

MATTHEW:
THE GOSPEL
OF THE KINGDOM

Shutting Tight the Kingdom Door

Matthew 23:13-36

Introduction: Overview/context

- *Woe* oracle - 7-fold
 - Woe includes compassion and regret, not rejoicing
- *Satire* - exposure through ridicule due to vice and folly
 1. Objects of attack
 2. Literary vehicle - list or story
 3. Standard of expected norm
 4. Biting tone
 5. Use of hyperbole, metaphor, and simile

Introductory Woe - Shutting the Kingdom Door (13)

But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!
For you shut the *kingdom of heaven* in people's faces.
For you neither enter *yourselves*
nor allow *those* who would enter to go in.

Woe #2 - Hell-bound Disciple Maker (15)

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!
For you travel across sea and land
to make a single *prosehyte*,
and when he becomes a proselyte,
you make him twice as much *a child of hell*
as yourselves.

- "Any religion is not better than no religion at all" ~False.

Woe #3 - Manipulative Word Merchant (16-22)

Woe to you, blind guides,
who say, If anyone swears by the *temple*, it is nothing,
but if anyone swears by the *gold of the temple*,
he is bound by his oath.'
You blind fools!
For which is greater, the gold
or the temple that has made the gold sacred?

And you say, 'If anyone swears by the *altar*,
it is nothing,
but if anyone swears by *the gift that is on the altar*,
he is bound by his oath.' You blind men!
For which is greater,
the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?
So whoever swears by the altar
swears by it and by everything on it.

And whoever swears by the *temple*
swears by it and by *him who dwells in it*.
And whoever swears by *heaven*
swears by *the throne of God*
and by *him who sits upon it*.

Woe #4 - Nit-Picky Law Neglecters (23-24)

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!
For you *tithe* mint and dill and cumin,
and have neglected the *weightier matters* of the law:
justice and mercy and faithfulness. [i.e. love]
These you ought to have done,
without neglecting the others.
You blind guides,
straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!

Woe #5 - External Cup Cleaner (25-26)

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!
For you clean the *outside* of the cup and the plate,
but *inside* they are full of greed and self-indulgence.
You blind Pharisee!
First clean the inside of the cup and the plate,
that the outside also may be clean.

Woe #6 - Internal Death Dweller (27-28)

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!
For you are like whitewashed tombs,
which *outwardly* appear beautiful,
but *within* are full of dead people's bones
and all uncleanness.
So you also outwardly appear righteous to others,
but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

Woe #7 - Prophetic Word Killer (29-36)

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!
For you *build the tombs* of the prophets
and *decorate the monuments* of the righteous,
saying, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers,
we would not have taken part with them
in shedding the blood of the prophets.’
Thus you *witness against yourselves*
that you are sons of those
who murdered the prophets.
Fill up, then, *the measure* of your fathers.

You serpents, you brood of vipers,
how are you to escape being sentenced to hell?
Therefore *I send you* prophets and wise men and scribes,
some of whom you will kill and crucify,
and some you will flog in your synagogues
and persecute from town to town,
so that on you may come
all the righteous blood shed on earth,
from the blood of righteous Abel
to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah,
whom you murdered
between the sanctuary and the altar.
Truly, I say to you,
all these things will come upon *this* generation.

Application

- What kind of disciples would you make if you were *replicated*?
- What is your disposition toward *truth* and *truthfulness*?
- What is your relationship toward *light* vs. *weighty* laws?
- Where are your attempts at transformation *focused*?
- What is your response to *exposure* to prophetic word?
- The sketch of a *Kingdom disciple* who opens the doors for others is that they love truth, justice, mercy, faithfulness, inward transformation, and the Word of God.
- Authenticity* is vital...but not an end of itself.
- Our need for *Trinitarian* transformation.
