

## W134\_Paul\_5.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording made in the Chapel of the Open Book, and it's the last of the series which we have had before us of some outstanding Old Testament and New Testament characters. This evening we are going to see a little bit of the background of the Apostle Paul. Before we do so, those of you who are listening to this recording may care to join us in our reading, which this evening is Matthew chapter 23. I think we all conscious that this is a solemn chapter. Our savior toward the end of his ministry and in view of his approaching death. So these very terrific words and repeated them. Woe unto them. Well unto these Pharisees and call them hypocrites. Now, we may have made a mistake many times in the way in which we judge one another not knowing the hearts, but it's written concerning him. He had no need to tell any one to tell him, for he knew what was in them. So this is a righteous judgment. It's a terrible thought to think that some who were physically the descendants of Abraham, as they speak of in John the eighth chapter, and he says there a generation of vipers when they make converts or make them. A twofold child of held in. They are themselves. And you see where it's all leading to. It's leading to the moment when the Roman armies are going to destroy that city and that temple. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

[00:01:44] In the next chapter, the very first words with which chapter 24 open is the consternation of the disciples. The wonder that they should say He should say such things. And drawing his attention to the to the temple and its buildings. I see. It was Phariseeism. Pharisee ism, whatever that stands for, that have brought the nation to this terrific pass. Whatever we say. Phariseeism We remember that the man whose life we have been considering in earlier studies, the Apostle Paul, was by upbringing a Pharisee. When he stood before Agrippa, he said, after the straightest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee. I wear this all. On one occasion, the tribunal that was sitting to judge him was made partly of Pharisees and partly of Sadducees. He just drew attention to the fact that he stood for resurrection and that split his judges into two. For the Sadducees believe neither in angel spirit nor resurrection. There were some things that were good about the Pharisees. It's very seldom that you and I could ever be right in pronouncing a judgment on anybody, which is total. And the scriptures give us an indication that if Paul was a Pharisee, I don't think he could have said that he was one of these awful wretches that are here denounced. And so I noticed that in a book which

I have, dealing with the question of the Pharisees, you won't mind me reading from the book, for I have no personal friends among them to tell you of my own heart.

[00:03:33] You see. So I'm rather glad about that, I hope. So in Palestine there was so much shame exhibited among the Pharisees in their acts of fasting and devotion that the people seem to have classified them according to their exaggerations and given them names accordingly. The following were some of the most common heavy footed those who were so exhausted by fasting or pretended that they were that they could not walk like other people. The bleeding, those who ran their heads against things because they always walked with their eyes cast down. They were the ancestors of Uriah Heep. All was humble and always made sure that they got a little scar on their forehead with a little blood coming to show how humble they were. And then the mortar Pharisees were those who bent themselves to their resemble the handle of a mortar as they walked. Now, that would be a symbol that we wouldn't quite understand. We'd have to invent one another, one of our own. Then the humpbacked were those who always hung their head very low. I never the one to which the Apostle Paul belongs. The dwarves. Harry Dean Fowler in his explanation of this title, which is borrowed from the rabbinical books, tell me anything that I haven't done and I'll do it. Pharisee. That is the Apostle Paul. I think he was inspired by God to tell us that he wasn't a hypocrite.

[00:05:05] But attaching the righteousness of the law so far as external obedience was concerned, he was blameless. And they entertained the idea, some of these men, that if only one Pharisee could keep the whole law for one day, the kingdom of God would come. So you see, you got a blend in, a mixture, self-seeking and fanatical phariseeism. And Paul, referring to his past, he said. That he outshone his contemporaries in his day in his zeal for the the religion of the Jews and the tradition of his fathers. A remarkable thing, or is it a remarkable thing that God should lay hold of that man to preach the gospel of free grace and sound out the words stand fast to the liberty wherewith Christ has set you free and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage. Wasn't he the man to deal with those who thought that they could, in some measure, supplement the grace of God by a little bit of their own works and boast in the flesh? He said, If any man can boast in the flesh, I'll beat the lot of you, I'm sure. And he puts in, among other things, I was a Pharisee. I've already told you that. I feel sure, by the way in which Paul uses the figure of speech called Paronomasia, the play upon words that when he wrote in both

Galatians and in Romans, that he had been separated unto the Gospel of God, he could not help but feel the sound of the word for him.

