

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 34 – February 3rd – Matthew 22:34-23:12

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Matthew

- Hagner, Donald A *Word Biblical Commentary Vols.33a & 33b: Matthew 1-13 & Matthew 14-28*, Word Books, Dallas, 1993 & 1995
- Morris, Leon *The Gospel According to Matthew*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1992

Verses 34-40

Cf. Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-28.

Verse 34

Οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι ἀκούσαντες ὅτι ἐφίμωσεν τοὺς Σαδδουκαίους συνήχθησαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό.

φίμωω silence, put to silence

συνήχθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl

συναγω gather, gather together, assemble

ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό is used in the sense of 'together' as in Acts 1:15. Hagner comments, "the identical phrase occurs in the LXX of Ps 2:2 in a context of opposition against the Lord's 'anointed.'"

Verse 35

καὶ ἐπηρώτησεν εἰς ἕξ αὐτῶν νομικὸς περὶ αὐτῶν.

ἐπερωτῶ ask, question

εἰς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

νομικος, η, ον pertaining to the law; ὁ v. lawyer

Though only a few manuscripts omit νομικος Metzger argues that the word is not original.

He suggests that, "Internal considerations of the most compelling kind make it altogether likely that all of the Uncials and almost all of the minuscules are wrong in reading νομικος"

i) Except for this passage, Luke alone of the evangelists uses this word.

ii) There would have been no reason to omit the word if genuine, but strong temptation to add it from the parallel passage in Luke 10:25.

Morris disagrees saying, "the attestation is strong, and there is no reason why Matthew should not use a word once only. It should be accepted."

πειραζω test, put to the test

Verse 36

Διδάσκαλε, ποία ἐντολὴ μεγάλη ἐν τῷ νόμῳ;

διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

ποιος, α, ον interrog pro. what, which

ἐντολη, ης f command

μεγας, μεγαλη, μεγα large, great

μεγαλη this Semitic construction means 'great as compared to the other commandments,' 'the greatest.'

νομος, ου m law

A trick question in that it was calculated to provoke controversy as this was a hot topic in rabbinic discussion.

Verse 37

ὁ δὲ ἔφη αὐτῷ· Ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ καρδίᾳ σου καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ ψυχῇ σου καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ διανοίᾳ σου·

ἔφη Verb, imperf act ind, 3s φημι say

ἀγαπήσεις Verb, fut act indic, 2 s ἀγαπαω love

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, complete, entire

ψυχη, ης f self, inmost being, 'soul'

διανοια mind, thought, understanding

The quotation is from Dt 6:5 with the exception that the final 'with all your might' is changed to 'with all your mind'. Cf. Josh 22:5.

Verse 38

αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μεγάλη καὶ πρώτη ἐντολή.

πρωτος, η, ον first, leading, foremost

"This commandment from Deut 6:5 can easily be recognized as a kind of elaboration on the first commandment of the Decalogue: 'I am the Lord your God ... you shall have no other gods besides me.'" Hagner.

Verse 39

Δευτέρα δὲ ὁμοία αὐτῇ· Ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν.

δευτερος, α, ον second

ὁμοιος, α, ον like, of the same kind as

πλησιον i) prep with gen near; ii) ὁ π.

neighbour, fellow man.

σεαυτου, ης reflexive pronoun yourself

Cf. Lev 19:18,34. See also Matt 5:43; 19:19; Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8.

"It seems that the Jews tended to understand by the *neighbour* one's fellow Jew and to leave open the possibility of a thoroughgoing hatred to 'lesser breeds without the law.' But there cannot be the slightest doubt that Jesus is extending the term as widely as it can be extended; he is saying that one must love one's fellow human being. The two great commandments go together (if anyone says he loves God and hates his brother he is a liar, 1 John 4:20)." Leon Morris. The quotation from 1 John no doubt refers primarily to a fellow *believer*, but it should not be limited to care for believers.

Verse 40

ἐν ταύταις ταῖς δυσὶν ἐντολαῖς ὅλος ὁ νόμος κρέμαται καὶ οἱ προφῆται.

δυο gen & acc δυο dat δυσιν two κρέμαται Verb, pres pass indic, 3 s κρεμαννυμι hang, midd intrans. hang

Cf. 7:12; Rom 13:10. "This does not ... mean that all other commandments may be ignored and that all that one must do is love. The commandments of God are serious and must be observed. But Jesus is saying that it is only when we love that we can truly obey them and that without love we do not really understand what the commandments mean. In one way or another all the commandments are expressions of God's love. Love is the thrust of them all, and it is only as we love that we fulfil them." Morris.

