

# Weaving the Word

## *Eying the Treasure*

Part 45 – September 13, 2015



Welcome to where we're opening our eyes and learning to see

### Who is the great deceiver?

... that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. – Revelation 12:9 NIV



[Jesus said] "When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies." – John 8:44b NIV

Okay; but, **who is the greatest deceiver?**

**That would be the One who deceived the great deceiver!**



And **without ever uttering a single untruth.**

[When the Pharisees warned Pilate to post a guard at Jesus' tomb] ... they said, "we remember that while he was still alive **that deceiver** said, 'After three days I will rise again.'" – Matthew 27:63 NIV



He catches the wise in their craftiness, and the schemes of the wily are swept away. Darkness comes upon them in the daytime; at noon they grope as in the night. – Job 5:13-14 NIV

And, sure enough, the darkness did come, at noon, on the day Christ was crucified. (Mark 15:33) Two years before, on a hillside above the Sea of Galilee, Jesus instructs His young apprentices.



"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting." – Matthew 6:16a NIV

**Fasting (temporarily ignoring the demands of our appetite), is a way to focus attention, express devotion, and grow in self-discipline.**



**Fasting isn't a spiritual hunger strike to get God to act.**

And, fasting *isn't* Jesus' point.

He's finishing up a 3-part teaching on the behavior they exhibit and the rewards they seek.

“Be careful *not* to do your ‘acts of righteousness’ before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have **no reward from your Father in heaven**. So **#1 when you give to the needy**, [Not, “If you give”] do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, **to be honored by men**. [Remember the clanging coins in the trumpet-shaped Temple coffers?] I tell you the truth, **they have received their reward in full**. [Temporary earthly honor, as opposed to the reward of heavenly, Fatherly honor] But when **you** give to the needy, do not let your [unclean] left hand [side] know [and foul up] what your [clean and pure] right hand [side] is doing, so that your giving may be **in secret** [not “to be honored by men”]. Then **your Father**, who sees what is done **in secret**, [for His honor] **will reward you**. [With eternal honor] And **#2 when you pray**, [Not, “If you pray”] do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners **to be seen by men**. [Remember how they lengthened the expensive fringes of their tallit/prayer shawl? (Mat 23:5)] I tell you the truth, **they have received their reward in full**. [A crowd of earthly spectators, as opposed to a heavenly audience of One] But when **you** pray, go into your **room**, [tameion: **secret room; storage chamber; storeroom**] close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then **your Father**, who sees what is done **in secret**, [not “to be seen by men”] **will reward you**. [In your storeroom] And [“something else that’s really been bothering Me”] **when you** pray, [in your secret storage chamber] do not **keep on babbling** like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father [who rewards you in your private storeroom] knows what you need before you ask him. This, then, is how you should pray: ‘**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.**’ For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. **#3 When you fast**, [Not, “If you fast”] do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure [aphanizō: consume; corrupt, vanish away] their faces **to show men** they are fasting. I tell you the truth, **they have received their reward in full**. [Showing off their corrupt faces] But when **you** fast, [Not, “If you fast”] put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and **your Father**, who sees what is done **in secret**, [not “to show men you are fasting”] **will reward you**. [In your private storeroom] Do not **store up** [thēsaurizō: collect; accumulate] for yourselves **treasures** [thēsaurus: a treasury; a storeroom] on earth, where **moth** and **rust** [brōsis: eating away] **destroy**, [aphanizō: consume; corrupt, vanish away (it’s what they do to their faces)] and where **thieves break in and steal!**” – Matthew 6:1-20 NIV



### Who is the great thief?

[Jesus said] “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” – John 10:10 NIV

**Who is the *greatest thief*? That’d be the One who takes what the great thief has stolen!**

The One who deceived him into hanging Him, *like a thief, between two thieves*, unwittingly assisting Him in dying for the sins of, and the release of, those held captive.



One of the last things Jesus said before the cross was:

“But understand this: if the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.” – Matthew 24:43-44 NIV

Of course, **this rescue requires a desire to be rescued.**

Paul encourages Timothy to be gentle with those who oppose him ...

... in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will. – 2 Timothy 2:25-26 NIV

In Revelation, the Lord God Almighty, says:

“Behold, **I come like a thief!** Blessed is he who stays awake and **keeps his clothes with him**, [this has to be the type that aren’t eaten by the moth] so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed.” – Revelation 16:15 NIV



So, what’s represented by the “moth” and the “cloth” and the “eating away”? It certainly paints a picture of the temporary nature of earthly treasures being consumed.

But, I think there’s a deeper meaning.

[In Job, we’re told that] Man wastes away like something rotten, **like a garment eaten by moths.** – Job 13:28 NIV

Nowhere in scripture is Satan compared to a moth. **But, God is!**

You rebuke and discipline men for their sin; **you consume** [macah: vanish away] **their wealth like a moth** ... – Psalm 39:11 NIV

**I am like a moth to Ephraim**, [a name applied to the whole kingdom] **like rot to the people of Judah.** – Hosea 5:12 NIV

**God is the moth and our body is the cloth, corroding away under the curse of sin that held us captive till we were set free. So, what type of treasure are you collecting in your storeroom?**

**The kind that’s under the curse? Or, the type that’s stored in Heaven? The kind that seeks the approval of man? Or, the type that seeks the glory of God?**

Jesus goes on to encourage and exhort His young apprentices:



But **store up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, [out of the reach of the curse of this earth] where **moth** and **rust** do not destroy, and where **thieves** do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. – Matthew 6:20-21 NIV

Know why? **Our heart is the secret storeroom of our treasure.** When Jesus was born, shepherds proclaimed what the angels said.

... and all who heard it were **amazed** at what the shepherds said to them. But **Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.** – Luke 2:18-19 NIV

**I thought we stored it up in Heaven. If your heart belongs to Jesus, it's already in Heaven.**

**Eternal life doesn't begin when we die, but when we enter.**

God raised us up with Christ and **seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus**, in order that in the coming ages he might show the **incomparable riches of his grace**, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. – Ephesians 2:6-7 NIV

*That's* the riches that won't corrode and can't be stolen!

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, **clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.** – Colossians 3:12 NIV

*That's* the clothes the moth won't consume.

**What's the one thing we can actually collect, here and now, that can't be consumed, corroded, or stolen and is secured in Heaven? In a Word: truth. Life-changing, world-impacting, everlasting, Truth. Truth so tangible and powerful, that it's a Person. Truth so pure and holy, that it's the very light of life. Truth so compelling, that it must become deeds of righteousness.**

And, **how do we collect this eternal treasure here and now? He who has eyes, let 'em see!**

Jesus finishes by telling His boys how to collect their reward.

"The **eye** [ophthalmos: metaphorically: understanding and perception] is the lamp of the body. If your **eyes are good**, [haplous; lit: single in focus; unconfused] your whole body will be full of **light**. [phōteinos: bright, brilliant, dazzling white] But if your **eyes are bad**, [ponēros; wicked; evil. And therefore, out of focus] your whole body will be full of **darkness**. [skoteinos; covered in darkness] If then the **light** [phōs: metaphorically: the power to understand moral and spiritual truth] within you is **darkness**, [skotos: blindness; metaphorically: ignorance of divine things and human duties] how great is that darkness!" [skotos: ignorance] – Matthew 6:16-23 NIV

**Under the curse, man is given eyes that cannot see. (Is 6:9-10) But, our Father, who sees in secret, rewards seekers with sight.**

As Jesus later said to His boys: *"Blessed are your eyes because they see."* (Mat 13:16)