

MATTHEW 23

NLET

JESUS INSTRUCTS HIS DISCIPLES TO DO AND KEEP
WHAT THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES TEACH FROM
MOSES

BUT NOT TO DO WHAT THEY DO

1 Then, the Jesus spoke to the throngs and to the disciples *that were* His, 2 saying, “Upon the seat of Moses¹ the Scribes and the Pharisees have seated *themselves*.

3 So then, keep on keeping and keep on doing² all things, as much as if ever they might say to you to keep³.

Now, in accord with the deeds *that are theirs* do not keep on doing. For, they keep on speaking; and, they do not keep on doing.

4 For,⁴ they are chaining *you with* burdens – heavy *ones* and grievous to bear⁵; and, they lay them upon the shoulders of the People.

Now, with the finger⁶ *that is theirs* they do not wish to remove them.

5 Now, they keep on doing all the deeds *that are theirs which are* calculated to be gazed at with wonder by the People.

Now,⁷ they keep on widening the phylacteries⁸ *that are theirs*.

And, they keep on lengthening the tassels of the outer garments *that are theirs*⁹.

6 And,¹⁰ they keep on loving

- the reclining places of honor at the meals, and
- the seats of honor in the synagogues, 7 and
- the salutations in the market places, and
- to be called by the People, ‘Rabbi’¹¹! Rabbi!¹².

JESUS TEACHES HIS DISCIPLES NOT
TO LIFT THEMSELVES HIGHER THAN OTHERS WITH TITLES

8 Now, you, *for your parts*, do not even begin to be called ‘Rabbi’! For, One is the teacher *that is* YOURS – the Anointed One¹³. Now, all of you, *for your parts*, are BROTHERS.

9 And, do not even begin to call *anyone* among you on the Earth ‘Father’! For, One is the Father *that is* yours¹⁴, *namely*, the One in the Heavens¹⁵.

10 Nor, even begin to be called ‘Guides’! For, One is the Guide *that is* YOURS¹⁶ – the Anointed One.

11 Now, let the greater among you be¹⁷ a servant *that is* YOURS.

12 Now, anyone who shall lift himself higher shall be lowered. And, anyone who might lower himself shall be lifted higher.

JESUS PRONOUNCES EIGHT WOES
UPON THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES

FIRST WOE

13 Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees! Hypocrits! Because, you – *as animals of prey* – keep on devouring the houses of the widows, even while being ones who are offering kindly, long prayers. For this reason you shall receive extraordinary condemnation.¹⁸

¹ 99.5% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have the spelling ‘Moses’ here instead of ‘Moseses’.

² 96.3% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have the word order ‘keep on keeping and keep on doing’ here instead of ‘keep on doing and keep on keeping’.

³ 97.4% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include the infinitive ‘to keep’.

⁴ 90% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have ‘For,’ here instead of ‘Now,’.

⁵ 99% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include the words ‘and grievous to bear’ here.

⁶ 99% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have ‘Now, with the finger’ here instead of ‘Now, they, for their part, with the finger’.

⁷ 95% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have ‘Now,’ here instead of ‘For,’.

⁸ ‘phylacteries’ – Among the Jews phylacteries were small rolls of parchment with texts from the Law written on them, bound to the forehead by persons praying.

⁹ 97.4% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include the phrase ‘of the outer garments that are theirs’ here.

¹⁰ 90% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of

transmission (f35), have ‘And,’ here instead of ‘Now,’.

¹¹ ‘Rabbi’ is the transliteration of a Hebrew word which means ‘teacher’.

¹² 95% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), repeat the word ‘Rabbi’ here.

¹³ 96% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include the noun phrase ‘the Anointed One’ here.

¹⁴ 99% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have the word order translated as ‘the Father that is yours’ here instead of ‘yours the Father’.

¹⁵ 96% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have ‘the One in the Heavens’ here instead of ‘the heavenly One’.

¹⁶ 30% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have ‘For, One is the Guide that is YOURS’ here instead of ‘Because, a guide of you is One.’.

¹⁷ 25% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have ‘let ... be’ (an aorist imperative verb) here instead of ‘shall be’ (a future indicative verb).

¹⁸ 98% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include verse 13 here. On the basis of three manuscripts (X, B, and D) the NU omits the whole verse.

SECOND WOE

14 ¹⁹Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees! Hypocrits! Because, you keep on shutting out the Kingdom of the Heavens from *being* in front of the People. For, You, *for your parts*, are not entering; nor, are you allowing the ones who are entering to enter.

THIRD WOE

15 Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees! Hypocrits! Because, you go around the Sea and the dry land to make one proselyte. And, whenever *it* might come to be, you make him a son of Gehenna²⁰ twice as much as yourselves.

FOURTH WOE

16 Woe to you, guides – *that is*, blind *ones*, the ones who are saying, ‘Whoever might swear in reference to the Temple, it is nothing. But, whoever might swear in reference to the gold of the Temple, he is obligated.’

17 Moronic *ones* and blind *ones*! For, which is greater – the gold or the Sanctuary which keeps on sanctifying²¹ ²² the gold?

18 And, *you are ones who are saying*, ‘Who, if ever²³ he might swear in reference to the Altar, it is nothing. But, whoever might swear in reference to the offering – *that is*, the *one* upon it – is obligated.’

19 Moronic *ones* and²⁴ blind *ones*! For, which is greater – the offering or the Altar – *that is*, the *altar* which keeps on sanctifying the offering?

20 So then, the one who swears in reference to the Altar swears in reference to it and in reference to all the things upon it.

21 And, the one who swears in reference to the Temple swears in reference to it and in reference to the One Who inhabited²⁵ it.

22 And, the one who swears in reference to the Heaven swears in reference to the Throne of the God and in reference to the One Who sits upon it!

