

Jesus Confronts Hypocrisy... Pharisee

Pharisees

The Greek term "Phariseios" [5330] – one of the Jewish sect "a separatist, a purist, someone separated from sin.

- ⇒ Origin – two centuries before the birth of Christ
- ⇒ First Mention – Reign of John Hyrcanus (134-104 B.C.)
- ⇒ The name means "separatist" – one who separated himself from the corrupt influence of Hellenism

Problems

- ⇒ Followed legal traditions not ascribed to the bible but the traditions of the fathers – ceremonial purity.
- ⇒ Traditions...washing cup and platter
- ⇒ Outward cleansing but has an inward sin
- ⇒ Tithe the wrong things (mint, rue)
- ⇒ Wants the uppermost seat in synagogue
- ⇒ Wants to be greeted in the market place

Who were the Pharisees?

St. Luke

The Gospel according to St. Luke is the only full presentation of the career of Christ from his birth. It is paired with the book of Acts for this full account.

- ⇒ Written prior to A.D. 62
- ⇒ Athens, Greece or Antioch, Syria
- ⇒ Written to Theophilus
- ⇒ Apostle Paul's companion
- ⇒ Popular Teachings
- ⇒ Chapter 11:37-44 Jesus denounces the Pharisees



Who were the Pharisees?

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Who were the Pharisees?

Have you ever wondered about the Pharisees in scripture and why they were so opposed to the Messiah. This document is a snapshot of who the Pharisees were in the time of biblical text.

Pharisaic Thought:

- ⇒ Pharisaic thought began as a commentary on the law, but it was ultimately raised to the level of law itself...to justify this teaching it was maintained that the **written law** was given by **God** to **Moses** on Mount Sinai along with the **oral law**.
- ⇒ The Pharisees developed systems of tradition which sought to apply the law to a variety of circumstances – oral law parallel statutory law because it deals with everyday lives of people.
- ⇒ The Pharisees believed in priestly purity for all Jew, the first Jewish sect to believe in the resurrection of the dead, and they believed that in addition to the commands (written law) that Moses also passed down oral traditions.
- ⇒ The book of Leviticus outlined these purity rituals and criteria for priest serving in the Temple. The special purity ritual consisted of water use...but not necessarily for hygiene.
- ⇒ Small landowners and traders...this is how they gain their wealth/respect
- ⇒ Pharisees were not professionals like the Scribes...with the Scribes (attorneys) which could write legal documents. However, there were some Pharisees that were Scribes also.
- ⇒ Synagogue was established by the Pharisees – the synagogue was the central place of Jewish religious life and community.

Pharisee Nobles in Scripture:

Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, Gamaliel, and Saul of Tarsus represent some of the noble men from the Pharisaic sect in the New Testament.

Pharisee Origin:

During the 1st century before Christ, two influential pharisaic teachers gave their names to two schools of legal thought – Hillel and Shammai.

- ⇒ **Hillel** - he was the more moderate of the two, he was considerate of the poor and willing to accept Roman rule as compatible to Jewish orthodoxy.
- ⇒ **Shammai** - he was stricter in his interpretation and bitterly opposed to Rome, his viewpoint ultimately found expression in the sect of Zealots whose resistance to the Romans brought on the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.
- The **Talmud** preserves the record of the 316 controversies between the schools of Hillel and Shammai. According to Yale University Library, the Talmud is the body of Jewish civil and religious law including commentaries on the Torah. It is rabbinical literature that includes the Mishnah and Gemara.
 - The **Mishnah** is the documented interpretation of the *oral law – statutory law* that in Pharisaic belief should be observed with greater stringency because it affects/impacts the everyday life of ordinary men unlike the *written law (torah) – constitutional law* that has the very order and intent of God. According to PBS-Learning Media, the Mishnah became the very foundation of rebuilding Jewish life (in exile) by addressing the dilemma of how to remain Jewish in a non-Jewish world. It categorizes the 613 commandments found in the Torah into (6) primary sections: agriculture (Zera'im), sacred time (Mo'ed), women and personal status (Nashim), damages (Nezikin), holy things (Kodashim), and purity laws (Taharot).

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