

# Fulfilled Prophecies

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By Dan Maines

## **Matthew 23**

### **Matthew 23:1-12**

Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to His disciples, saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; therefore, whatever they tell you, do and comply with it all, but do not do as they do; for they say things and do not do them. And they tie up heavy burdens and lay them on people's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as their finger. And they do all their deeds to be noticed by other people; for they broaden their phylacteries

and lengthen the tassels of their garments. And they love the place of honor at banquets, and the seats of honor in the synagogues, and personal greetings in the marketplaces, and being called Rabbi by the people. But as for you, do not be called Rabbi; for only One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers and sisters. And do not call anyone on earth your father; for only One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called leaders; for only One is your Leader, that is, Christ. But the greatest of you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled, and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted."

† Jesus condemned the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who loaded burdens on others while seeking glory for themselves.

† True greatness in the kingdom comes through humility and service.

† The fulfilled perspective shows that leadership in Christ's kingdom is servant-leadership, not prideful rule.

### **Matthew 23:13-15**

"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut the kingdom of heaven in front of people; for you do not enter it yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves."

† Their hypocrisy not only destroyed themselves but also those they influenced.

† Their zeal produced converts to corruption rather than to truth.

† Jesus' words exposed their role in preparing that generation for judgment.

### **Matthew 23:16-22**

"Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, that is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the

temple is obligated.' You fools and blind men! Which is more important, the gold or the temple that sanctified the gold? And you say, 'Whoever swears by the altar, that is nothing; but whoever swears by the offering that is on it is obligated.' You blind men, which is more important, the offering or the altar that sanctifies the offering? Therefore, the one who swears by the altar, swears both by the altar and by everything on it. And the one who swears by the temple, swears both by the temple and by Him who dwells in it. And the one who swears by heaven, swears both by the throne of God and by Him who sits upon it."

† They twisted oaths to serve greed and pride.

† Jesus exposed their blindness, showing that all vows are before God.

† Their false reasoning revealed their corruption and prepared them for judgment.

### **Matthew 23:23-24**

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and you have neglected the weightier provisions of the Law: justice, mercy, and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!"

† They obsessed over trivial rituals while ignoring justice, mercy, and faith.

† Their straining out gnats but swallowing camels pictured their hypocrisy.

† Covenant judgment would fall on them for neglecting what mattered most.

### **Matthew 23:25-28**

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may

also become clean. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. So you too, outwardly appear righteous to people, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness."

† Their outward show of religion hid inner corruption.

† Jesus exposed their lawlessness and compared them to whitewashed tombs.

† Outward appearance could not hide their inward death.

### **Matthew 23:29-36**

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous, and you say, 'If we had been living in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.' So you testify against yourselves, that you are the sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of the guilt of your fathers. You snakes, you offspring of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell? Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will flog in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, so that upon you will fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation."

† They honored dead prophets while preparing to kill living ones.

† Jesus declared their guilt in the blood of all the righteous, from Abel onward.

† Judgment would fall on that generation, fulfilled in AD 70.

## **Matthew 23:37-39**

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who have been sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, 'Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord!'"

† Jesus lamented over Jerusalem's hardness and rejection.

† The temple would be left desolate, pointing to its destruction.

† Their refusal of Him sealed their fate.

### **How it applies to us today:**

† Matthew 23 exposes the dangers of hypocrisy, pride, and empty religion. The fulfilled perspective reminds us that the judgment fell on that generation, and their house was left desolate. Today we live in the kingdom that cannot be shaken, called to sincerity, justice, mercy, and faith. The warning stands for all generations: God sees the heart, not outward show.

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

### **Source Index**

† Josephus, Wars 5.10; Antiquities 20.9

† Tacitus, Histories 5.13

† Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho 118

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies 4.36.2

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