Verses 41-46

Cf. Mark 12:35-37a; Luke 20:41-44.

Verse 41

Συνηγμένων δὲ τῶν Φαρισαίων ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς

συνηγμένων Verb, perf pass ptc, gen pl συναγω see v.34 ἐπερωταω ask, interrogate, question

Verse 42

λέγων· Τί ὑμῖν δοκεῖ περὶ τοῦ χριστοῦ; τίνας υἱὸς ἐστίν; λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· Τοῦ Δαβὶδ.

"The question asked by Jesus must have seemed very easy to the Pharisees. It was common knowledge that the promised Messiah ... was to be of the lineage of David (cf. John 7:42; for OT background, see 2 Sam 7:12-13; Ps 89:4; Jer 23:5; cf. *Ps. Sol* 17:21). Conversely, throughout the Gospel the references to Jesus as the Son of David (e.g., 1:1, 20; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:9) amount to assertions of his messianic identity." Hagner.

δοκεω think, suppose

Verse 43

λέγει αὐτοῖς· Πῶς οὖν Δαβὶδ ἐν πνεύματι καλεῖ αὐτὸν κύριον λέγων·

πῶς how(?)

"See the opening words of Ps 110. It is astonishing that David should call his son 'my lord'; by Jewish standards of familial respect, it is rather the son who might refer to his father as 'my lord.'" Hagner.

Verse 44

Εἶπεν κύριος τῷ κυρίῳ μου· Κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν σου;

κάθου Verb, pres midd/pass dep imperat, 2 s καθημαι sit, sit down

δεξιός, α, ον right, δεξια right hand

ἕως ἂν until

θῶ Verb, aor act subj, 1 s τιθημι place

ἐχθρός, α, ον enemy

ὑποκατω prep with gen under, beneath

πους, ποδος m foot

"The prophecy refers to the Messiah as sitting at the right hand of God, that is, in the highest place of all... And while he sits there, God himself will defeat all his enemies." Leon Morris. Morris goes on to point out that by this, Jesus challenged their notion that the Messiah would be a warrior king, just like David. "It was fundamentally because they had a wrong conception of the Messiah, thinking of him as a human warrior rather than a divine Saviour, that they failed to see Him in Jesus." Tasker.

Verse 45

εἰ οὖν Δαβὶδ καλεῖ αὐτὸν κύριον, πῶς υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ἐστίν;

See v.43.

"The point of the question addressed to the Pharisees is apparently to elevate the concept of Messiah from that of a special human being to one who uniquely manifests the presence of God – and thus one whom David has also to address as his Lord. This pericope serves thus in one sense as a kind of justification for the extravagant claims made by Jesus, or concerning him, earlier in the Gospel (e.g., 10:32–33, 40; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16). As in Peter's confession, so here, the Christ, the Son of David, is to be recognized as uniquely 'the Son of the living God'... He is the living Lord of the church ... who sits at God's right hand. The Pharisees accordingly reject Jesus at their very great peril. They have rejected not merely a human messianic claimant but the unique emissary of God, whom even David had called 'my lord.'... So too today repeated attempts are being made to explain Jesus in strictly human categories. Yet if we limit our understanding of Jesus to analogies that from the beginning rule out the supernatural and the divine, we will never arrive at an adequate view of Jesus. This is the very point the Gospel desires to press home to its readers. Jesus' question to the Pharisees – How then does David call him 'my lord'? – must also be asked of those modern scholars who allow Jesus to be no more than a human teacher. The burning question 'Who do you say I am?' (16:15) has only one adequate answer." Hagner.

Verse 46

καὶ οὐδείς ἐδύνατο ἀποκριθῆναι αὐτῷ λόγον, οὐδὲ ἐτόλμησέν τις ἀπ' ἐκείνης τῆς ἡμέρας ἐπερωτῆσαι αὐτὸν οὐκέτι.

οὐδεις, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν no one, nothing
δυναμαι can, be able to, be capable of
ἀποκριθῆναι Verb, aor pass dep infin

ἀποκρινομαι answer, reply
οὐδε and not, neither
τολμαω dare, be brave
ἐκεινος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that
ἐπερωταω see v.41
οὐκετι adv no longer, no more

Matthew 23:1

Τότε ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐλάλησεν τοῖς ὄχλοις καὶ τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ

τοτε then, at that time
λαλεω speak, talk
ὄχλος, ου m crowd, multitude
μαθητης, ου m disciple, follower

Morris comment that, in the following verses Jesus, "is not so much criticizing [the Pharisees] as drawing his hearers' attention to the kind of lives they should be living."

