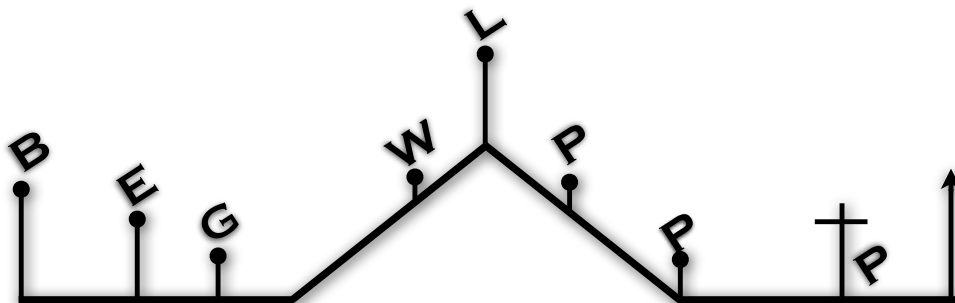


NOTES

UNIT 13: Moving Towards The “Flame”

I. LOOKING BACK:



II. “MOVING TOWARDS THE FLAME”: The Perea Ministry of Jesus

A. Key Events of This Segment:

E V E N T	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Dedication in Jerusalem; Jesus’ life threatened	—	—	—	10:19-38
Jesus retreats outside the boundaries of Judea; “Bethany beyond the Jordan”	—	—	—	1:28; 10:40-42
Jesus teaches on Yahweh’s love for sinners (parables of the Lost Sheep, Coin, Son)	—	—	15:1-32	—
Jesus teaches on Kingdom living (parables of the dishonest steward, rich man and Lazarus, unprofitable servants;	—	—	16:1-17:10	—
Illness, death and raising of Lazarus (Bethany)	—	—	—	11:1-44
Jesus leaves the Jerusalem area and heads “northeast”	—	—	—	11:54
Heals 10 lepers on journey back to Jerusalem	—	—	17:11-21	—
Encounter with the “rich young ruler”	19:16-30	10:17-31	18:18-30	—
Jesus’ third prediction of death	20:17-19	10:32-34	18:31-34	—
Healings at Jericho	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43	—
Conversion of Zacchaeus in Jericho	—	—	19:1-10	—
Arrival back at Bethany and anointing by Mary	26:6-13	14:3-9	—	11:55-12:11

**Matthew and Mark are “silent” for most of this period (December through early to mid-March)*

B. The Raising of Lazarus — the World *Behind* the Text (John 11)

1. The “Logistics” of Grieving

- a. Jesus had gone to “Bethany beyond Jordan” for temporary safety (cf. Jn 1:28 and 10:40).
- b. Lazarus would have been buried the same day he died (Acts 5:6-10).
- c. Jesus was most likely about 60 miles from “Martha’s Bethany.”

