

Rebecca Stager

Viperae!

Christ's Words to the Pharisees

Performance Notes:

This piece is mostly written in 7/4 time, both as a nod to the "number of perfection" (7), and as a means to evoke a stilted sense of rhythm. The bass line most commonly demonstrates where the measure may be divided for conducting in groups of 4 and 3. Dotted barlines are added as suggestions for subdividing bars that are rhythmically more ambiguous.

The melody is often doubled on the octave. Portions of text with italicized text are meant to indicate who has the melody for ease of bringing it out of the texture.

Marcato sections should be heavy and driving, like a finger poking someone in the sternum with each accent. Legato sections should be fluid, with plenty of *messa di voce*, and should ring with heartbroken disappointment. All cesura should be treated as pointed silences. The halt of sound is intended to jar the listener.

All *sprechstimme* should be done with a voiced sound, rich and breathy. It should sound as if singers may be putting a curse on their enemies during these spoken parts!

The addition of percussion is intended to add more texture to the sound, bringing a sharper edge to the singing. The low downbeats should be done with a sound like low stomps, the thud of wooden staffs on the ground, or some other approach or combination. The higher clicks can be done with drum sticks, wooden blocks (nothing fancy required), etc. The entire choir is intended to participate, but it is recommended that smaller number of percussionists are engaged in the quieter sections. Percussion dynamics should directly correlate with the singer's dynamics.

ch
+ bright
S
F sh

VIPERAE!

MATTHEW 23:4

14 Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: //

Pesante, tempo giusto
Furious!

TO THE VIPER!

SOPRANO
Vae vo - bis scri - bae Vae vo - bis Pha - ri - saei

ALTO
Vae vo - bis scri - bae Vae vo - bis Pha - ri - saei

TENOR
Vae vo - bis scri - bae Vae vo - bis Pha - ri - saei

BASS
Vae vo - bis scri - bae Vae vo - bis Pha - ri - saei

Stomp/Staff

molto rall.

S.
Vae vo - bis hy - po - cri - tae!

A.
Vae vo - bis hy - po - cri - tae!

T.
Vae vo - bis hy - po - cri - tae!

B.
Vae vo - bis hy - po - cri - tae!

ST

2

5 New tempo 6 $\text{♩} = 100$ Desolate 7 8 9 10

A. 33 You serpents, generation of vipers, Cae-ci! **Bright** **mp** **"blinded!"**
che chi

T. *p* *mp*
Pha-ri-sae-i hy-po-cri-tae! Pha-ri-sae-i

B. *p* *sh* *ma* *mp*
vi-pe-rae ser-pen-tes vi-pe-rae ser-pen-tes vi-pe-rae

3 4 6

WB.
ST



11 **mp** **"fools"** 12 **mf** 13 14 **f**

S. *mp* *mf* *f*
stul-ti et cae-ci Vi-pe-rae! Ser-pen-tessss!

A. **mf** **"shame!"** **f**
Woe to you! Vae vo-bis! Vae vo-bis! Vi-pe-rae! Ser-pen-tessss!

T. *mf* *f*
hy-po-cri-tae! Pha-ri-sae-i hy-po-cri-tae! Ser-pen-tessss!

B. *mf* *f*
ser-pen-tes vi-pe-rae ser-pen-tes Ser-pen-tessss!

B. ser-pen-tes

WB.
ST

♩ = approx. 110

15 *mp* 16 17 18 19

A. *Al-li-gant o-ne-ra-gra-vi-a et in-por-ta-bi-li-a no-lunt ea mo-ve-re! Om-ni-a*

T. *gra-vi-a in-por-ta-bi-li-a no-lunt ea mo-ve-re!*

B. *Vi-pe-rae, ser-pen-tes! Vi-pe-rae, ser-pen-tes! Vi-pe-rae! Om-ni-a*

B. *4 For they bind heavy and insupportable burdies, and lay them on
men's shoulders; but with a finger of their een they will see save
them.
Aligant enim onera gravia, et insupportabilia, et imponunt in hominum
humeros: aligis oculis suis salvati erunt.*

