

Matthew 23:13-39 Woes against the Scribes and Pharisees

13 But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.

14 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.

15 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.

16 Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.' **17** "Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold? **18** And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.' **19** "Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? **20** Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. **21** He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it. **22** And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it.

23 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. **24** Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

25 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. **26** Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. **28** Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

29 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, **30** and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' **31** "Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. **32** Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt.

33 Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? **34** Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, **35** that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. **36** Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings,

but you were not willing! [38](#) See! Your house is left to you desolate; [39](#) for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' " NKJV

Facts Revealed:

- † Jesus pronounced Eight Woes against the Scribes and Pharisees whom Jesus calls hypocrites (pretenders), giving the reason for each.
- † But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.
 - ✧ Woe to hypocritical, violent, pretentious religious leaders. [\[Matthew 23:13\]](#)
 - ✧ They will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and they obstruct the way of those who desire to do so. [\[Matthew 23:13, Luke 11:52\]](#)
 - ✧ By their traditions they have made the Commandments of God ineffective. [\[Matthew 15:1-20, Mark 7:6-9\]](#)
- † Woe to their greed and pretentious prayers. They will receive greater condemnation. [\[Matthew 23:14, James 3:1\]](#)
 - ✧ They devour widows houses and make long prayers in pretense, to be seen of men as highly pious. [\[Matthew 6:5, 23:14, Mark 12:40\]](#)
- † Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.
 - ✧ You travel land and sea to win one proselyte (convert). [\[Matthew 23:15\]](#)
(The Orthodox Jews of today insist that a person is required to be converted to their brand of Judaism to be accepted in the Jewish society of Israel. The conversion they require is to the Judaism of the Pharisees and Scribes which is based on the "Oral Law" and is the same traditional doctrine that Jesus condemned in His day). [\[Matthew 15:9, Mark 7:6-9, Colossians 2:20-22, Titus 1:10-14\]](#)
 - ✧ When he is converted, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves. [\[Matthew 23:15\]](#)
 - ✧ Clearly the doctrine of the Judaizers is abhorrent to God, as He calls them "sons of Hell."
 - ✧ When it comes to their regulation concerning swearing oaths, Jesus calls them **fools and blind.** [\[Matthew 23:16-22\]](#)
- † Woe to you, blind **guides**, who say:
 - ✧ 'Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.' [\[Matthew 23:16\]](#)
 - ✧ "**Fools and blind!** For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold?" [\[Matthew 23:17\]](#)
 - ✧ 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.' [\[Matthew 23:18\]](#)
 - ✧ **Fools and blind!** For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? [\[Matthew 23:19\]](#)

Foolishness of making these distinctions

- ✧ Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it. And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it. [\[Matthew 23:20-22\]](#)
- † Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [\[Matthew 23:23\]](#)

- ✧ For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. [\[Matthew 23:23\]](#)
 - ▷ These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. [\[Matthew 23:23\]](#)

 - ✧ God desires first of all, Justice, Mercy, and Faith.
 - ▷ God said, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt sacrifices." [\[Hosea 6:6\]](#)
 - ▷ He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God? [\[Micah 6:8\]](#)
 - ✧ It is also important to pay the tithe and keep all the commandments, so Jesus said, "These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone."
 - ✧ Because of their nit picking regulations under their "Oral Law" which nullify the commandments of God; [\[Matthew 15:1-20, Mark 7:6-9\]](#) Jesus said, "Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!" [\[Matthew 23:24\]](#)
 - ▷ Their pretentious religiosity focuses on things that are not important, and overlooks the Commandments of God which lead to pure lives acceptable before God.
- † Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** [\[Matthew 23:25\]](#)
- ✧ For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. [\[Matthew 23:25\]](#)
 - ▷ Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man." [\[Matthew 12:34, 15:11, 18, Luke 6:45\]](#)
 - ✧ Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. [\[Matthew 23:26\]](#)
 - ▷ Our need for cleansing must start from within, the heart and mind.
 - ▷ Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. [\[James 4:8-10\]](#)
- † Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** [\[Matthew 23:27\]](#)
- ✧ For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. [\[Matthew 23:27\]](#)
 - ✧ Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. [\[Matthew 23:28\]](#)
- † Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!** [\[Matthew 23:29-30\]](#)
- ✧ Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' [\[Matthew 23:29-30\]](#)
 - ✧ Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. [\[Matthew 23:31\]](#)
 - ▷ It is so easy for us to look back on history and believe that we would have been different from those who lived before. But when you look at what goes on in our own generation, it becomes obvious that we would have done the same things as those in history if we had been here in their time.
 - ▷ Mankind has not changed, and we still focus on the things that do not help, and ignore the things that are important. Especially in our education system where we have removed the knowledge of God and His wisdom from the people, and replaced it with

humanistic thought and what is called psychology, trusting in mans "wisdom" and rejecting the wisdom of God which is from above.

- ✧ Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt. [Matthew 23:32]
 - ✧ This they will do as they crucify Jesus and later kill His Apostles and persecute and kill the members of the Church.
 - ✧ Persecution and martyrdom is a thing which will continue to be so until Jesus comes back and sets up His Kingdom of Heaven at the end of the Great Tribulation.
- ✧ Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? [Matthew 23:33]
 - ✧ Jesus leaves no doubt that the destiny, for those who reject the message of the Kingdom of Heaven and teach others to do the same, is the condemnation of Hell. [Matthew 5:17-20, 18:6-9]
 - ✧ This is the same warning as for a person of a city that refuses the message of the Kingdom of Heaven. [Matthew 10:5-15, 11:20-24, Mark 6:7-13, Luke 10:1-12, 13-16]
- ✧ Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. [Matthew 23:34-36]
 - ✧ The proof of Jesus' condemnation against the Scribes and Pharisees will be validated in their response to the Church which will bring the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven and the persecution and martyrdom the Scribes and Pharisees will lead against them.
 - ✧ The Scribes and Pharisees will do to the followers of Jesus, the same as their fathers through history did to the prophets God sent to them in their day.
 - ✧ Jesus' condemnation is valid, their destiny is Hell.
 - ✧ The generation that saw Jesus did indeed experience destruction from the land of Israel, and led to the persecution of the Jews for over 2,000 years. It did come upon "This generation" to whom Jesus said these words.

This led Jesus to weep over Jerusalem

† "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! ³⁸ See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹ for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' " [Matthew 23:37-39, Luke 13:34-35]

- ✧ Jesus desires to save mankind from Hell with all His heart.
- ✧ Each individual must choose whether to accept His plea or reject it.
- ✧ The consequence of rejecting the call is eternal condemnation and Hell Fire. Your house is left to you desolate [Matthew 23:38, Luke 13:35], how can you escape the condemnation of Hell? [Matthew 23:33, Mark 16:16]
- ✧ It will be more tolerable on the day of Judgment for Sodom and Gomorrah than for those who refuse the Gospel of the Kingdom. [Matthew 10:14-15, 11:20-24, Mark 6:11, Luke 10:10-12]
- ✧ After Jesus returned to Heaven, He will not return to earth again until the time for the Kingdom of Heaven to be established. [Acts 3:19-21]

- ❖ At that time the Children of Israel will certainly say, "Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord." [\[Matthew 23:39\]](#)
- ❖ These are the same words for which the Pharisees had said to Jesus, "rebuke your disciples." [\[Luke 19:39\]](#)