[00:06:43] The Greek aphorism sounds very much like the word Pharisee and looks like it, and the word Pharisee from another root altogether. Another language means the same thing. A separated person. So here was a blessed child once separated unto legalism. And now separated unto the gospel. Well, I felt that it would be a good thing to end up this little survey of different phases of truth because we're coming to an end of a series by examining as far as we can what the Scriptures have to teach us about these Pharisees so that we may realize what the Apostles stood for in some measure, what the antagonism against the gospel amounted to because they were the ones who were responsible for the writing of the epistle to the Galatians because they came down and intimidated the young church and said unless they submitted to rites and ceremonies and put themselves under law, they couldn't be saved. And Paul says, every one of you put yourself under the law falling from grace and Christ who profits you nothing. So the conflict started very, very early. And then I think we want to have a certain amount of gentleness and sympathy when we think about some of these people in their bondage, because there are some who have been very genuine, even though you might say very foolish.

[00:08:10] I've already told you of our old friend Mr. Dave, most of you remember him. He had a great acquaintance, acquaintances among some Jews, very faintly. And he told about one old Jew who had a little lock up shop. And he was in great distress because if he didn't lock his shop up, he knew full well when he went away to the synagogue. Somebody went and rifled his shop and stole things. And if he locked his shop up, he didn't know what to do with the key because he did go to a neighbour that opened the door again. Could you say, Well, what was his trouble? Well, the key was a burden on a Sabbath day, and he couldn't carry a burden on the Sabbath day, so he couldn't go to synagogue. But just as he. Oh, yes. When it was in such distress over it that the Beth Din, that's the council that sit in judgment, they came to the conclusion that if he tied the key round his leg and it was a sort of a garter, he wasn't carrying a burden. And it relieved him. And he was joyful to shut up his shop and lock it up and carry the key with him without breaking the law. Now, that seems silly to us, but that man was really genuine in his desire to do what he thought was the will of God. And then I have a cutting from a paper which I saw.

[00:09:26] You may have seen it. Yehuda Kadari, a Jerusalem. Some of highly orthodox Jewish parents had two dreams. One was to be selected as a member of the Israeli contingent of the Boy Scout Jamboree, the other once in England to meet the Queen. The first dream came true, and Yehuda became youngest member of the Israeli scout contingent to travel to Britain. And there he was in his tent in Sutton Park, Birmingham. And when told that his second dream was also coming true, he had been selected as one of 15 Israeli scouts to shake the queen's hand when she visited the camp on the Saturday. He was resting in his tent when the loudspeaker announcement came. Get ready for Her Majesty's visit in half an hour. Yehuda jumped up, grabbed the scout's uniform to put it on, and suddenly felt the banknotes he had in the pocket of the shirt he was about to wear. Tears came into his eyes. For being an Orthodox Jew, he was not allowed even to touch money on the Sabbath. What should he do? Pretty uniform on and thereby commit a sin against his religion or give up the honor and his life's dream of shaking the Queen's hand. Now, that's a genuine bit, isn't it? That's a real test for a boy, isn't it? I don't think we can condemn him. We can condemn the idea that makes it a burden or makes it evil. Just a touch a bank note on a Sabbath.

[00:11:00] But there he was, away from home. Should he do it or not? Little Yehuda chose to stay in his tent. Another Israeli youngster was elected in his place. And the last bit I liked so much yesterday, his mother cabled to him, I am not a queen, but I shake your hand. So that's something I think to feel that whether we agree with the idea or not, there was someone standing for what he believed to be true. And that is something to be thankful for in a day like this, especially among young people, isn't it? Old people, too. Well, come back again. Now to our story. There's another case which is a little bit on the same parallel. One rabbi was in prison and on one occasion, the water allowance was so small. Setting. Use it for washing. And had not a drop to drink. I ever go without. Three have decide it would be polluted if he drank water without ceremonial washing. So he decided he would do the ceremonial washing with a little scrap of water and go without drink. All that day and all that night, that's all the next day. So we must be careful that we don't cruelly judge people. We can only think of a system that could bind some hearts like that until at last, they were in despair. Well, now. Josephus is a Pharisee to whom we owe a book.

