



## MATTHEW 23

### Exposing the Hypocrisy of the Leadership

- Knowing He had but days left to live, Jesus let fly all He had been wanting to say to the religious leaders
- We see a decidedly negative even pessimistic tone in Yeshua
- His rant against the Jewish religious leadership is made for the benefit of the many onlookers

# LEADING AND MISLEADING

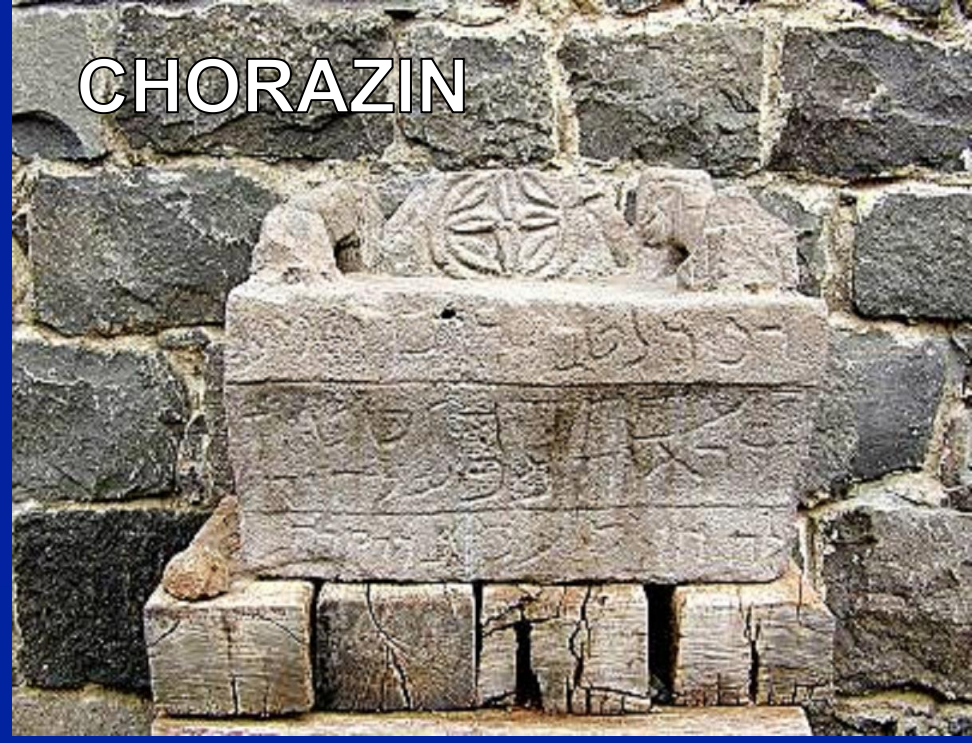
- Rome was the governing authority, but the Synagogue is what determined day to day life for the common Jews
- Synagogue leaders nearly always were Pharisees
- The Temple had less daily influence on the lives of the people
- The Sadducees controlled the Temple and the Courts



# THE SEAT OF MOSES

- Christ turns to speak to the crowds
- Scribes the top of the leadership in the Synagogues
- Very few Synagogues were dedicated buildings
- Most Synagogues were like “house Churches”
- “Seat of Moses” likely indicated the person of authority at each Synagogue

CHORAZIN



CAPERNAUM  
SYNAGOGUE





# DO AS THEY SAY, NOT AS THEY DO

- The topic is hypocrisy
- No human will ever teach God's Word perfectly
- Yeshua seems to accept the authority of the Synagogue leaders
- Matt. 5:17 – 20
- Scripture passages were read in the Synagogue, but interpreted through the lens of Tradition
- Matt. 15:7 – 9
- Wrong doctrine leads to vain worship of God



# Watering down God's Word

- Yeshua was not teaching hypothetically
- We must be careful not to unintentionally validate doctrines and traditions that don't belong in our faith
- Luke 11:37 – 54
- Luke's narrative took place in a different setting
- Yeshua is not condemning all Jewish leadership; just the ones before Him, and like them