WB. ST.

sof prep

eh

B2 ONLY

leaf

5 And all their works they do for to be seen of men, For they make
their phylacteries broad, and enlarge their fringes.
*Omnia vero opera sua faciunt ut videantur ab hominibus: dilatant
enim phylacteria sua, et magnificant frangias.*

20 21 22

S. *o-pe-ra sua fa-ciunt ut vi-dean-tur ab ho-*

A. *o-pe-ra sua fa-ciunt ut vi-dean-tur ab ho-*

T. *o-pe-ra sua fa-ciunt ut vi-dean-tur ab ho-*

T. *vi-dean-tur ab ho-*

B. *o-pe-ra sua fa-ciunt ut vi-dean-tur ab ho-*

B. *Om-ni-a o-pe-ra vi-dean-tur ab ho-Mi*

WB. ST.

shoo

shoo

cv

"YOU FOOLS ARE BLIND!"

Marcato et encore piú mosso!

"YOU LEADERS ARE BLIND!"

24 $\text{♩} = 115-120$ Sung with authority! 25

23

S. *p* -mi - ni - bus. *mf* Stul - ti et cae - ci! Vo - bis du - ces cae - ci!

A. *p* mi - ni - bus. *mf* Stul - ti et cae - ci! Vo - bis du - ces cae - ci!

T. *p* mi - ni - bus. *mf* Stul - ti et cae - ci! Vo - bis du - ces cae - ci!

B. *p* -mi - ni - bus. *mf* Du - ces cae - ci! Vo - bis du - ces cae - ci!

B. *p* -mi - ni - bus. Du - ces cae - ci! Vo - bis du - ces cae - ci!

WB. *p*

SR



"OFFSPRING OF VIPERS!"

(Encore a tempo!
Non ritardando!)

26

S. Ge - ni - mi - na vi - per - a - rum! Vae vo - bis scri - bae!

A. Ge - ni - mi - na vi - per - ra - rum! *f* Clau - di - tis reg - num cae - lo - rum an - te

T. Ge - ni - mi - na vi - per - a - rum! Vae vo - bis scri - bae!

B. Ge - ni - mi - na vi - per - a - rum! Clau - di - tis reg - num cae - lo - rum an - te

B. Ge - ni - mi - na vi - per - a - rum! Clau - di - tis reg - num cae - lo - rum an - te

WB.

SR

"YOU SHUT THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN FOR ALL PEOPLE!"

29 30 *chya*

S. Vae vo - bis Pha - ri - saei! Fa - cia - tis

A. ho - mi - nes. Cir - cui - tis *ee* ma - re et a - ri - dam ut fa - cia - tis

T. Vae vo - bis Pha - ri - saei! Fa - cia - tis

B. ho - mi - nes. Cir - cui - tis *ee* ma - re et a - ri - dam ut fa - cia - tis *chya*

W.B.

ST

Legato

Sweeping motion, in rolling in waves of righteous indignation!

31 32 *ch* *ch* *ch* *ch* *ch* *X*

S. u - num pro - se - ly - tum et fa - ci - tis e - um

S. 2 u - num pro - se - ly - tum et fa - ci - tis e - um

A. u - num pro - se - ly - tum et fa - ci - tis e - um

T. u - num pro - se - ly - tum et fa - ci - tis e - um

T. u - num pro - se - ly - tum et fa - ci - tis e - um

B. u - num pro - se - ly - tum et fa - ci - tis e - um

W.B.

"YOUR LEADERS THEN BECOME TWICE AS EVIL AS YOU!"

