



Matthew

Lesson 23

In one of the last times Jesus dialogs with the religious leaders before His arrest, He gives a scathing evaluation of their character and a dramatic description of their hypocrisy and guilt. Not only has their corruption caused them to keep many people from the truth of God instead of leading them to it, He accuses them of being guilty of being the sons of those who killed the prophets of old, and they will be guilty of the blood of all the prophets to come. That rebuke was probably the catalyst that pushed them to the point of action in getting rid of Him.

Though they had wanted Him gone for a long time, this humiliation and demeaning narrative was the last straw. Jesus had to go, or they would lose their control over the people. Jesus also gives a description of the suffering coming upon Jerusalem and her people due to that corruption and their refusal to repent and receive the salvation that only He can give them. That truth brings Jesus sorrow, but it is the inevitable outcome of their dead spiritual state.



The events of Chapters 21-25, starting with the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, take place approximately Sunday – Tuesday/ Wednesday before Passover. Much of it is Matthew's record of the last conflicts Jesus had with the religious leaders before they arrested Him.

READ CHAPTER 23

- From 23:1-7, list 5 issues Jesus states directly that He has with the religion of the Scribes and Pharisees. Also, explain what negative effect these would have on the people they were supposed to be shepherding. (Note: phylacteries = small boxes containing Scripture verses attached to a man's forehead and back of his hand. See Ex.13:9; Deut.6:8, 11:18. Tassels = fringes on a man's outer garment. See Numbers 15:38-39.)*

ISSUE	EFFECT
Vs. 3	
Vs. 4	

Vs. 5	
Vs. 6	
Vs. 7	

2. Describe how any of these issues are present in the church today, and the effect they may be having on the church as a whole.



The word “woe” used in Matthew 23 eight times is an interjection of grief or indignation that expresses sorrow or distress. In the Old Testament, it is used by the prophets in oracles of judgment against sin (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*).

3. List the eight uses of the word in Matthew 23 and the accusation Jesus makes in each.

WOE TO	ACCUSATION
Vs. 13	
Vs. 14	
Vs. 15	
Vs. 16-17	

Vs. 23	
Vs. 25-26	
Vs. 27-28	
Vs. 29-30	

4. *How do you think men who had spent their whole lives seeking and serving God could become guilty of these accusations?*

5. *Explain the analogy Jesus use to describe their misuse of the Law in 23:24.*

6. *Why does Jesus accuse them of killing the prophets? 23:34-36*

7. *In vs. 37-39, why does Jesus mourn over Jerusalem?*

8. *How does Matthew 23:39 relate to Matthew 21:8-9?*

Prayer requests:

Group time notes:
