### Matthew

## Chapter 23

1Then Jesus spoke to the crowd and to his disciples, and said this:  
  
 2‘Since the Scribes and Pharisees have put themselves in the seat of Moses, 3you should do whatever they tell you to do… Yes, do and pay attention! But don’t do as they do, because they like to talk, but they don’t [practice what they preach].  
  
 4‘Rather, they bundle heavy loads to lay on men’s shoulders, which they’re personally unwilling to try to lift with even a finger, 5since everything that they do is done just to be seen by men.  
  
 ‘They broaden the [scripture-carrying] cases they wear, they make the fringes [on their clothes] a bit longer, 6they like the first places at meals and the front seats in the synagogues, 7and they enjoy being greeted in the markets and having people call them Rabbi.  
  
 8‘But not you!  
  
 ‘Don’t [have people] call you rabbi, for you only have one teacher, while you’re all just brothers.  
  
 9‘Nor should you address anyone on this earth as Father, because there’s just One who’s your Father, the Heavenly One.  
  
 10‘Don’t even be called leaders, because you only have one Leader, the Anointed One.  
  
 11‘Rather, the greatest among you must be your servant. 12For those who promote themselves will be humbled, while those who humble themselves will be promoted.  
  
 13‘Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees – you hypocrites – for you’re blocking the way into the Kingdom of the heavens.  
  
 ‘You don’t enter it, and you don’t allow the rest that are on their way to enter it!  
  
 14‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows’ houses, and for a pretence make long prayer. Therefore, you shall receive the greater damnation. [spurious words, copied from Luke 20:47]  
  
 15‘So, woe to you Scribes and Pharisees – you hypocrites – because you travel land and sea to make a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of the garbage dump as yourselves!  
  
 16‘And woe to you blind guides that say:  
  
 ‘If someone swears an oath by the Temple, it doesn’t mean anything.  
 But if he swears by the gold in the Temple, the oath is binding.’  
  
 17‘Morons and blind men!  
  
 ‘Which is really greater… The gold, or the Temple that makes the gold holy?  
  
 18‘You also say:  
  
 ‘If someone swears an oath by the Altar, it doesn’t mean anything; but if anyone swears by the gift on [the Altar], the oath is binding.’  
  
 19‘Blind men!  
  
 ‘Which is really greater… The gift, or the Altar that makes the gift holy? 20Those who swear an oath by the Altar are not only swearing by it, but also by everything that’s on it.  
  
 21‘Also, those who swear an oath by the Temple are swearing by the One who dwells there, 22and those who swear an oath by heaven are swearing by the throne of God and by the One who’s sitting upon it!  
  
 23‘Yes, woe to you Scribes and Pharisees – hypocrites – for even though you contribute even 1/10th of your mint, dill, and cumin, you ignore the deeper things of the Law, like justice, mercy, and faith!  
  
 ‘Yes, you should do those things also… In addition to the rest. 24[However, you’re just] blind guides that strain out weevils as you gulp down camels!  
  
 25‘Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees – hypocrites – because you wash the outsides of cups and dishes that are still filled with theft and excesses on the insides.  
  
 26‘Blind Pharisees: first clean the insides of the cups and dishes, so that the outsides can also be clean!  
  
 27‘Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees – hypocrites – because you’re like whitewashed graves that look beautiful on the outside, but you’re full of dead men’s bones and every sort of filth on the inside…  
  
 28‘You look like righteous men on the outside, but on the inside, you’re full of hypocrisy and lawlessness!  
  
 29‘Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees – hypocrites – because you build tombs to dead Prophets… Yes, you decorate the tombs of the righteous and say:  
  
 30‘If we had lived back in the days of our forefathers, we wouldn’t have shared in [spilling] the blood of the Prophets!’  
  
 31‘But when you say this, you’re testifying against yourselves that you’re the sons of those who murdered the Prophets! 32And now [it’s time] for you to fully measure up to [the badness of] your ancestors!  
  
 33‘Yes, you snakes and children of vipers! How can you escape the judgment of the garbage dump?  
  
 34‘Look! I’ll be sending you Prophets, wise men, and writers, whom you’ll kill… You’ll hang some on poles, and you’ll whip others in your synagogues and chase them down in one city after another.  
  
 35‘And that’s when you’ll become responsible for all the righteous blood that has been spilled on the earth from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of ZechariAh (son of BarachiAh), whom you murdered between the Holy Place and the Altar.  
  
 36‘Yes, I’m telling the truth when I say that all of this [guilt] will be laid upon this people!  
  
 37‘O JeruSalem, JeruSalem…  
  
 ‘You killer of Prophets and stoner of those who were sent to you!  
  
 ‘How often I’ve wanted to gather your children the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings… But you didn’t want that!  
  
 38‘So look… Your house has been taken from you!  
  
 39‘I tell you the truth: You won’t see me again until you say:  
  
 ‘Praise the one who comes in Jehovah’s Name!’