[00:12:39] There's one. Josephus is written on the story of Israel from early days and some of his statements. Have been in our hands to read and only within our own lifetime. Some of them have come to light and proved that he was true. Josephus tells us that the canon of the Old Testament Scripture was what we have it now, and that his people from their very birth, would give their lives rather than add to or take away one book from the Old Testament. All that's fine. But now listen to him explaining to the Greeks a part of the Pharisees teaching. Now, as to Hades, wherein the souls of the righteous and unrighteous are detained, it is necessary to speak. Hades is a place in the world not regularly finished, a subterraneous region where the light of this world is not shined. From this circumstance that in this place the light does not shine, It cannot be, but that there must be perpetual darkness. This region is allowed as a place of custody for souls in which angels are appointed as guardians to them, who distributed them temporary punishments agreeable to everyone's behavior and manners. So here is Hades. Angels are taking these people and they're distributing them punishments to them already before the day of judgment. And so we find that this place I'm now quoting from another paragraph, this place where the good are and where they are being in some measure looked after, being smiled upon and having a rest, which is anticipating heaven itself.

[00:14:22] This place we call Abraham's bosom. He wrote about that in the Gospels, The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. Did you see what Christ was doing in that gospel? He wasn't saying that the parable was a true statement. He says to the Pharisees, and they knew that he was speaking about him, but themselves. When he says so, he says, Look, what you believe is this. And then he gave them the rich man and Lazarus. I wanted to see what fools you must be if you believe that to carry on as you do. And at the finish. You know how it ends. I have Moses and the prophets. If they will not believe Moses and the prophets, neither would they believe. Though one rose from the dead, and neither did they. And if you could find anything to justify the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Moses and the Prophets, why you'd make a fortune. Because nobody's found it yet. Our savior wasn't saying that the rich man and Lazarus had a true statement. He was saying, That's what you believe, and here it is. Josephus did didn't know that our savior said that for in Josephus Day the Gospels were written. But he's telling you what the Pharisees believed. There was this place and there was Abraham's bosom. Now it says. But as to the unjust, they are dragged by force to the

left hand by the angels allotted for punishment, no longer going with their goodwill, but as prisoners driven by violence.

[00:15:53] Now those angels that I set over these souls dragged them into the neighborhood of hell itself, who, when they are hard by it, continually hear the noise of it and do not stand clear of the hot vapor. But when they have a nearer view of this spectacle as of a terrible and exceeding great prospect of fire, there struck with a fearful expectation of future judgment. And he says that there is a chaos, deep and large fixed between them. Well, our saviour said there's a great gulf fixed. In so much as a gas man that hath compassion upon him cannot be admitted, nor can one that is unjust. If he were bold enough to attempt it pass over. I won't read the rest of it because it goes into pages. But don't you see that was Pharisees doctrine. The rich man and Lazarus are contrast parable. There's quite a number in Luke's gospel, like The Unjust Steward is another one, and it says in the context the Pharisees knew that he spoke about them. Well, that's one of the ways in which catechism has been recorded and preserved to this day with that line of teaching. Well, you remember when the apostle writing to the Corinthians and we had the passage before us earlier said that not only did Israel have a veil over their eyes, but they had a veil over their heart when they read the scriptures.

[00:17:17] Well, I thought this evening I would bring this veil along to you. What remnant I have of it. I'm sorry that those who may be listening to this won't see it, but here it is. This is an actual veil that has been used by an Orthodox Jew. It's a little bit the worse for wear, but there it is. You'll see that it goes over the head, could go over the head and hang down on either side of the shoulders. And if I knew enough, I could tell you to what tribe this Jew belonged. Because these tribes vary according to the tribes. There's one part of this which is missing, and that is in the corner. There should be hanging five threads doubled over and eight threads for doubled over and tied into five knots. Now you wonder why all that is. Well, the reason is this. That the rabbinical teaching was that in the law of Moses there were 613 positive and negative precepts of the law. 630. Now, the name of this shoal in the Hebrew is this. What's it selling? And it equals 650 is a neighbor that in the Hebrew language sits it. And as every letter in the Hebrew language has a number, the adding up of those letters produces the number 600. If you know the Hebrew alphabet, you know the is the last letter.

