

# Hero or Hypocrite? Attacks on the Pharisees During the Late Second Temple Period

## שגיב או צבוע? מתקפות על הפרושים בשלהי תקופת בית שני

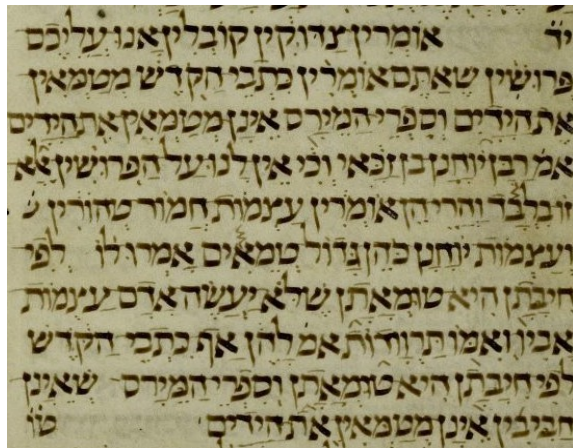
Ari Lamm



### 1) Josephus, *Jewish War* 2.8.1 (ca. 79 CE)

Jewish philosophy, in fact, takes three forms. The followers of the first school are called Pharisees, of the second Sadducees, of the third Essenes.

### 2) Mishnah [MS. Parma 2596, De Rossi 497], *Yadayim* 4:6 (ca. early 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE)



The Sadducees say: We protest against you, O Pharisees, for you say that the Holy Writings render the hands impure, while the Books of Homer do not.

R. Yohanan b. Zakkai said: Is this all that we might hold against the Pharisees? Why, they say that the bones of a donkey are pure, while the bones of John [Hyrcanus?] the High Priest are impure.

They [his students] replied: According to their dearness is their impurity, so that a person should not make the bones of his parents into spoons.

He said to them: So too with respect to the Holy Writings...while the Books of Homer, which are not dear, do *not* render the hands impure.

### 3) 11QTa [*Temple Scroll*] 51:4-5 (ca. mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE)

וכל הנושא מעצמותמה ומנבלתמה עור ובשר  
וצפורן וכבס בגדיו ורחץ במים ובאה השמש  
אחר יטהר

And everyone who carries their bones or their corpse, the skin or the flesh or the claws, shall wash his clothes and bathe in water; the sun will set, and afterwards he will be pure.

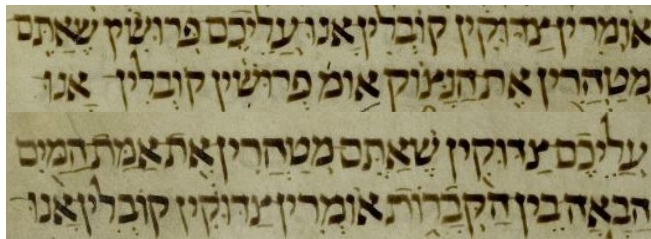
### 4) Mishnah [MS. Parma 2596, De Rossi 497], *Yadayim* 4:7b (ca. early 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE)



The Sadducees say: We protest against you, O Pharisees [on account of the following]. If my bull or my donkey, for whose observance of *mitsvot* I am not responsible, [damages another's property] I am held responsible, then mustn't it be that if my servants, for whose observance of *mitsvot* I am responsible, [damage another's property] I should certainly be held responsible?

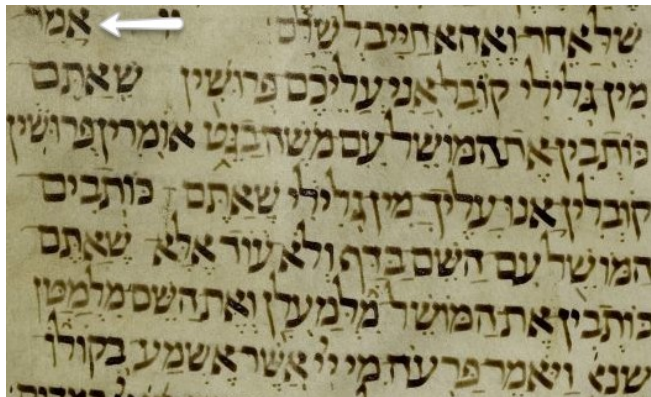
They replied: Shall we not distinguish between my animals who do not possess an intellect, and my servants who do? Thus, if I were to annoy [my servant], he would go and burn another's grain heap, and I would be responsible to pay for it.

**5) Mishnah [MS. Parma 2596, De Rossi 497], *Yadayim* 4:7a (ca. early 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE)**



The Sadducees say: We protest against you, O Pharisees, for you render pure the stream [of water from a pure vessel to an impure vessel].  
The Pharisees replied: We protest against you, O Sadducees, for you render pure the stream of water that passes through a cemetery [and then collects into a *mikveh*].

**6) Mishnah [MS. Parma 2596, De Rossi 497], *Yadayim* 4:8 (ca. early 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE)**



A Galilean heretic said: I protest against you, O Pharisees, for you write the name of the gentile ruler together with the name of Moses in the bill of divorce.  
The Pharisees replied: We protest against you, O Galilean heretic, for you write the name of the gentile ruler together with the Name [of God] in Scripture, and moreover, you write the gentile ruler's name first! As the verse says, “And Pharaoh said, who is this 'God' that I should listen to him?...” (Exodus 5:2).



**7) Matthew 23:16-19 (ca. 80-90 CE)**

**16**“Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’ **17**You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred? **18**And you say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath.’ **19**You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?”

**8) Matthew 23:25-26**

**25**“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. **26**You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.”