

GOSPEL OF LUKE
Luke 11 (RSV)

Woes on the Pharisees and the Experts in the Law

³⁷ While Jesus was speaking, a Pharisee asked him to dine with him; so he went in and sat at table. ³⁸ The Pharisee was astonished to see that he did not first wash before dinner.

³⁹ And the Lord said to him, **“Now you Pharisees** (*members of progressive Jewish sect*) **cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of extortion and wickedness.** ⁴⁰ **You fools! Did not he who made the outside make the inside also?** ⁴¹ **But give for alms** (*ἐλεημοσύνη [el-eh-ay-mos-oo'-nay] mercy, pity, alms-giving, charity*) **those things which are within; and behold, everything is clean for you.** (NIV: “be generous to the poor, and everything will be clean for you”)

Six Woes (οὐαί [oo-ah'-ee] uttered in grief or denunciation:

1. How would you summarize each “woe”?
2. Are there differences between the woes to the Pharisees and the Lawyers?

⁴² **“But woe to you Pharisees! for you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God; these you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.**

⁴³ **Woe to you Pharisees! for you love the best seat in the synagogues and salutations in the market places.**

⁴⁴ **Woe to you! for you are like graves which are not seen, and men walk over them without knowing it.”**

⁴⁵ One of the lawyers (*experts in Jewish law*) answered him, “**Teacher, in saying this you reproach us also.**”

⁴⁶ And Jesus said, “**Woe to you lawyers also! for you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers.**

⁴⁷ **Woe to you! for you build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers killed.**

⁴⁸ **So you are witnesses and consent to the deeds of your fathers; for they killed them, and you build their tombs.** ⁴⁹ **Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,’** ⁵⁰ **that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation,** ⁵¹ **from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechari’ah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it shall be required of this generation.**

⁵² **Woe to you lawyers! for you have taken away the key of knowledge; you did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering.”**

⁵³ As Jesus went away from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard, and to provoke him to speak of many things, ⁵⁴ lying in wait for him, to catch at something he might say.

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Questions and Discussion