[00:18:58] So that will be a very high number. So we give you 600. Well, now they wanted 613, so they put the eighth thread, the eight threads you see, and the five knots, eight and five might 13. Now then I've got them here to put over my head a symbol that I've kept the whole law of God positive and negative. When I pray to him. He's got a picture in it, hasn't it? Because we've got a reality. They only had the symbol, but we are covered. We'll be covered at the presence of God. And we are accepted in the beloved, not only 613 precepts of the law, but anything that could be demanded of us has already been provided in the gift of all gifts, the gift of Christ. But I think the more you you look at this and think of what that means to them, the way in which the Apostle has spoken about it over their heart, and when the veil shall be taken away, then Israel shall be saved. So they are blinded by their very traditions. And he had warned that the force, the same as his father's had, otherwise he wouldn't have been a Pharisee. Well, then not only did they have to wear a shawl over their head, but they wore phylacteries. Now the word phylactery is not a Hebrew word. It's a Greek word and it is allied with the word prison. What is a prison? Well, the word prison in the Greek language comes from the idea of watching over or guarding.

[00:20:28] So derivative of the word could be a charm which protected you from harm. And a phylactery is a charm. Now it's borrowed or it arises out of a statement in the Old Testament that God said that the law of the Lord should be as frontlets before their eyes. Whatever frontlets are. Or again, he said, the law is a lamp to our feet. Well, I didn't go and put Lance on their feet, but I went and put a box on their forehead. And so I thought, you ought to see that if you haven't seen them before. This is one you see, there's a box which is a phylactery. And this one, with the tremendous length of strapping, would go around the arm. It would go so that it made the letter S on the back of the hand. Then it would curl up here seven times, you see. And that, of course, is stitched round there. And nobody would ever look inside to see what it was. While I stood at the counter recently, just down the back of commercial road. In a shop where they sold these things, I could see the agitation on the part of a Jewish father. He was buying for the first time the phylacteries for his son, who at 12 years of age was going to be made a son of the law and recite in the synagogue.

[00:21:57] But the ones that he got were not exactly the ones that he was wanting, and he had to be assured again and again and again that that sort of varnish was just all right, just as just as lucky so know. But that, of course, we smile. But he was concerned

about it. Now, when I got these, the Jews sold them to me, said, Well, I've had those for years. He said that they brought that for me to be cleaned up and varnished and nobody ever came for them. Well, of course I wasn't concerned. So I've ruined the charm. This is spoiled. I've cut it open. You see. So but don't you think now we think about the Jews as a lot of shoppers, don't they? Will you imagine the opportunity of selling a Jew, a phylactery like that with nothing in it? Because he never. No, he wouldn't dare to. No. Well, I opened it, you see, And when I opened it, I found inside a roll of parchment. And from where you look, you may be able to see that that is beautifully written, handwritten Hebrew, a perfect bit of the Hebrew writing rolled up and never seen in all the life of the person who possessed it. In the middle, you can see the middle one perhaps has got two letters a little bit blacker than the others just standing out a little bit. Well, those two letters sound like the end, Ed, and that is the Hebrew word for witness.

[00:23:23] They were Jehovah's Witnesses. The real ones. Yes. And at the at the that that statement is the solemn word they say in the synagogue in their prayers. The hear O Israel. The Lord, our God is one Lord. And the first word. And the last word. As the letter emphasized that whenever they look at that, any Hebrew Bible you buy has always got those letters standing out large. And then if you care to look at that afterwards, which I shall leave out, and you can see the yod, which is a very small letter, our iota or the Greek iota or our word jot and tittle, the tiny decorative figures which we can hardly understand why they're put, but not one jot or tittle of the law shall pass. Well, then you remember that our saviour accused these Pharisees. He said they may broad their phylacteries. Well, here's someone who wasn't quite so pious. He would have a little one. He wouldn't be pretty. You see, you could have enormous ones. This is another size. Here you are. See? So there were small sizes of piety and greater sizes of piety. And this one. As got inside it. The the little scroll you see tiny little one inside and the one that I have of the of the head. Instead of having one, it's divided into four compartments and they're all put separately and all done perfectly.

