



## The Child of Hell

(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.

Our continued study on the subject of “hell” in the Bible takes us now to Matthew 23:15 where we will learn what “the child of hell” means.

Of note is the audience, the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus had already been confronting these rulers over the spiritual needs of the people, and in verse 14, the subject of devouring widow’s houses appeared.



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

Let’s not forget that the Bible is an eastern book, filled with eastern customs and ways. In the East, a woman basically has no rights. She is not treated like a woman in the West, and she doesn’t even expect to be either.

She does not aspire to these things, rather, to serve man. For example, if there was one seat in a room, and she was offered it, she would not take it. Instead, she would let the man have it. Women are not allowed to talk to other men. This would be a problem for a Western woman, but not an Eastern one. If her husband died, she would not be allowed to manage the properties left by him, go to court for her needs, or even raise her children on her own. The custom dictates that she send a note to the priest or pastor in her life, requesting a trustee appointed by the Temple. She would tell him that she plans on coming to listen to the selected men pray. The priest would then arrange this with

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several deacons of the Temple. The man with the most beautiful and longest prayer would be selected by the woman. She would use her senses to decide something that needed spiritual oversight, and the deacons would pray for the woman, not for God. They would intentionally deceive her in order to steal her wealth. Once selected, the newly appointed trustee would be given all of the deeds, the keys, and complete authority over everything. Because she had no business mind in such matters, she wouldn't even know she was being swindled.

Jesus confronted this evil and warned them of a greater damnation, judgment, awaiting them.

Then he continued with verse 15.

(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.

A hypocrite is an actor under an assumed character. He or she is a "stage player," skilled at fooling people into believing they are who they are not. Jesus understood what these men were up to and wouldn't stand for it. He described how they found more people to join their team - "proselytes". They would walk around, always on the prowl for someone else to join them in their evil activities. Once joined, they would turn him into a twofold evil person. They wouldn't stop at the "dry land" to find another follower; they also searched the sea. They spared no expense to capture more and more for their cause.

Once a member, Jesus stated that this person became "the child of hell." If you've been following these teachings on "hell," you already know that the word "hell" is ALWAYS a mistranslation. This case is no different. But before I handle this, let's look at the word for "twofold."

Twofold refers to "edges." It literally means, "with two edges" or "two-edged." Have you ever heard of a "two-edged sword?" It is deathly sharp on both sides of the blade, and was used to slice "coming and going", so to speak. The Pharisees would act holy and religious, but they would turn people into devilish weapons, hell-bent on destroying other's lives.

Now, let's see what "the child of hell" means. The word "hell" is the now, familiar word *gehenna*. Remember that it means "city dump," where the refuse of the

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city continually burns. Do you remember the history behind this fiery place? Bullinger teaches us about it in Appendix 131 of the Companion Bible. This Greek word is actually “a transliteration of the Hebrew *Gai Hinnom*, where were the fires through which children were passed in the worship of Moloch.” Long since ceased, this practice was always remembered by the smoldering fires of *Gehenna*. In the Old Testament, the word “Tophet” was used because it was a place in this valley. Today, the fires are referred to as the fires of destruction because that’s where the refuse of the city is destroyed. This term is why “fires of destruction” have been associated with the judgment of God. Sometimes, this place is also called, “the gehenna of fire.” But, it is never a literal “hell.”

Let’s put this together with what we know from our study. The

Pharisees, stage actors, searched high and low for followers, and when they found one, they would turn him into a devilish child of the fires of destruction, capable of cutting a man in two with his horrible deeds.

Much love in Christ!

Jerry D. Brown