

# Matthew 23

Chapter 23 of 28 · 39 Verses · Authorized King James Version

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## Woe to the Scribes and Pharisees

- 1** Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,
- 2** Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:
- 3** All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.
- 4** For 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.
- 5** But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,
- 6** And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,
- 7** And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.
- 8** But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.
- 9** And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.
- 10** Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.
- 11** But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.
- 12** And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

**13** But 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.

**14** 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.

**15** Woe 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.

**16** Woe 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!

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

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

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

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

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

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

**23** Woe 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.

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

**25** Woe 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.

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

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

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

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

**30** And 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.

## Lament over Jerusalem

**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.

## HEBREW & GREEK WORD STUDIES

### Altar — θυσιαστήριον (Thusiastērion)

#### Altar

The Greek **thusiastērion** (θυσιαστήριον) denotes an altar for sacrifice. Hebrews 13:10 declares 'We have an altar' from which temple priests cannot eat—referring to Christ's sacrifice outside the camp.

### Blood — αἷμα (Haima)

#### Blood

The Greek **haima** (αἷμα) denotes blood. Christ's blood 'cleanseth us from all sin' (1 John 1:7), securing 'eternal redemption' (Hebrews 9:12) through His once-for-all sacrifice. Believers have been 'purchased with his own blood' (Acts 20:28).

### God — Θεός (Theos)

#### God

The Greek **Theos** (Θεός) refers to deity, used both for the one true God and false gods. Context determines whether it denotes the Father specifically or the Godhead generally.

### Heaven — οὐρανός (Ouranos)

#### Heaven, sky

The Greek **ouranos** (οὐρανός) denotes heaven—God's throne and the believer's eternal home. Jesus taught His disciples to pray 'Our Father which art in heaven' (Matthew 6:9) and promised to prepare a place there (John 14:2).

### Iniquity — ἀνομία (Anomia)

#### Lawlessness, iniquity

The Greek **anomia** (ἀνομία) means lawlessness—disregard for God's law. 'Sin is the transgression of the law' (1 John 3:4). Christ 'gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity' (Titus 2:14).

### Judgment — κρίσις (Krisis)

#### Judgment, decision

The Greek **krisis** (κρίσις) denotes judgment—evaluation and sentence. All will stand before God's judgment seat (Romans 14:10), and Christ has been appointed Judge of the living and dead (Acts 10:42).

**Kingdom** — βασιλεία (Basileia)

Kingdom, reign

The Greek **basileia** (βασιλεία) means kingdom—both the realm ruled and the exercise of royal authority. The 'kingdom of God' is central to Jesus' teaching, representing God's saving rule breaking into history.

**Lord** — Κύριος (Kurios)

Lord, Master

The Greek **Kurios** (Κύριος) means 'lord' or 'master,' used both for human masters and divinely for God the Father and Jesus Christ. Its application to Jesus affirms His deity, as it translates YHWH in the Septuagint.

**Mercy** — ἔλεος (Eleos)

Mercy, compassion

The Greek **eleos** (ἔλεος) denotes compassionate mercy—pity for those in distress. God is 'rich in mercy' (Ephesians 2:4), withholding deserved punishment and granting undeserved kindness.

**Prophet** — προφήτης (Prophētēs)

Prophet

The Greek **prophētēs** (προφήτης) denotes a prophet—one who speaks forth God's message. Jesus was recognized as 'a prophet mighty in deed and word' (Luke 24:19), fulfilling and surpassing the prophetic office.

**Righteous** — δίκαιος (Dikaios)

Righteous, just

The Greek **dikaios** (δίκαιος) means righteous or just—conforming to God's standard. Christ's righteousness is imputed to believers through faith (Romans 4:5), making them legally righteous before God.

**CROSS REFERENCES**

**Matthew 23:1** **Parallel theme:** Luke 12:1; 12:57

**Matthew 23:2** **Parallel theme:** Ezra 7:25; Malachi 2:7; Mark 12:38; Luke 20:46

**Matthew 23:3** **Parallel theme:** 2 Chronicles 30:12; Acts 5:29; Romans 13:1; 2 Timothy 3:5;  
Titus 1:16

**Matthew 23:4** **Parallel theme:** Luke 11:46; Acts 15:10; 15:28; Galatians 6:13

**Matthew 23:5** **Parallel theme:** Matthew 9:20; Exodus 13:9; Deuteronomy 6:8; 22:12;  
Proverbs 3:3; Luke 16:15; John 5:44; 7:18; 12:43; Philippians 2:3

**Matthew 23:6** **Love:** 3 John 1:9

**Matthew 23:7** **Parallel theme:** John 1:38; 1:49; 3:2; 3:26; 6:25; 20:16

**Matthew 23:8** **Parallel theme:** Matthew 17:5; Luke 22:32; James 3:1; 1 Peter 5:3.

**References Christ:** Matthew 23:10; Revelation 1:9

**Matthew 23:9** **Parallel theme:** Matthew 7:11; 2 Kings 2:12; Malachi 1:6; Acts 22:1; 1 Corinthians 4:15; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Hebrews 12:9; 1 John 3:1

**Matthew 23:11**

**Parallel theme:** 1 Corinthians 9:19; 2 Corinthians 4:5; 11:23; Galatians 5:13

**Matthew 23:12**

**Parallel theme:** Matthew 5:3; 18:4; Job 22:29; Proverbs 15:33; 29:23; Daniel 4:37; Luke 14:11; 18:14; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5

**Matthew 23:13**

**Parallel theme:** Zechariah 11:17; Luke 11:52; Acts 8:1; 2 Timothy 3:8; 4:15. **Resurrection:** Matthew 23:23; 23:27; 23:29; Isaiah 33:14. **Kingdom:** Acts 13:8

**Matthew 23:15**

**Parallel theme:** Matthew 5:22; John 8:44; Acts 13:10; 13:43; Galatians 4:17; 6:12; Ephesians 2:3. **Creation:** Acts 14:2

**Matthew 23:16** **Parallel theme:** Matthew 15:14; 23:19; 23:24; 23:26; James 5:12. **Temple:** Matthew 23:17

**Matthew 23:17** **Parallel theme:** Matthew 23:19; Psalms 94:8

**Matthew 23:19** **Sacrifice:** Exodus 29:37. **Parallel theme:** Exodus 30:29

**Matthew 23:21** **Parallel theme:** 1 Kings 8:13; 2 Chronicles 6:2; Psalms 26:8

**Matthew 23:22** **References God:** Matthew 5:34. **Parallel theme:** Psalms 11:4; Isaiah 66:1

**Matthew 23:23** **Judgment:** Proverbs 21:3; Luke 11:42. **Grace:** Matthew 9:13; 12:7; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:8. **Parallel theme:** Leviticus 27:30; 1 Samuel 15:22; Luke 18:12

**Matthew 23:24** **Parallel theme:** Matthew 7:4; 19:24; 23:16

**Matthew 23:26** **Parallel theme:** Matthew 12:33; Isaiah 55:7; Jeremiah 4:14; 13:27; Ezekiel 18:31; Luke 6:45; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 10:22; James 4:8

**Matthew 23:27** **Parallel theme:** Numbers 19:16; Acts 23:3. **Resurrection:** Luke 11:44

**Matthew 23:28**

**Righteousness:** Luke 16:15. **Parallel theme:** Matthew 23:5; 1 Samuel 16:7; Psalms 51:6

**Matthew 23:32** **Parallel theme:** Genesis 15:16; Numbers 32:14

**Matthew 23:33**

**Parallel theme:** Matthew 3:7; 5:22; 12:34; Genesis 3:15; Luke 3:7; John 8:44; Hebrews 2:3; 10:29; 12:25; Revelation 12:9

**Matthew 23:34**

**Parallel theme:** Matthew 10:23; 13:52; Colossians 1:28. **Prophecy:** Acts 13:1

**Matthew 23:35**

**Parallel theme:** Genesis 4:8; Jeremiah 26:23; Zechariah 1:1. **Righteousness:** Hebrews 11:4. **Blood:** 2 Kings 21:16; 24:4; Isaiah 26:21; Jeremiah 26:15; Hebrews 12:24; Revelation 18:24

**Matthew 23:36** **Parallel theme:** Matthew 10:23; 24:34

**Matthew 23:37** **Parallel theme:** Matthew 22:3; Ruth 2:12; Psalms 17:8; 36:7; 63:7; 91:4; Hosea 11:2. **Prophecy:** Matthew 5:12; Nehemiah 9:26; Jeremiah 35:15

**Matthew 23:38** **Parallel theme:** 1 Kings 9:7; Jeremiah 22:5; Luke 13:35; 21:6; 21:20; 21:24

**Matthew 23:39** **Blessing:** Matthew 21:9; Psalms 118:26. **Parallel theme:** Romans 11:25

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