Molto Marcato
Pointed, cutting

Meno mosso
♩ = 110

33 34 35 36

f *sfz* *sfz* *molto rall.* *ff*

S. *fi - li - um* **J** *Ge - hen - neae_ du - plo quam vos!*

A. *fi - li - um* *Ge - hen - neae_ du - plo quam vos!*

T. *fi - li - um* *Ge - hen - neae_ du - plo quam vos!*

T. *fi - li - um* *Ge - hen - neae_ du - plo quam*

B. *fi - li - um* *Ge - hen - neae_ du - plo quam vos!*



Legato et encore meno mosso

♩ = 105-ish *Tired, heartbroken, resigned.*

Con moto!

37 38 39 40 41

mf *mp* *p*

♩ = 110-115

S. *Vae vo-bis Pha-ri-sae-i hy-po-cri-tae! Du-ces cae-cil ae vo-bis*

A. *Vae vo-bis Pha-ri-sae-i hy-po-cri-tae! Du-ces cae-cil*

T. *Vae vo-bis Pha-ri-sae-i hy-po-cri-tae! Du-ces cae-cil*

B. *Vae vo - bis Pha - ri - sae - i hy - po - cri - tae! Du - ces cae - cil vi - pe - rae*

W.B. *J = 105-ish*

42 43 44 45

S. *de - ci - ma - tis a - ne - thum re - li - quis - tis tu di - ci - um et fi - dem.*
ch *Yoo*

S. 2 *de - ci - ma - tis mentam et cy - mi - num re - li - quis - tis ju - di - ci - um et fi - dem.*
mf *see*

A. *Pha - ri - sae - i hy - po - cri - tae! re - li - quis - tis tu di - ci - um et fi - dem.*
mf *Yoo* *ch*

A. *Pha - ri - sae - i hy - po - cri - tae! re - li - quis - tis ju - di - ci - um et fi - dem.*
mf

T. *et re - quis - stis iu - di - ci - um et mi - se - ri - cor - di - am re - li - quis - tis iu - di - ci - um et fi - dem!*
mf

T. *et mi - se - ri - cor - di - am re - li - quis - tis iu - di - ci - um et fi - dem!*
ch

B. *ser - pen - tes vi - pe - rae re - li - quis - tis iu - di - ci - um et fi - dem!*
mf *ch*

W.B.

ST

Marcato al fine, Stringendo al fine

♩ = 120 Completely exasperated!

46 47 48 49

S. Vae vo-bis scri-bae Vae vo-bis Pha-ri-saei Vae vo-bis hy-po-cri - tae!

A. Vae vo-bis scri-bae Vae vo-bis Pha-ri-saei Vae vo-bis hy-po-cri - tae!

T. Vae vo-bis scri-bae Vae vo-bis Pha-ri-saei Vae vo-bis hy-po-cri - tae!

B. Vae vo-bis scri-bae Vae vo-bis Pha-ri-saei Vae vo-bis hy-po-cri - tae!

WB. ♩ = 120

ST

50 51 52 53 54

S. Menacing *mf* *mf*
ve - ro ple-na sunt

A. *mp* *mf*
de - al - ba - tis a fo-ris spe - ci - o - sa ve - ro ple-na sunt

T. *p* *mp* *mf*
si - mi - les se - pul - chris de - al - ba - tis spe - ci - o - sa ve - ro ple-na sunt

B. *subito p* *mp* *mf*
Si - mi - les es - tis se - pul - chris de - al - ba - tis a fo - ris spe - ci - o - sa ve - ro ple - na sunt

WB.

ST

Driving, Marcato

55 56 57 *f* *sfz*

S. os - si - bus mor - tu - o - rum et om - ni spur - ci - ti - a quo - mo - do

A. os - si - bus mor - tu - o - rum et om - ni spur - ci - ti - a quo - mo - do

T. os - si - bus mor - tu - o - rum et om - ni spur - ci - ti - a quo - mo - do

T. os - si - bus mor - tu - o - rum et om - ni spur - ci - ti - a *ff* quo - mo - do

B. os - si - bus mor - tu - o - rum et om - ni spur - ci - ti - a quo - mo - do

W.B.

