

Day 4 in Jerusalem: 'Woe to You Scribes and Pharisees'

Yesterday, Jesus really put the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees in their place. But He didn't seem to do it in a vindictive manner, like He was resigning them all to hell and they had no way out.

Jesus appeared to have an ulterior motive—one that gave them a choice.

There's no doubt that His words had bite to them. He publicly rebuked them by saying "they do all their works to be seen by men. They make their Scripture boxes broad and lengthen the tassels on their prayer shawls. They love the places of honor at feasts and the prominent seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the marketplaces, and being called 'Rabbi' by men..." (Matt. 23:5-7).

He didn't stop there.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven against men. For you neither enter yourselves, nor allow those who are entering to go in. Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You devour widows' houses and for pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation" (Matt. 23:13-15).

Yet this Man, whom they hated, seemed to preach with love. It's as if He wanted to show mercy on them and have them repent of their evil deeds. And that's just what many of them performed—evil and narcissistic deeds.

But if they did repent, then certainly there was room for them in what Jesus called His "kingdom of heaven." But who knows what that means?

He continued to give warnings to anyone who would listen, including a story that involved 10 virgins who went out to “meet the bridegroom.” It appears that half of them were wise and brought oil for their lamps, and the other half ignored the need. When the latter five went out to buy more oil for their lamps, the bridegroom came and the door to the wedding banquet was shut, He explained.

He was heard saying, “Truly I say to you, I do not know you. Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.” It was as if He was warning us to prepare for what is coming.

Some took heed to this warning, while others simply wrote it off as the ravings of a lunatic. Whatever the case, He warned again that judgment would come against the nations. The things He speaks of are very sober in nature. They do make you think, and think hard.

He was also overheard saying that the Son of Man, whom it was assumed He was speaking of Himself, would be betrayed and crucified. It’s a very distinct possibility as it has been said that today, the chief priests, the scribes and the elders of the people gathered in the place of the high priest Caiaphas.

Rumors circulated that they were plotting on how they might kill Jesus. It became known that even one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, met with the chief priests to conspire on how he might betray his friend. They paid Judas 30 pieces of silver, so the plan was set in motion for Jesus’ death.

 And it was all because they simply did not like what He was preaching. This plan was sinister. It was as if Jesus knew all along what they were conspiring to do, yet He did nothing about it.

Passover is tomorrow and they wouldn’t dare kill Him on that day, would they? But what about after? How would they go about

it? {eoa}

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Editor's Note: The preceding is an account of what one person could possibly have witnessed in Jerusalem on Wednesday during Holy Week. It is the fourth day of what happened, according to the Bible, prior to Jesus' crucifixion. Some of the text is editorial license.