** the full measure of those who God has sent - now including even the Messiah.
 - *It is thereby that they are liable to Gehenna.*

HOW CAN YOU FLEE?

- “I send to you prophets and wise men and scribes ... some you will kill and crucify...”
 - Generally understood to be the followers of Christ, in short the Apostles and those who will preach the Gospel in the synagogues.
 - ie.: St James the Greater and St Stephen
 - **Jesus** sometimes refers to some of his followers as scribes (Mt 13:52) as does **St Paul** in 1 Cor 1:20.
 - Christian titles were just starting to emerge.

HOW CAN YOU FLEE?



- “... some of them you will ... pursue from town to town.”
v. 34
- All scholars see an allusion to Saul of Tarsus, before his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus.
- Recall St Paul was a Pharisee. cf. Phil 3: 4b-6

HOW CAN YOU FLEE?

- **Zechariah, son of Barachiah** - Perhaps Zechariah the last martyr (2 Chron 24:20-22) who was stoned to death.
 - There, he is son of Jehoiada (not Barchiah). Yet that would not disqualify based on the fact that sometimes ancestry could simply be anyone in the lineage - not just the immediate father.
 - **Jesus, for instance was seen as son of Joseph, but also son of Abraham or David.** see Mt 1:1,16

Maybe but ... 

HOW CAN YOU FLEE?

- **Zechariah, son of Barachiah** - St Jerome's research in apocryphal accounts led him to believe this was the father of John the Baptist, supported by Jesus' words: "...whom you murdered, ..."
- But why not just call him Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist?
- *Opinions vary*, but the Biblical text seems to suggest that the Pharisees knew the referenced **Zechariah** - who if father of John, was **the holy priest** who in **Luke 1:9** is described as offering incense in the Temple sanctuary.

HOW CAN YOU FLEE?

- “Amen, I say to you, all these things will come upon **this generation.**” v. 36

- Very simply - Christians will be persecuted.

ALL to be fulfilled within 40 years - ... by 70AD

- v. 37-39 - Jesus laments, that God’s judgment will cause their house (the Temple) to be destroyed.
- This is a *first* echo in Matthew regarding the destruction of the Temple and the Pharisees and the Sacrificial system of Judaism. vv 37-39