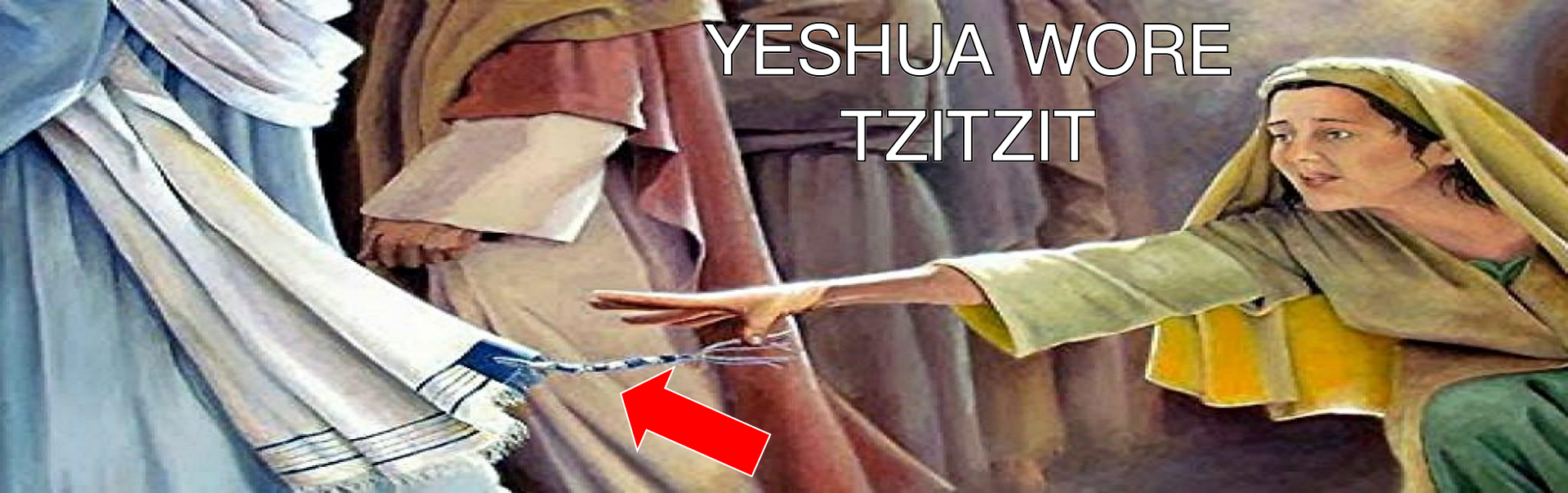
TRADITIONS

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

- Jesus, Matthew 11:28

- Christ says these Synagogue leaders put heavy burdens on people, and do nothing to help them
- Acts 15:10 – 11
- The burdens are NOT the Law of Moses, they are *Halakhah*, Jewish Law, Traditions of the Elders
- Yoke = the authority/teaching one is connected to
- Much of vs. 4 involves a play on words