[00:24:50] Yet you can never see outside. Now they were the the charms, the batteries that they used more or less to boast that they were holy. Now, this is a bag which is been knocked about so badly, but still there it is. And. You can see the traditional shield of David, and in the middle is the actual word tefillin. That's it. The tonic, because they call the prayer and the shawl, the whole lot of it, the Tullis or Tullis, according to whether you belong to this Jewish faction or that, you know, the Shibboleth sound. Well, here is

one of the Hebrew prayer books. This one was printed in in Austria, Leipzig. It's got an English translation, which sometimes is very weird English doing the best they can. But here's the prayerbook and the rabbis admitted that there were so many prayers and nobody could really manage to get through them. So they had a diminutive one that anyone could do, but they weren't. So they weren't so acceptable to God and they haven't got so much merit as the man who went through a lot of them. You see, when I'm going to read one prayer, which I hope you will realize the apostle was speaking about when he wrote to the Galatians. This is part of the prayer. Morning prayer. Every time you go to a morning service in a synagogue, you would say these words. Think of the effect upon a boy 12 years of age becoming a son of the law.

[00:26:31] And from the time he was 12 until he died, he would say these words every time he went to a morning service at synagogue. Here it is. Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God, King of the universe. To give is to the instinct to distinguish between day and night. Or I'm afraid I'll have to go on a long way before I get to the piece I'm looking for. I should have to leave it because there are so many yards of it. But that's how it starts. But I'll tell you what, the player ended. Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God, King of the universe. I think the. That was not made and not not born a Gentile. I thank thee. I was not born a slave. And thankfully I was not born a woman. Oh, see, now, you see, that must effect the mind of a Jew that every day he goes to a service. He thanks God he wasn't born a woman. And then the Apostle wrote the epistle to the Galatians. And said that in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek. There's the one, neither bond nor free. There's the other, neither male nor female. There's the third. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. What a difference. But how that lives, doesn't it? You think of a Pharisee who, from all his earliest remembrances of thank God he wasn't a gentile, a slave, or a woman, being given the grace of God to see the truth, that he cancels the whole thing out because of the grace in Christ.

[00:28:13] Galatians three. So there it is. I'll put that there for you to think later. Of course, there's a possibility that this giving it will not be broadcast, not be recorded. It's being recorded so that Mr. Ramsey can hear it and decide. But I don't see what the folks are going to do while I'm holding up all these things. And we'll it won't make a difference to the series. This is a little bit extra. Well, now I thought that we might use this treatise, which I have here, which sets out a good deal of the statements concerning these people to get a little idea of what it all stands for. This question of the

traditions that these people held. They boasted that. They could extract more from one girl in a Hebrew letter than Moses could ever see in the whole law. There are hundreds and thousands of possible interpretations and translations and subdivisions until, as it says, this kept the devotee keyed up to a high pitch of tension for fear some technicality would be violated. He wouldn't know whether he ought to walk this way or sit this way or stand this way. It says when one puts on his shoes, he should commence with the right one. And when he takes them off, he should commence with the left one.

[00:29:43] And it's all down in the prayers. And you're going to do some rigmarole if you go and put them on the wrong one first. Now, you've heard people about touching wood and being lucky over doing this and that, or this is the whole of it was riddled with it. When they had problems. Uh, with regard to, for instance, one thing was his idea. Long controversies were held by the rabbis as to whether an egg long controversies, pages of it learnedly written whether an egg laid on the Sabbath could be eaten according to Exodus 16:22 and 26, because they were not allowed to go and collect Manna on the Sabbath. They had enough for two days. Well, they said, Now if an egg is laid on the Sabbath, isn't that like no matter, we mustn't use it. But that was small in comparison with some of the things. Take, for instance, this question of the Sabbath. They made it a burden and then they invented all sorts of dodges to get out of it. As you can well imagine. If a band starts to write a letter or contract on the Sabbath, as soon as he has written two letters of the alphabet, he is guilty and must be stoned. Well, that was very severe, of course, but they were interpreting the Old Testament right to the letter. To carry a pocket handkerchief in the pocket is a capital offense.

