

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Matthew: Jesus As Israel's Messiah And His Kingdom

P. Christ As Israel's Messiah Seen In His Judgment Of The Pharisee Leaders (Matthew 23:13-39)

I. Introduction

- A. If Jesus is God's Messiah, He as the Leader of God's flock in the nation Israel served to replace errant leaders, a theme that is found in Old Testament passages like Ezekiel 34:1-2, 10.
- B. Of note, Ezekiel 34:2b pronounces a "woe" against Israel's errant shepherds, and in Matthew 23:13-36 Jesus pronounced **seven** woes against Israel's religious leaders in the Pharisees!
- C. We view those "woes" for instruction and application relative to religious leadership today (as follows):

II. Christ As Israel's Messiah Seen In His Judgment Of The Pharisee Leaders, Matthew 23:13-39.

- A. Though the KJV includes eight "woes" in Matthew 23:13-36, Matthew 23:14 is an interpolation that was borrowed from Mark 12:40 or Luke 20:47 in view of its absence in Matthew 23 in the earliest and best mss of the major Alexandrian, Western and Caesarean text types, and the mss that include it put it in different places, either before or after verse 13, Bruce M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek N. T., 1971, p.60.
- B. Thus, Jesus taught **seven** "woes" in Mathew 23:13-36, revealing what God expects of the leaders of His flock:
 1. The first woe against the **hypocrisy of shutting up the Kingdom to others**, Matt. 23:13: the Pharisees led people to reject Christ, shutting up the Kingdom to others and stay lost themselves, B. K. C., N. T., p. 74.
 2. The second woe against the **hypocrisy of pushing legalistic rules that turn others to hell**, Matt. 23:15: the Pharisees' traversed land and sea to make a single convert, but their teachings were so legalistic, they only made their proselytes twice hardened converts to hell as they were doubly legalistic in error, *Ibid.*
 3. The third woe against the **hypocrisy of tricking others to manipulate them**, Matt. 23:16-22: the Pharisees made oaths that would trickily let them maneuver others to do their will while not committing themselves to their word, *Ibid.* Jesus noted such oaths still make the Pharisees guilty for not keeping them.
 4. The fourth woe against **the hypocrisy of majoring on minors and not addressing the majors**, Matthew 23:23-24: the Pharisees loved to strain at a gnat when it came to tithing even the smallest of seeds, but they neglected the far more important duties of justice, mercy and faithfulness in the law, Matthew 23:23 NIV.
 5. The fifth woe against the **hypocrisy of external acts of cleanness while committing internal sins**, Matt. 23:25-26 NIV: Jesus complained how the Pharisees meticulously ceremoniously cleaned the outside of the cup and dish for eating food while neglecting to clean up the greed and self-indulgences within, *Ibid*, p. 75.
 6. The sixth woe against the **hypocrisy of good external appearances and internal corruption**, Matt. 23:27-28: The fifth woe focused on acts and the sixth on appearances, and Jesus condemned the Pharisees' love for making themselves externally look good while staying lawless and hypocritical within, *Ibid.*
 7. The seventh woe against the **hypocrisy of giving support to the prophets while rejecting Christ**, Matt. 23:29-36: the Pharisees claimed that had they lived in the days of the Old Testament prophets who their forefathers persecuted, they would have not persecuted them; however, these same Pharisees rejected the Ultimate Prophet in Jesus, and so were guilty of the blood of God's Ultimate Messenger, Matt. 23:29-32; *Ibid.* Indeed, in the coming era of the Church, God would send even more prophets, wise men and scribes, and these the Pharisees would mistreat them, so God would bring upon them the judgment of the blood of all the prophets who foretold the works of God they would thus be rejecting, Matthew 23:33-36; *Ibid.*
- C. Finally, Jesus pronounced a final lament over Jerusalem for rejecting Him, Matthew 23:37-39: for its ongoing hypocritical rejection of God's messengers, be it in the Old Testament, in Christ's era or in the Church era to come, that generation of leaders and the people of Jerusalem would face judgment and miss the Kingdom though Christ had longed to give it to them like a hen might gather her chicks under her wings, *Ibid.* Only in a later time, at Christ's Second Coming, would the city be blessed upon changing its mind about Christ, *Ibid.*

Lesson: *Jesus condemned the Pharisee leaders' hypocritical sins of turning men against Him, of keeping men lost in teaching truth-curbing legalism, of tricking others to manipulate them, of excelling in the minors while ignoring the majors, of doing what was externally clean while internally staying evil, of giving a good outward appearance while staying internally corrupt and of asserting support of past prophets while rejecting God's current Messenger.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Jesus as God's true Messiah to be saved. (2) May all of us believers, people and leaders alike, transparently align all our attitudes, thoughts and acts with God's Bible truth to be pleasing to Him.*