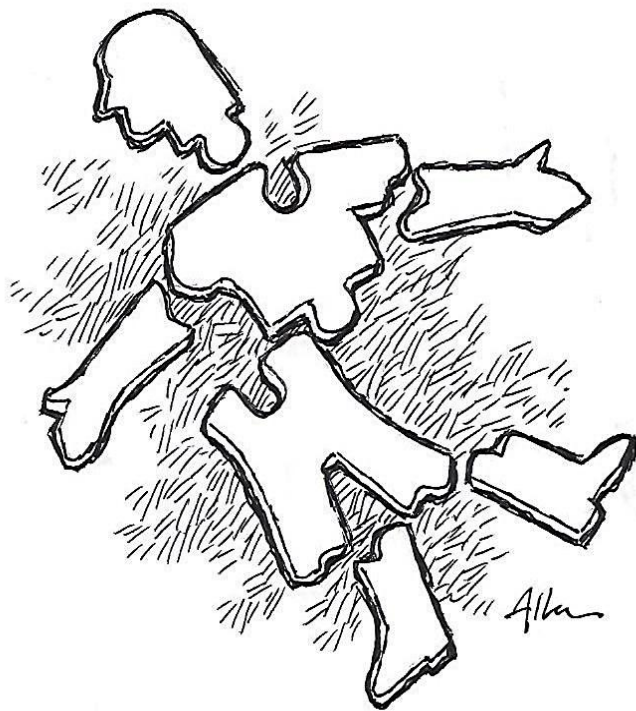
# YESHUA WORE TZITZIT



- The long *Tzitzit* and broad *T'fillin* were meant to draw attention to their “piety”
- Matt. 9:20
- Numbers 15:38 – 40
- Vss. 6 & 7 are more self-glorification by the Pharisees

## T'FILLIN





# SO... WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH TITLES?

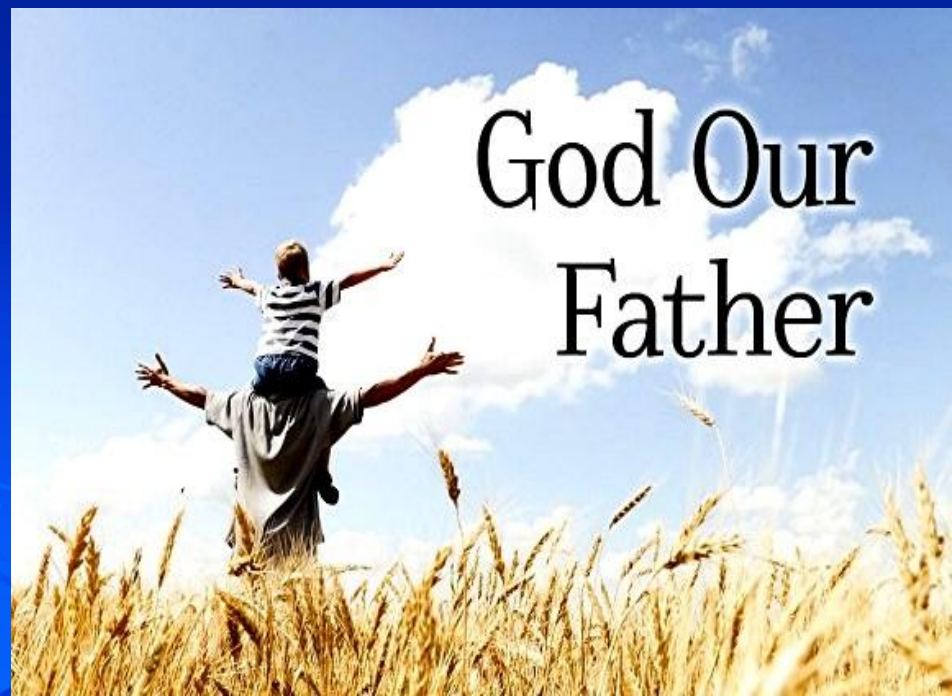
- Honorific titles not appropriate, because we are all brothers (equals)
- How does any society or organization do without structure and titles?
- 1Cor. 12:12 – 27
- Christ was not declaring an end to titles; rather don't use them the way the Pharisees do





# WHO IS THE “ONE RABBI”?

- Rabbi probably meant master teacher
- Doesn't really fit God the Father, and Yeshua didn't usually give to Himself such titles
- Might it be the Holy Spirit?
- John 14:26
- Luke 12:11 – 12
- Holy Spirit as master teacher is appropriate



# ONLY MESSIAH IS OUR LEADER!



- Christ finds it incongruent to give any person on earth the title of “Father” within His Church
- Yeshua doesn’t want anyone set on a pedestal as “The Leader”
- Rabbi, Father, and Leader are all meant in the sense of the Divine
- Did the crowds understand? Probably not