[00:31:12] So it is carried, tied around the knee like a garter. And I told you that that was the decision of the best in for this man tying his key so that he wouldn't carry a burden. Hairdressing return building. So one woman could not do this work for another on the Sabbath. A blind man was forbidden to carry a staff. He was never sick on a Sabbath because he was bearing a burden. Everyone had to search his pockets before the Sabbath to see if they contained anything which were forbidden to be carried on that day. Well, you see that boy, that scout? He'd been brought up under this, and one of the things forbidden. He must not touch money. Until he had to forfeit the fulfillment of his dream. Then they were called rabbi. You remember our savior said Call no, man. Father. Well, it's not so much calling anybody a father, although that's the Greek word. It was the title rabbi. And they dominated the people very much like Romanism. And it

says. To get a rabbi for a son in law and provide for him was to secure a blessing. To marry the daughter. One was to advance oneself to heaven. And one of their statements is the fear of the rabbi is as the fear of God. They sat in Moses seat. And the people were terrified of him. Then he goes on to speak about this. The Pharisees are their phylacteries. And then with regard to their prayers.

[00:33:00] I choose cheap seats. I'm entering the synagogue. There were seats on one side for men. The other side, a gallery. There were latticed sections for women who were shrouded with long veils. At one end was the Tebah or Ark of Painted Wood, which contained the sacred scriptures. And in front of it was the bema or elevated seat, the judgment seat of Christ is that word for the reader. In the cheap seats set the ten men of leisure or leading elders, including the ruler of the synagogue. This power of position became a snare to the grasping Pharisee and brought forth Christ's remark Beware of the scribes which loved the chief seats in the synagogue and the uttermost rooms at the feasts. Then we've mentioned about the fasting so that the man was called a heavy footed because he walked so slowly through the streets that everybody had known that he was fasting. A man must be very careful in pouring water on his hand three times for an evil spirit rests upon the hands before washing and does not depart until the water be poured on them three times. Therefore, it is necessary before washing to abstain from touching the hand to the mouth or the nose or the ear or the eyes, or one hand to the other before the morning light, as it would incur the risk of disease in the part touched. So you remember our savior speaks about the interminable washings of pots and beds and couches and everything.

[00:34:29] And then you remember that reference to the whitened sepulchre. Well, you know, in the law of Moses, any contact with death makes a person unclean. Even though they were doing it as an act of mercy, they would still be unclean. Where the trouble arose when folks were coming from distant parts to Jerusalem to keep the Passover. I will be streaming in from all parts and Sepulchres were built in all sorts of places. That's in the middle of a field. And if it were a bit overgrown or not conspicuous, her person may have taken the trouble to come all those miles to keep the Passover, then accidentally walk over a grave and he'd be finished. He couldn't go. So they had it arose, which was a kindly one. But just before Passover, they whitewashed the Sepulchres so that they would stand out white against the background. Well, the outside, they said, Yes, that's all very well, but that's what you are. Whitened sepulchres.

Externally, you appear pleasant to me, but internally corruption. And so he used that figure against them. And then you remember how he spoke and gave a long statement about the swearing. They used the most unnatural and extraordinary oaths and then found means and ways of breaking them. All sorts of evasions were invented after you had made an oath. I think they would have entered very much into the days when I was a boy at school when we used to swear our dying oath over something and we were alive as crickets.

[00:36:13] They would understand that and know how easy it was to find one to get away with it. And then they had exceedingly loose conception of the bondage or the bond of marriage. You know how in Malachi he charges the priests with playing fast and loose with marriage and divorce and saying that it was not so at the beginning. God intended marriage so that there should be a seed of God and you have allowed it to drift until it brings forth a generation of vipers. Says a man must not marry a woman with the intention of divorcing her. But if he previously inform her that he is going to marry her for a season, it is lawful. That's a quotation from one of the rabbinical writers. So that would suit some of the Hollywood sort of title. What we associate with that. Was it agreed beforehand, you see, and all is well. Then the Lord speaks about the Pharisees and their converts and their attitude toward them. And we can quite see that a zeal may in some measure be just for self-satisfaction. Well, I think I've said enough over that section to satisfy our feelings that we ought to be very grateful that we have not been submitted to such bondage as this. You know, the Peter who had been through this himself, among other things, he said when he was bearing a witness at the Council of Jerusalem, he says now, therefore, why kimchi God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear.