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- d. Martha and Mary were “sitting shiva” (cf. Jn 11:20-29 and page 119).
 - e. Martha was again in Jesus’ face and Mary was again at his feet (cf. Lk 10:38-42 and Jn 11:17-32).
 - f. Jesus ministers to *both of them*, right where they each are:
 - (1) To Martha with *words* (Jn. 11:21-27).
 - (2) To Mary with *weeping* (Jn 11:32-36).
- C. The Raising of Lazarus — the World Of the Text (John 11)
- 1. Jesus’ “weeping” was private, theirs was public:
 - a. Mary and the others were “*crying as children, audibly*” (Gk = *klaio*)
 - b. Jesus was “*weeping silently; shedding tears*” (Gk = *dakruo*)
 - 2. Jesus’ indignation was public, *not* private!
 - a. “*deeply moved*” - (2x) comes from a verb meaning, “*to snort with anger*” (Jn 11:33,38).
 - this same verb is used for the apostles anger over the “waste” of nard on Jesus’ head (Mk 14:5).
 - it is translated “enraged” in Daniel 11:30 (LXX).
 - b. “*troubled*”
 - this verb means to be “*distressed, agitated, or disturbed.*”
 - there is also a reflexive pronoun in this sentence; Jesus was doing this *to Himself!*
 - it is the same verb He uses to describe His own emotions about being betrayed (Jn 13:21).
 - 3. Jesus “loving” was unique
 - a. The word used for Jesus’ “love” for this family is an *imperfect* in the Greek.
 - (1) John is highlighting the quality of a *relationship* here, not the reality of a *commitment* (Jn 11:5).
 - (2) This love was obvious enough for the residents of Bethany to have seen it (Jn 11:36).
 - (3) This resurrection is very different from Jairus’ daughter and the widow’s son (Mk 5:22,35-43; Lk 7:11).
 - b. This verb construction is unique to Jesus *and* to John:
 - (1) No other NT author uses an imperfect with *agapaō*.
 - (2) This is the same verbal construction used 5x in this Gospel to speak of “*the disciple that Jesus loved...*” (13:23; 19:26; 21:7,20 and *phileō* in 20:2).
- C. The Sanhedrin: The World *Behind* the Text (John 11:45-52)
- 1. This is the first mention of this “Council” in the Gospel narrative (even though it has been made reference of; cf. Mt 5:22).

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2. The Sanhedrin (from Greek *sunedrion*) had existed for nearly 200 years by this time.
3. The first record of the “Sanhedrin” is Josephus’ account of Herod’s insolent and intimidating appearance before it (*Ant.* 14.9.3-5).
4. During the Hasmonean era (i.e., Maccabean) it emerged as both a court of justice *and* a guardian of the “traditions of the elders.”
5. The influence of this austere group extended into Syria (e.g. Damascus; Acts 9:2; 22:5) and apparently into Galilee (cf. Mk 3:22; 7:1).
6. The Sanhedrin had come to be composed of three primary groups of people:

On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. — Acts 4:5, 6

- a. “**rulers**”
 - those of the high priestly families
 - mostly Sadducean in background and very wealthy
 - there may even have been an “inner circle” of ten most powerful families based on references in Josephus to other similar councils (cf. *Ant.* 20.8.11).
- b. “**elders**”
 - priestly and economical aristocracy in Jerusalem
 - Joseph of Aramathea was in this group (Mk 15:43; Mt. 27:57; Jn. 19:38).
- c. “**scribes**”
 - historically, this group was the most recent addition to the old structure.
 - were predominately Pharisees
 - Gamaliel, Paul’s mentor, was in this group
 - most likely, Nicodemus, “*the teacher in Israel...*” was in this group as well (Jn. 3:10).

7. This “Council” (Sanhedrin) appears 22x in our NT, but never after Acts.
 - a. 8x in the Gospels
 - b. 14x in the Book of Acts: Peter & John, Stephen, Paul are all tried by this group (Acts 4:15; 6:12-60; 22:30-24:20).

D. The True Enemy of Jesus and Judaism: “*the traditions of the elders*”

1. In order to understand the incredible and blind hostility towards Jesus, we must understand an earlier conversation of Jesus:

*And the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not walk according to **the tradition of the elders**, but eat with defiled hands?” And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, “‘This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ **You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.**” And he said to them, “You*

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have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish **your tradition!** For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.' But you say, 'If a man tells his father or his mother, Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban' (that is, given to God)-- then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, thus **making void the word of God by your tradition** that you have handed down. And many such things you do." (Mark 7:5-13, emphasis added).

2. In Jesus' day, there was a body of teaching collectively known as "the traditions of the elders."
 - a. It is also called the "Oral Law."
 - b. It was believed to have been given to Moses at Sinai and passed down over the generations.
 - c. It emerged as an attempt to interpret and apply the *written Law* in contexts and cultures that were always changing.
 - d. For example, the law against "working" on the Sabbath does *not* explain what it actually *means* to "work."
 - e. We see the first record of this with Ezra ("the scribe"!) exegeting the Law:

And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law, while the people remained in their places. They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. — Nehemiah 8:6-8

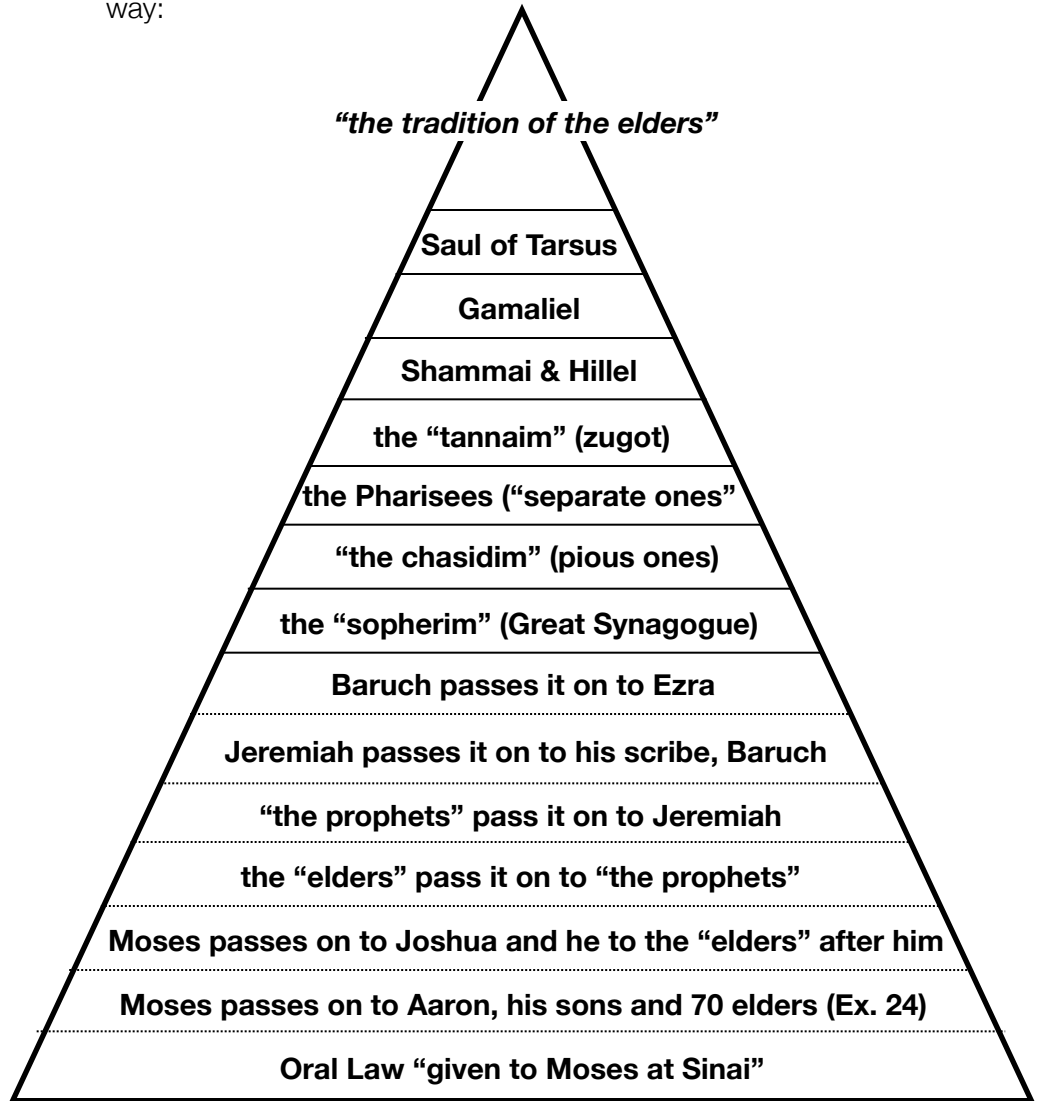
- f. This "running commentary" on the law was known as midrash.
- g. The Oral Law actually became more important than the written law because it was deemed necessary for understanding Moses.
- h. Over time, the Rabbis took on an almost divine status in the eyes of the leadership and the people:

"Know then, that "the words of the Scribes" are more lovely than the words of the law: for, says R. Tarphon, if a man does not read, he only transgresses an affirmative; but if he transgresses the words of the school of Hillel, he is guilty of death, because he hath broke down a hedge, and a serpent shall bite him. It is a tradition of R. Ishmael, the words of the law have in them both prohibition and permission; some of them are light, and some heavy, but "the words of the Scribes" are all of them heavy--זקנים רבירי וקנים, "weightier are the words of the elders", than the words of the prophets." [T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 3. 2]

- i. Eventually, all this midrashic teaching was compiled into a single volume, known as the "Mishna" which became the basis for the two Jewish Talmuds:

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3. The development of “the traditions of the elders” can be understood this way:



- 4. But, its “fruit” was an oppressive system that promoted self-righteousness, the enemy of grace.
- 5. Jesus repeatedly attacked the “traditions of the elders” and in so doing poisoned the minds of those who valued systematic theology over biblical theology.

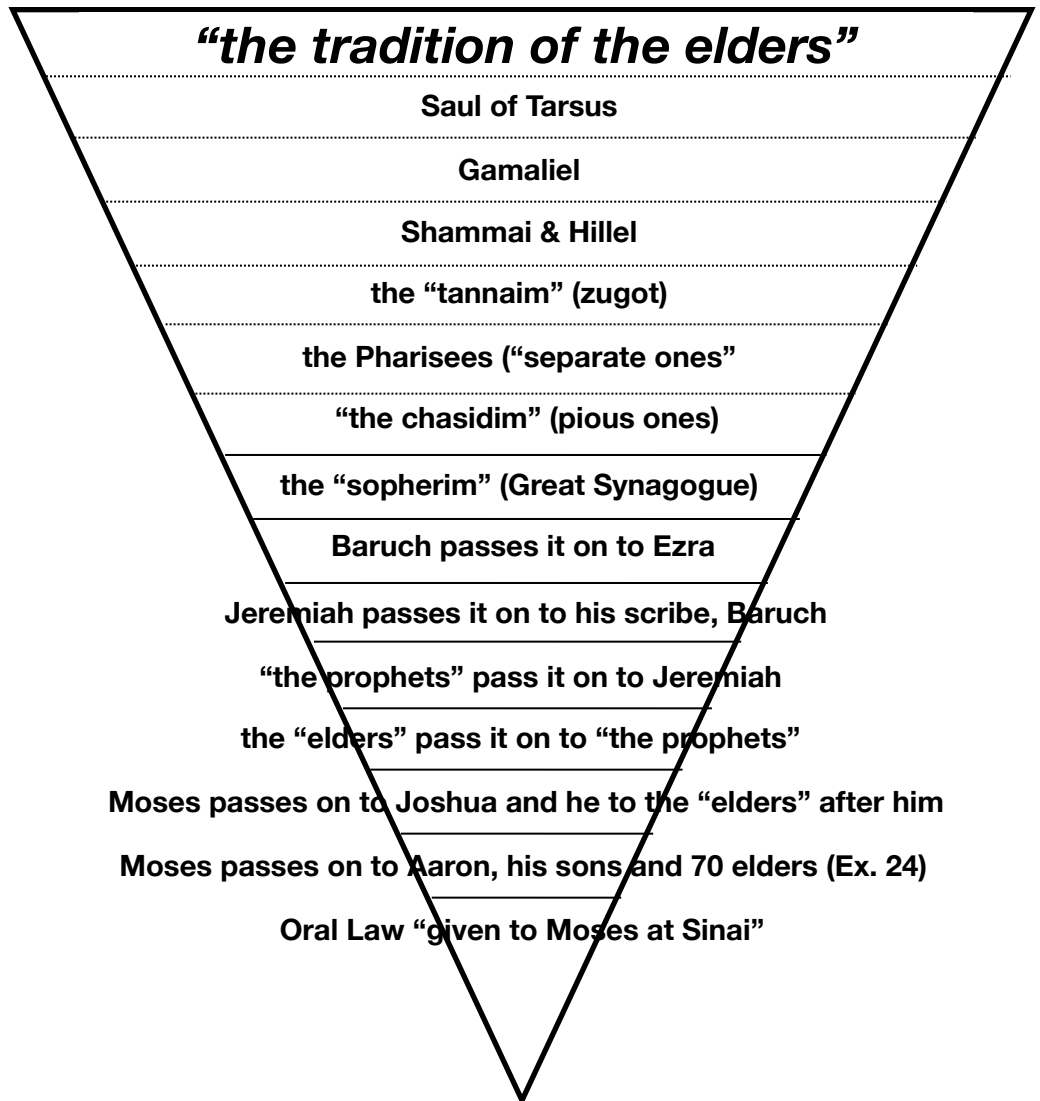
But you say, ‘If anyone tells his father or his mother, What you would have gained from me is given to God, he need not honor his father.’ So for the sake of your tradition you have made void the word of God. (Matthew 15:5, 6, ESV).

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ (Matthew 5:43, ESV).

They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger. — Matt. 23:4

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6. What the “traditions of the elders” had become by the days of Jesus:



E. The World *Before* the Texts

1. Jesus wants us “at His feet” more than “in His face.” Are you “at His feet” in times of prosperity or only in need?
2. Jesus’ anger was *always* directed against sin, not sinners (unless they claimed to be righteous).
3. How much of my theology comes from the words of Jesus rather than the thoughts of people?

The Jewish Way of Mourning

by Rabbi Maurice Lamm

In this wisely conceived, graduated process of mourning, Judaism raises up the mourner from the abyss of despair to the normalcy of daily life.

Judaism, with its long history of dealing with the soul of man, its intimate knowledge of man's achievements and foibles, his grandeur and his weakness, has wisely devised a system of graduated mourning periods. During this time, the mourner may express his or her grief and release, with calculated regularity, the built-up tensions caused by bereavement.

The Jewish religion provides a beautifully structured approach to mourning which is divided into five stages.

1. The first stage - **aninut**.

This is the period between death and burial when despair is most intense. At this time, not only the social amenities, but even major positive religious requirements are canceled in recognition of the mourner's troubled mind.

2. The second stage — **lamentation**.

This period consists of the first three days following burial, days devoted to weeping and lamentation. During this time, the mourner does not even respond to greetings, and remains in his home (except under certain special circumstances). It is a time when even visiting the mourner is usually somewhat discouraged, for it is too early to comfort the mourners when the wound is so fresh. During this time, the mourner remains within the house, expressing his grief through the observances of wearing of a torn garment, sitting on the low stool, wearing of slippers, refraining from shaving and grooming, and recital of the Kaddish (see below).

3. The third stage — **shivah**.

This stage covers the seven days following burial and includes the three-day period of lamentation. During this time, the mourner emerges from the stage of intense grief to a new state of mind in which he is prepared to talk about his loss and to accept comfort from friends and neighbors.

The world now enlarges for the mourner. He continues the observances outlined in the second stage above, but he is able to interact with acquaintances who come to his home to express sympathy in his distress.

A sacred obligation devolves upon every Jew — no matter his relationship to the deceased or to those mourning — to comfort the survivors — these being father, mother, wife (or husband), son, daughter, (married or unmarried), brother, and sister (or half-brother and half-sister) of the deceased.

In Judaism, exercising compassion by paying a condolence call is a mitzvah, considered by some of our greatest scholars to be biblically ordained. It is a person's duty to imitate God: as God comforts the bereaved, so man must do likewise.

The fundamental purpose of the condolence call during shivah is to relieve the mourner of the intolerable burden of intense loneliness. At no other time is a human being more in need of such comradeship.

The inner freezing that came with the death of his relative now begins to thaw. The isolation from the world of people and the retreat inward now relaxes somewhat, and normalcy begins to return.

4. The fourth stage — **sheloshim**.

This period consists of the thirty days (counting the seven days of shivah) following burial. The mourner is encouraged to leave the house after shivah and to slowly rejoin society, always recognizing that enough time has not yet elapsed to assume full, normal social relations.

Shaving and haircutting for mourners is still generally prohibited, as is cutting the nails, and washing the body all at once for delight (as opposed to washing for cleanliness which is required).

5. The fifth stage — **a year of mourning**.

The fifth stage is the twelve-month period (counted from the day of burial) during which things return to normal, and business once again becomes routine, but the inner feelings of the mourner are still wounded by the rupture of relationship with the loved one.

The observance that most affects the daily life of the mourner during the twelve-month period is the complete abstention from parties and festivities, both public and private. Participation in these gatherings is simply not consonant with the depression and contrition that the mourner experiences.

It borders on the absurd for the mourner to dance gleefully while his parent lies dead in a fresh grave.

Thus, the Sages decreed that, while complete physical withdrawal from normal activities of society lasts only one week, withdrawal from joyous, social occasions lasts thirty days in mourning for other relatives, and one year in mourning for one's parents. Joy, in terms of the mourning tradition, is associated largely with public, social events rather than with personal satisfactions.

At the close of this last stage, the bereaved is not expected to continue his mourning, except for brief moments when yizkor or yahrzeit (see below) is observed. In fact, Jewish tradition rebukes a man for mourning more than this prescribed period.

SAYING KADDISH

The Kaddish is recited at every prayer service, morning and evening, Shabbat and holiday, on days of fasting and rejoicing.

The period that the mourner recites the Kaddish for parents is, theoretically, a full calendar year. The deceased is considered to be under Divine judgment for that period. Some communities, therefore, adhere to the custom that Kaddish be recited for twelve months in all cases.

However, because the full year is considered to be the duration of judgment for the wicked, and we presume that our parents do not fall into that category, the practice in most communities is to recite the Kaddish for only eleven months.

The Kaddish is to be recited only in the presence of a duly constituted quorum, a minyan, which consists of ten males above the age of Bar Mitzvah. If there are only nine adults and one minor present, it is still not considered a quorum for a minyan.

YIZKOR AND YAHRZEIT

Yizkor is a ceremony recalling all the deceased during a communal synagogue service. Yahrzeit is a personal memorial anniversary; it may be observed for any relative or friend, but it is meant primarily for parents.

The Yizkor service was instituted so that the Jew may pay homage to his forebears and recall the good life and traditional goals. This service is founded on a vital principle of Jewish life, one that motivates and animates the Kaddish recitation.

It is based on the firm belief that the living, by acts of piety and goodness, can redeem the dead. The son can bring honor to the father. The "merit of the children" can reflect the value of the parents.

This merit is achieved, primarily, by living on a high ethical and moral plane, by being responsive to the demands of God and sensitive to the needs of one's fellow man. The formal expression of this merit is accomplished by prayer to God and by contributions to charity.

Yahrzeit is a special day of observances to commemorate the anniversary of the death of parents. Though the word is of German origin, the custom is outlined in the Talmud.

This religious commemoration is recorded not as a fiat, but as a description of an instinctive sentiment of sadness, an annual rehearsing of tragedy, which impels one to avoid eating meat and drinking wine — symbols of festivity and joy, the very stuff of life.

Author Biography: Rabbi Maurice Lamm is the author of *"The Jewish Way of Death and Mourning," "The Jewish Way in Love and Marriage," "Becoming A Jew"* and many other books. A professor at Yeshiva University's Rabbinical Seminary, he lectures nationally to Jewish and Christian audiences.

This article can also be read at:

http://www.aish.com/literacy/lifecycle/The_Jewish_Way_of_Mourning.asp