Verse 2

λέγων· Ἐπὶ τῆς Μωϋσέως καθέδρας ἐκάθισαν οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι.

καθεδρα, ας f seat, chair

'Chair' refers here to teaching office. "This means that as the custodians of Moses' teaching they share in his authority and are accordingly to be respected." Hagner.

καθίζω sit, take one's seat
γραμματευσ, εως m scribe, expert in
Jewish law

Verse 3

πάντα οὖν ὅσα ἐὰν εἴπωσιν ὑμῖν ποιήσατε καὶ τηρεῖτε, κατὰ δὲ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν μὴ ποιεῖτε, λέγουσιν γὰρ καὶ οὐ ποιοῦσιν.

ὅσος, η, ον as much as, how much; ὅσος
ἐὰν whoever, whatever

εἴπωσιν Verb, aor act subj, 3 pl λεγω
τηρεω keep, observe

Some (Carson, Jeremias) hold these words of Jesus to be irony and sarcasm. Morris however, believes that Jesus is drawing attention to the difference between the words and the deeds of the Pharisees. Bengel and Gundry point out that it is only when and insofar as they expound Moses that their words demand attention, not when they add and develop their own traditions. Hagner, while suggesting that the words might be put in inverted commas since they reflect the Pharisees view of themselves, also sees this as part of "Matthew's concern to affirm Jesus' loyalty to the righteousness of the Torah" rather than the statement being ironic or sarcastic.

Verse 4

δεσμεύουσιν δὲ φορτία βαρέα καὶ ἐπιτιθέασιν ἐπὶ τοὺς ὄμους τῶν ἀνθρώπων, αὐτοὶ δὲ τῷ δακτύλῳ αὐτῶν οὐ θέλουσιν κινῆσαι αὐτά.

δεσμευω tie (up), bind
φορτιον, ου n burden, load
βαρέα Adjective, n nom/acc pl βαρυσ, εια, υ
heavy
δυσβαστακος, ον hard to carry

καὶ δυσβάστακτα is lacking in L^f it sy^{s,c,p} bo; after φορτια κ has simply μεγαλα βαρεα. The omission can have been caused by homoioteleuton, i.e., the skipping of the eye from the και to the και following the adjective. Favouring the text are B D W Θ^f13 TR lat sy^h sa (mae). Metzger thinks that the words are an interpolation from Luke 11:46 and should not be considered a part of the original text. If they were original, he asks, why are they omitted "from such a rich variety of witnesses"?

ἐπιτιθημι place on, place, add
ὤμος, ου m shoulder

"The Pharisees, in a well-motivated but misled attempt to protect the obedience of the written Torah, had built up an elaborate fence around the Torah through the detailed stipulations of their special tradition (which in tragic irony had the effect of canceling out what it had been intended to explicate; cf. 15:3, 6). This they firmly imposed on others, without being willing to make adjustments to the burden, not even by so slight an exertion as the moving of a finger." Hagner.

"The regulations they evolved for ritual purity were much harder for people in trades and similar walks of life than for the more leisured and scholarly Pharisees." Morris.
Cf. 11:30 for the contrasting 'burden' of Jesus.

δακτυλος, ου m finger
θελω wish, will
κινεω move, remove

Verse 5

πάντα δὲ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν ποιοῦσιν πρὸς τὸ θεαθῆναι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις· πλατύνουσι γὰρ τὰ φυλακτήρια αὐτῶν καὶ μεγαλύνουσι τὰ κράσπεδα,

θεαθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin θεαομαι see, look at, observe

Cf. 6:1-6.

πλατυνω enlarge, widen
φυλακτηριον, ου n phylactery

A small case containing scripture verses, worn on the arm and forehead by the Jew while praying, as commanded in Dt 6:8.

μεγαλυνω enlarge, magnify
κρασπεδον, ου n fringe, edge, tassel

"Tassels attached to the outer garment to remind people to follow God's commandments (Num 15:37-38)." Morris.

Verse 6

φιλοῦσι δὲ τὴν πρωτοκλισίαν ἐν τοῖς δείπνοις καὶ τὰς πρωτοκαθεδρίας ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς

φιλεω love
πρωτοκλισια, ας f place of honour
δειπνον, ου n feast, banquet

I.e. being seated at the right hand of the host or the master of the house. Cf. Luke 14:7-14.

