

The Gospel According to John

5-8-2019

1. Last week I completed a study of Joh 2:23-25 by way of the *Doctrine of the Passover*, the *Doctrine of the Pharisee and Jesus' encounter with Nicodemus*.
2. Before we return to our study, I want to give you opportunity to use 1Jo 1:9 as may or may not be necessary.
3. Let's begin by looking at an expanded translation of Joh 2:23-25.

Expanded Translation

Joh 2:23 Now while Jesus was in Jerusalem during Passover week, many people saw the miraculous signs he performed and many believed in his name.

Joh 2:24 But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for He knew all men.

Joh 2:25 Jesus knew from His omniscience what those he encountered were thinking; He knew what was in the minds of all men.

4. Jesus visits with Nicodemus:

KJV

Joh 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

Joh 3:2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

Joh 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Joh 3:4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

Joh 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Joh 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Joh 3:7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

Joh 3:8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

4.1 The Pharisees were hypocrites because they did not live up to their own high standards of righteousness.

- They laid burdens upon others which they themselves were unwilling to bear.

Mat 23:4 They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.

Mat 23:5 "Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long;

Mat 23:6 they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues;

- They used sophisticated and subtle reasoning to evade the spirit of the law while carrying out its letter.

Mar 7:9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

Mar 7:10 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death:

Mar 7:11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.

Mar 7:12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

Mar 7:13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

- They gloried in their own righteousness and did good works only to be seen by men.

Mat 23:5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

Mat 23:6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

Mat 23:7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

Mat 23:8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

Mat 23:9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

Mat 23:10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.

Mat 23:11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

Mat 23:12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

Luk 18:9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

Luk 18:10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

Luk 18:11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

Luk 18:12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

Luk 18:13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

Luk 18:14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

- John the Baptist had called them a "brood of vipers" who rested complacent in their Abrahamic sonship.

Mat 3:7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

- Jesus seconded this verdict, adding that they were "whitened sepulchers," and sons not of the "prophets and righteous" (like Abraham) for whom they had built elaborate tombs, but of those who had slain those same prophets and the righteous, even from Abel to Zechariah.

Mat 23:27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

Mat 23:28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Mat 23:29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchers of the righteous,

Mat 23:30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

Mat 23:31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

Mat 23:32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

Mat 23:33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

Mat 23:34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

Mat 23:35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

Mat 23:36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

Footnote: Abel to Zacharias includes all the murders recorded in the OT, from the first book (Gen 4:8) to the last in the Hebrew canon (2Ch 24:20-22). The failure of these Pharisees to learn the lessons of history and repent of their wickedness, the same that had characterized their fathers, meant that in God's sight they shared the guilt.

- They were "blind leaders of the blind" who sought many proselytes but in reality, kept men out of the kingdom of heaven.

Mat 15:14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

Mat 23:13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

Mat 23:14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

Mat 23:15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

- The hypocritical features just noted in the New Testament are well known, but it should not be forgotten that on occasion Pharisees are seen in a somewhat more favorable light.

Luk 7:36 And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

Luk 13:31 The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee.

Luk 13:32 And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.

Luk 13:33 Nevertheless I must walk to day, and tomorrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

Luk 13:34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

Luk 13:35 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

- To Gamaliel are attributed some of the same good qualities that Josephus saw in the Pharisees--moderation, avoidance of harsh punishments, and awareness of divine sovereignty as well as human responsibility.

Acts 5:33 When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.

Acts 5:34 Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space;

Acts 5:35 And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men.

Acts 5:36 For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.

Acts 5:37 After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.

Acts 5:38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought:

Acts 5:39 But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.

- Paul was a Pharisee before his conversion, and apparently regarded this party as the highest expression of the "righteousness which is in the law."

Phi 3:4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

Phi 3:5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

Phi 3:6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Gal 1:14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

5. Summary

5.1 A definition of Pharisaism might begin by stressing that it was a religion that "built a fence around the law." By taking the legal regulations of the Old Testament, many of which were intended for the Levitical priests, and making them relevant and applicable to every Jew. This the Pharisees did by their system of oral tradition and interpretation.

5.2 Why then did Jesus denounce Pharisaism? partly because of the hypocrisy of some of its representatives who "say, and do not."

5.3 While laying external burdens upon themselves and their followers, they had actually made righteousness an easier way, a goal that was attainable by certain acts, so that when these acts had been performed the Pharisee might think he had done all that was required of him.

5.4 Against this attitude Jesus said that when all such requirements had been carried out, the servant of God could still not rest secure.

Luk 17:7 "Suppose one of you had a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Would he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, 'Come along now and sit down to eat'?

Luk 17:8 Would he not rather say, 'Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink'?

Luk 17:9 Would he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do?

Luk 17:10 So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'

Luk 23:5 "Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long;

Luk 23:6 they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues;

Luk 23:7 they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them 'Rabbi.'

6. Let's see what the Scripture has to say about this man named Nicodemus.

6.1 He was a Pharisee, a ruler of Jews (**Archon**, "ruler,") often used as a title for a member of the Sanhedrin, cf. Joh 7:46-53, compared with Joh 3:1-18.

NIV

Joh 7:46 "No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared.

Joh 7:47 "You mean he has deceived you also?" the Pharisees retorted.

Joh 7:48 "Has any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him?"

Joh 7:49 No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law -- there is a curse on them."

Joh 7:50 Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked,

Joh 7:51 "Does our law condemn anyone without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?"

Joh 7:52 They replied, "Are you from Galilee, too? Look into it, and you will find that a prophet does not come out of Galilee."

Joh 7:53 Then each went to his own home.

