

# Luke 11:46

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

## Analysis

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**Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers**

(ὅτι φορτίζετε τοὺς ἀνθρώπους φορτία δυσβάστακτα, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐνὶ τῶν δακτύλων ὑμῶν οὐ προσψάετε τοῖς φορτίοις)—the fourth woe condemns hypocritical burden-bearing. Phortizō (lade, load heavily) describes oppressive loading of phortia (burdens) that are dusbastakta (grievous to bear, unbearable). The lawyers imposed crushing religious regulations while exempting themselves through clever loopholes.

Jesus later contrasted his burden-lifting with Pharisaic burden-imposing: 'My yoke is easy, and my burden is light' (Matthew 11:30). The lawyers' regulations (handwashing, tithing, Sabbath rules) created crushing guilt without providing grace. They wouldn't prospasauō (touch with a finger) the burdens themselves—authority without compassion, law without mercy.

## Historical Context

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The oral law (later codified in the Mishnah and Talmud) contained thousands of detailed regulations expanding Torah's 613 commandments into all-encompassing life control. Sabbath rules alone included 39 categories of prohibited work, each with multiple subcategories. Common people couldn't possibly observe all

requirements, creating permanent guilt and dependence on priestly/Pharisaic mediation.

## **Related Passages**

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## **Study Questions**

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1. What 'burdens grievous to be borne' might Christian legalism impose— standards beyond Scripture or cultural preferences presented as biblical mandates?
2. How can church leaders avoid the lawyers' error of imposing requirements they don't personally bear?
3. What is the difference between Jesus's 'easy yoke' and religious burdens— how does grace lighten rather than increase obligation?

## Interlinear Text

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ὁ	δὲ	εἶπεν	καὶ	ὑμῖν	τοῖς	νομικοῖς	οὐαὶ	ὅτι
G3588	<b>And</b>	<b>he said</b>	<b>also</b>	<b>unto you</b>	G3588	<b>ye lawyers</b>	<b>Woe</b>	<b>! for</b>
G1161	G1161	G2036	G2532	G5213		G3544	G3759	G3754
φορτίζετε	τοὺς	ἀνθρώπους	φορτίοις	δυσβάστακτα	καὶ			
<b>ye lade</b>	G3588	<b>men</b>	<b>the burdens</b>	<b>grievous to be borne</b>	<b>also</b>			
G5412		G444	G5413	G1419	G2532			
αὐτοὶ	ἐνὶ	τῶν	δακτύλων	ὑμῶν	οὐ	προσπαύετε		
<b>ye yourselves</b>	<b>with one</b>	G3588	<b>fingers</b>	<b>of your</b>	<b>not</b>	<b>touch</b>		
G846	G1520		G1147	G5216	G3756	G4379		
τοῖς	φορτίοις							
G3588	<b>the burdens</b>							
	G5413							

## Additional Cross-References

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**Luke 11:52** (Word): Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

**Isaiah 10:1** (Parallel theme): Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed;

**Galatians 6:13** (Word): For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

**Isaiah 58:6** (Parallel theme): Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

**Luke 11:45** (Word): Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also.