πρωτοκαθεδρια, ας f place of honour

"There appear to have been some seats behind the officiants, facing the congregation, for people not leading the service, and, if so, they would have been regarded as important places." Morris.

Verse 7

καὶ τοὺς ἀσπασμοὺς ἐν ταῖς ἀγοραῖς καὶ καλεῖσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων· Ῥαββί.

ἀσπασμος, ου m greeting
ἀγορα, ας f market place

"In Oriental etiquette, the inferior had the prior obligation to greet the superior with a salutation whose length indicated the superior's importance." Meier.

Ῥαββι rabbi, teacher, master

"To be called 'Rabbi' in public meant that there was open recognition of the status of the man so honoured; he was regarded as an outstanding teacher of the law." Morris.
Many MSS (D W f⁴³ TR sy^{s.c.h}) repeat the word Ῥαββι which is probably a scribal heightening.

Verse 8

ὁμοῖς δὲ μὴ κληθῆτε· Ῥαββί, εἷς γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁμοῖς ὁ διδάσκαλος, πάντες δὲ ὁμοῖς ἀδελφοί ἐστε·

κληθῆτε Verb, aor pass subj, 2 pl καλεω
εἷς, μια, ἐν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one
διδασκαλος, ου m teacher

"Although the 'one teacher' is not specified here, there can be no doubt that he is the same as the one tutor of v. 10, i.e., the Christ. The point here is not to deny that the Christian community has teachers but rather to put up a barrier against the elevation of some above others and the pride that so naturally accompanies such differentiation. The stress thus falls on the egalitarian statement 'all [παντες] of you are brothers and sisters.' All are equally dependent upon the single authoritative teacher of the community, Jesus... Behind this emphasis lies a polemic against the de facto authority of the Pharisees and scribes. Possible eschatological overtones, in the context of the announcement of the new covenant, are found in Jeremiah's declaration that no one will need teaching because they will all know the Lord directly (Jer 31:34)." Hagner.

Verse 9

καὶ πατέρα μὴ καλέσητε ὁμοῖς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, εἷς γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁμοῖς ὁ πατήρ ὁ οὐράνιος·

γη, γης f earth
οὐράνιος, ον heavenly, in heaven

"The sense of spiritual 'father' in 1 Cor 4:14-15 is rather different from what is entailed here." Hagner.

Verse 10

μηδὲ κληθῆτε καθηγηταί, ὅτι καθηγητῆς ὑμῶν ἔστιν εἷς ὁ χριστός·

μηδε negative particle nor, and not
καθηγητης, ου m teacher, leader, master

Do we take seriously this warning against the use of titles among the people of God? Jesus prohibits such titles because they reflect a wrong view of the Christian's relationship with God. The Christian had an immediate relationship with God through Christ: God is their Father and Christ their teacher and Lord by virtue of the Spirit dwelling within them (cf. 1 Jn 2:27). This 'priesthood of all believers' means that there can be no spiritual hierarchy in the church but only a community of brothers and sisters who encourage one another. There may be some with special spiritual gifts (see Ephesians 4:11), but even here they are not to be viewed as spiritual superiors but as members of the body given and gifted for the health of the whole.

Verse 11

ὁ δὲ μείζων ὑμῶν ἔσται ὑμῶν διάκονος.

μειζων, ον greater, greatest
ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἰμι
διακονος, ου m & f servant

Cf. 20:26-28.

Verse 12

ὅστις δὲ ὑψώσει ἑαυτὸν ταπεινωθήσεται, καὶ ὅστις ταπεινώσει ἑαυτὸν ὑψωθήσεται.

ὅστις, ἡτις, ὅτι who, which, whoever
ὑψωω exalt, lift up, raise
ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself
ταπεινωω humble

"Such a reversal is already anticipated in the OT (cf. Prov 29:23; Job 22:29; Ezek 17:24; 21:26) and is taken up in the NT, probably in dependence upon the teaching of Jesus (cf. Jas 4:10; 2 Cor 11:7; the pattern is seen even in Jesus' own mission as described in Phil 2:8-9). The very close parallels in Luke 14:11; 18:14, although slightly different in form, reflect the same symmetrical parallelism of Matthew's logion." Hagner. See also 1 Sam 2:8; Ps 18:27; Prov 3:34; Ezek 21:26; Lk 1:52 etc