NIV

Joh 3:1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council.

Joh 3:2 He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him."

Joh 3:3 In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."

Joh 3:4 "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked.

"Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!"

Joh 3:5 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.

Joh 3:6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

Joh 3:7 You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'

Joh 3:8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So, it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

Joh 3:9 "How can this be?" Nicodemus asked.

Joh 3:10 "You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things?"

Joh 3:11 I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony.

Joh 3:12 I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things?

Joh 3:13 No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven -- the Son of Man.

Joh 3:14 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up,

Joh 3:15 that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

Joh 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Joh 3:17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Joh 3:18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

NIV

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Joh 7:53 Then each went to his own home.

6.2 Nicodemus was most likely a a teacher of Israel, and a very wealthy man (Joh 19:39).

Joh 19:39 He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds.

6.3 His nocturnal visit to Jesus is no doubt the most often used Scriptures used by evangelists all over the world. (Joh 3:1-18).

6.4 Nicodemus is however, mentioned only in the Gospel of John.

6.5 Nicodemus assisted Joseph of Arimathea in the preparation of Jesus' body for burial. (Joh 19:38-42)

Joh 19:38 Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission, he came and took the body away.

Joh 19:39 He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds.

Joh 19:40 Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs.

Joh 19:41 At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid.

Joh 19:42 Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

6.6 Nothing is known with certainty about his family or background. Attempts have been made to identify him with the Nicodemus ben Gorion mentioned in the Talmud.

6.7 After his participation in the burial of Jesus, Nicodemus disappeared from the New Testament narrative, but in an apocryphal narrative of the passion and resurrection of Christ, variously entitled Gospel of Nicodemus and Acts of Pilate, further references are made to him.

6.8 Although the New Testament does not state that Nicodemus later became a Christian, there is a strong probability that he did.

6.9 In Christian legend, he is represented as having been baptized by Peter and John, suffered many hardships at the hands of hostile Jews, deprived of his office in the Sanhedrin, and banished from Jerusalem because of his faith in Christ.

7. Now let's see what we can learn from

KJV

Joh 3:19 And this is the condemnation, that **light** is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than **light**, because their deeds were evil.

Joh 3:20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the **light**, neither cometh to the **light**, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.

Joh 3:21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

NIV

Joh 3:19 This is the verdict: **Light** has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of **light** because their deeds were evil.

Joh 3:20 Everyone who does evil hates the **light**, and will not come into the **light** for fear that his deeds will be exposed.

Joh 3:21 But whoever lives by the truth comes into the **light**, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."

Comments:

1. I think the best way to study verses 19-21 is to review the *Doctrine of Light*.

Doctrine of Light

1. The literal phenomena of light is necessary for us to function effectively on planet earth.

Gen 1:3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

Gen 1:4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

2. Light is used in Scripture for that which brings life. Joh 1:4

Joh 1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

3. There are many uses of light in Scripture: **Phos** is the Greek word for light and it appears some 70 times in the New Testament. Several of those uses are:

3.1 As the essence of God. 1Jo 1:5

Joh 1:5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

3.2 For Jesus who came into a world of darkness to save a lost world.

Joh 8:12

Joh 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

3.3 The good news of the Word is called light. 2Co 4:4

2Co 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

3.4 At point of regeneration the believer is moved from darkness to light.

1Pe 2:9

1Pe 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;

3.5 **Light** is used to describe doctrine resident in the soul. Eph 5:8;
Psa 119:105

Eph 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye **light** in the Lord:
walk as children of light:

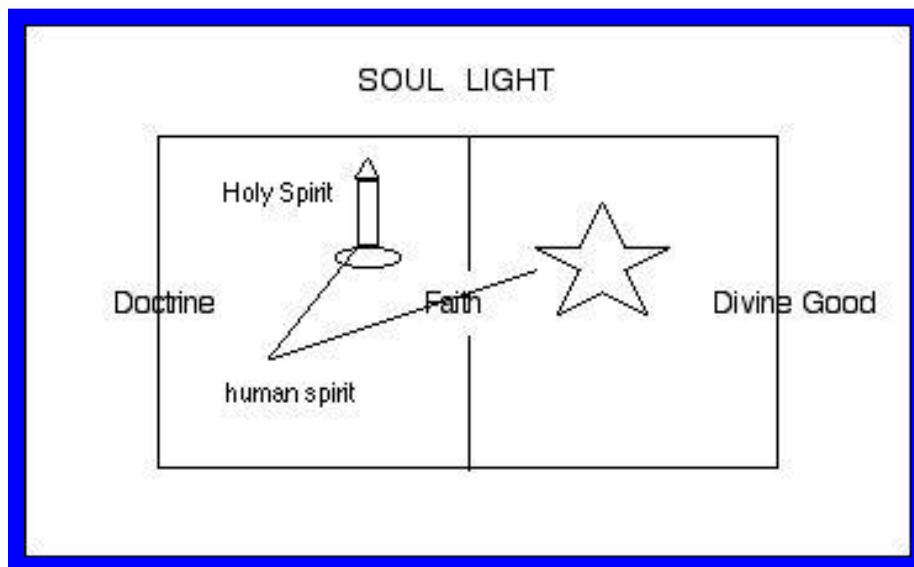
Psa 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a **light** unto my path.

3.6 Doctrine in the soul of the believer is said to be constructed of the
armor of light. Rom 13:12

Rom 13:12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off
the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of **light**.

3.6.1 **Light** therefore depicts entrance into spiritual maturity. Eph 5:14

Eph 5:14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the
dead, and Christ shall give thee **light**.



End Lesson

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