ST

molto rall.

58 59 60 61 62 *fff* *Ah!*

S. fu - gie - tis a iu - di - ci - o Ge - hen - nae? *Ah!*

A. fu - gie - tis a iu - di - ci - o Ge - hen - nae? *Ah!* *Ah!*

T. fu - gie - tis a iu - di - ci - o Ge - hen - nae? *Ah!* *Ah!*

T. fu - gie - tis iu - di - ci - o Ge - hen - nae? *Ah!* *Ah!*

B. fu - gie - tis iu - di - ci - o Ge - hen - nae? *Ah!* *Ah!*

W.B.

ST

Text direct translation and pronunciation

(Jesus speaks *about* the scribes and Pharisees)

They-bind burdens heavy and immovable
4: alligant onera gravia et inportabilia
[ˈa.li.gant ˈo.ne.ra ˈgra.vi.a et ˌin.por.taˈbi.li.a]

(they are)-unwilling them to-move
nolunt ea movere
[ˈno.lunt ea moˈve.re]

All works (of)-theirs they-make to be-seen by people
5: omnia opera sua faciunt ut videantur ab hominibus.
[ˈom.ni.a ˈve.ro ˈo.pe.ra ˈsu.a ˈfa.tjunt ut viˈden.tur ab oˈmi.ni.bus]

(Jesus speaks *to* the scribes and Pharisees.)

You-close-off the-kingdom of-heaven against people
13: clauditis regnum caelorum ante homines
[ˈklaʊ.di.tis ˈreg.num ˈtʃe.lo.rum ˈan.te ˈo.mi.nes]

woe upon-you scribes and Pharisees, you-hypocrites!
15: vae vobis scribae et Pharisaei hypocritae
[ve ˈvo.bis ˈskri.be et ˌfe.ri.ˈse.i i.po.kriˈte]

Circle-you the-sea and dry-land to create a-single convert
circuitis mare et aridam ut faciatis unum proselytum

and you-make him a-son of-hell twice as-much-as you
et facitis eum filium gehennae duplo quam vos

woe upon-you guides blind
16: vae vobis duces caeci

you-fools and blind-(ones)
17: stulti et caeci

woe upon-you! Tithes you mint and anise and cinnamon
23: vae vobis! Decimatis mentam et anethum et cyminum

and you-relinquish justice and mercy/compassion and faith(fullness)

et reliquistis iudicium et misericordiam et fidem

you-similar are (to) tombs white-washed, to (the) outside attractive
27: similes estis sepulchris dealbatis a foris speciosa

in-truth fat (plump) are-you (with) the-bones (of) corpses
vero plena sunt ossibus mortuorum

and all-kinds (of) filth
et omni spurcitia

you-serpents, generation (of) vipers
33: serpentes genimina viperarum

How will-you-flee from the-justice of-hell?
quomodo fugietis a iudicio gehennae?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MtNPFV2ofSw>

Viperae-Becky Stager-Bass-Runthrough

By Caleb Snodderly <https://www.youtube.com/@calebsnodderly3008>

Matthew 23:14

King James Bible

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

23 Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,

²Saying The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:

³All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

⁴For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

⁵But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

⁶And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

⁷And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

⁸But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

⁹And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

¹⁰Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.

¹¹But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

¹²And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

¹³But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

¹⁴Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

¹⁵Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

¹⁶Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!

¹⁷Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

¹⁸And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

¹⁹Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

²⁰Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

²¹And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.

²²And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

²³Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

²⁴Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

²⁵Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

²⁶Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

²⁷Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

²⁸Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

²⁹Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

³⁰And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

³¹ Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

³² Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

³³ Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

³⁴ Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

³⁵ That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

³⁶ Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

³⁷ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

³⁸ Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

³⁹ For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.