[00:37:51] When we were reading Matthew 23, one of our brethren read the words Ye blind guides which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. And I could quite imagine that the figure that comes into your mind is you've been having a drink and suddenly you think you've swallowed a fly. You know about that? Well, strictly speaking, strain at a net. Is not straining the course or swallowing, but straining it through a sieve. You see, I used to strain the wine through a mesh in order to strain out a gnat. If it was there. And then this is when you're going through all that trouble of straining at a gnat. You're going to swallow a camel, and now you won't believe that they actually swallowed camels with you. You can't swallow that, can you? But you can see the point. Isn't that religion all

over going to desperate trouble to do one thing When you've done it, then you go floundering to the very opposite without realizing it. That's ceremony instead of grace as merely observing rules. Now there's another bit that needs perhaps a little care in Matthew 23. The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses seat. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe.

[00:39:14] Uh, did you observe that? Observe and do, but do not see after their works for they say and do not. Well, that sounds to be a sort of telling you to do two things. First of all, it says whatsoever they bid you observe, you do it. And then whatever they do, whatever they tell you to do, don't do it. So I think. We must remember that the construction is possible and other way round exactly the same words could read like this. And it's quite a number of examples. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, you observe and do. I'm telling you, I'm not telling you to do it. I'm telling you what you do. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, you observe and do, but do not alter their works. For they say and do not. They're hypocrites. Would have assumed the plight of Moses would have usurped it. And you mustn't do what they tell you. That's very much the same as the as the parable in Luke's gospel, I told you. He had contrast parables where we are told our savior said, Make unto yourselves friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness. Oh, you don't want to tell people to do that. They do it well enough without. And he says in that parable as though he's instructing them to cheat in order that they may. Wooden habitations at the end. It says here. Um. Verse eight, the Lord commended the unjust steward because he had done wisely for the children of this world are in their generation, wiser than the Children of Light.

[00:40:55] And I say unto you, make to yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. Our context, isn't it? I mean, if you've got dreams are in a shady sort of business, that's the text to send them on Christmas cards. How many there would be a lovely might have put that up in their office and in their room, mate. Now this again yields another side, another aspect of truth without altering the original at all, he says. But do I say unto you, make to yourselves, friends of the mammon of unrighteousness that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations? And the implied answer is No, I do not. This is what I say. He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in that which is much. See, he's answered it. He's cancelled it. So whatever you do, don't take these unless you're very sure of your ground. Well, that's the background. Here we

have this man. He wasn't perhaps quite so hypocritical as others, but he was entirely in bondage. A slave to the traditions of his father. And it acted upon him so that he didn't hesitate to hire men and women, drag them before the judgment, and gave his voice against them, even unto death.

[00:42:23] So I felt that we might perhaps end up this series by just canvassing the scripture a little bit as to what constituted a Pharisee and bringing a few of these odds and ends in front of you to show you that it's still perpetuated in some measure, some degree, even to this day among the Jewish people. One day they're going to look upon him whom they pierced. I think their eyes will be opened and the prayer cloths and the prayer books that they have and all the ceremonies, they have mercy. You know, in the Jewish quarter, they won't. They must not even switch on an electric light on a Sabbath. You must not like anything on the Sabbath. A Gentile woman is usually employed in a block of flats that belong to the Jewish people on the Sabbath to go and light the fire, put the light on Sabbath. We can only honor them to think that they do it. But we are sad to think that under such bondage and feel that that's pleasing God. The next thing is to watch that we don't slip into any forms and ceremonies ourselves and begin to prove ourselves as though we are a better class of Christian than others. The one thing to keep uppermost in our mind is first and middle and end. Foundation and Top Stone is the finished work of Christ. And in that and in that, only we stand complete and accepted.