FIFTH WOE

23 Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees! Hypocrits! Because, you tithe –

- the green mint, and
- the dill, and
- the cumin;

and, you have neglected the heavier *things* of the Law –

- the Judgement, and
- the Mercy²⁶, and
- the Faith.

²⁷ It is necessary to observe these things and not to neglect those things.

24 Guides – blind *ones*! The ones who are straining out the gnat, but ones who are gulping down the CAMEL!

SIXTH WOE

25 Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees! Hypocrits! Because, you keep cleansing the outside of the wine-cup and the meat platter, but from inside they are full of robbery and unrighteousness²⁸.

26 Pharisee! Blind *one*! Cleanse first the inside of the wine-cup and of the meat platter²⁹, in order that the outside of them³⁰ might also come to be clean.

SEVENTH WOE

27 Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees! Hypocrits! Because you are like tombs having been lastingly plastered with lime, which *tombs* from the outside, on the one hand, appear to be beautiful, *but*, on the other hand, are full of bones of dead *ones* and nothing but uncleanness.

¹⁹ 97% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), do not include the conjunction ‘Now,’ or ‘But’ here.

²⁰ ‘Gehenna’ – a valley southeast of Jerusalem that was turned into a garbage dump where fires burned garbage and carcasses were eaten by maggots after this valley had been used for pagan worship which involved the sacrifice of babies to Molech. It is a graphic, repulsive image of the fiery destination for the ungodly.

²¹ 99.5% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have ‘keeps on sanctifying’ (a present participle) here instead of ‘sanctified’ (an aorist participle).

²² ‘sanctifying’ – meaning ‘the setting of something or someone apart from others for the purposes of God’

²³ 90% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have ‘if ever’ here instead of ‘ever’.

²⁴ 99% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include the words ‘Moronic ones and’ here

again.

²⁵ 99.5% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have ‘the one who inhabited’ (a aorist participle) here instead of ‘the one who inhabits’ (an present participle).

²⁶ 97% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have the correct accusative case for this noun phrase ‘the mercy’ which is a direct object.

²⁷ 95% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), do not include the conjunction ‘Now,’ here.

²⁸ 93% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have ‘unrighteousness’ here instead of ‘lack of self-control’.

²⁹ 99% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include the words ‘and of the meat platter’ here.

³⁰ 97% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have ‘of them’ here instead of ‘of it’.

28 In the same way, also you, *for your parts*, on the one hand, from the outside appear to be righteous to the People. On the other hand, from within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

EIGHTH WOE

29 Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees! Hypocrits! Because, you keep on building the tombs of the Prophets. And, you keep on adorning the monuments of the righteous *ones*. 30 And, you keep on saying, 'If we were existing³¹ in the days of the Fathers *that are* ours, we never would be³² partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

31 And so, you keep on bearing witness to yourselves that you are sons of the ones who murdered the Prophets.

32 And, you, *for your parts*, have filled up the measure belonging to the *forefathers that are* yours.

33 Serpents! Generation of vipers! How *in the world* might you escape from the Judgment, *namely*, the Gehenna³³?

34 For this reason, look! I, *for My part*, keep on sending to you prophets, and wise men, and scribes. And,³⁴ from *some* among them you shall kill and shall crucify. And, *some* from among them you shall flog in the synagogues *that are* yours. And, you shall pursue *them* from city to city; 35 so that upon you should come all blood – *that is*, righteous *blood* being poured out upon the Earth – from the blood of Abel³⁵, the righteous one, until the blood of Zacharias, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the Sanctuary and the Altar.

36 Assuredly I say to you that³⁶ all these *things*³⁷ shall come upon the generation – *that is*, this *one*.

JESUS MOURNS OVER JERUSALEM

37 Jerusalem! Jerusalem! The *city* which keeps on killing the Prophets and keeps on stoning the ones who have been lastingly commissioned to her! How many times I desired to gather together the children *that are* yours, the way a bird gathers together the chicks *that are* her own³⁸ under the wings! And, you did NOT want *it*!

38 Look! The house *that is* yours is being left desolate!

39 For, I say to you, you shall by no means *really* see Me until which *time* you might ever say, '**One Who is being blessed is the One Who is coming in connection with a name – that is, YaHWeH**^{39,40}'

³¹ 90% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have 'might be existing' (a present subjunctive verb) here instead of 'were existing' (an imperfect verb).

³² 90% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have 'would be' (a present subjunctive verb) here instead of 'were being' (an imperfect verb).

³³ 'Gehenna' – a valley southeast of Jerusalem that was turned into a garbage dump where fires burned garbage and carcasses were eaten by maggots after this valley had been used for pagan worship which involved the sacrifice of babies to Molech. It is a graphic, repulsive image of the fiery destination for the ungodly.

³⁴ 94% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include the word 'And,' here again.

³⁵ 90% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have the spelling 'Abel' here instead of 'Habel'.

³⁶ 96% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), include the word 'that' here.

³⁷ 65% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have the word order 'all these things' here instead of 'these things all'.

³⁸ 98.5% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission (f35), have a reflexive pronoun translated here as 'that are her own' here instead of a pronoun translated as 'that are hers'.

³⁹ 'Yahweh' – the transliteration of the Hebrew proper noun יהוה which actually appears in Psalm 118:26. Often the New Testament writers used the unarticulated Greek word for 'Lord' (κυρίου here) to indicate this great name for God, especially in quotations of Old Testament prophecies, such as here.

⁴⁰ A reference to Psalm 118:26, one of the Psalms that the Jewish pilgrims sang as they travelled to this Feast. The pilgrims had welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem with these words early in this week. The Scribes and Pharisees did not join them at that time.