

They Didn't Know

by Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian Church

"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" **Psalms 2:1.**

The heathen rage and act as they do toward God because they do not know Him. They think that they can say and do whatever they want and that there will not be any consequences for them. In the book of **2 Kings** in chapter **19** the king of Assyria defeated Israel and several other nations. His next target was Judah and he didn't see any problem with defeating it. After all, he had won all his wars with other nations - why would this one be any different?

Rabshakeh, who represented the king of Assyria, called to the Jews and mocked their small numbers. He said that he could give them two thousand horses and that they could not put men on all of them. After this he mentioned the conquered nations and the gods that they worshipped. Their gods, he said, could not save them and he was confident that the God of Israel would be no different. True they had defeated all of the nations that he had spoken of and had cast their so-called "gods" into the fire. What Rabshakeh and the Assyrian nation didn't realize was that these fallen nations worshipped idols. Yes, even Israel who had turned from God and

walked in the sins of the ungodly.

Now they faced a nation that had turned back to God, the true and living God, and trusted in Him for deliverance. The God that the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem worshipped was not a man-made idol, but the God of creation who made all things, including man. The Assyrians made the mistake of thinking that the God of Jerusalem and Judah was no different than the gods of the other nations. They were about to find out the great difference between an idol and the living God.

When king Hezekiah enquired of God the answer was that the Assyrians would leave and go back to their own land. Not only would they go back to Assyria, but that the Assyrian king would die by the sword in his own land. This came to pass just as God, speaking through the prophet Isaiah, had said. The king of Assyria was, like so many others, slow to learn that there was a God in Judah. Assyria sent other messengers to Jerusalem and said, "Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee." It was not the people who trusted in God who were deceived, but those who trusted in themselves and in their idols. Because they had defeated idol-worshipping nations the Assyrians thought that they, with their god, was the strongest and greatest of the nations.

They, the Assyrians, even lied when they said that the Lord had told them to come up and to destroy Judah. This was to weaken the resolve of the people and to cause them to think that God

had given them up to destruction. God said, "For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake." And he did exactly as he said and saved Jerusalem from this Assyrian invasion. The city and country would fall another time when they forgot God and turned from him, but as long as they obeyed God and walked according to his word they were safe.

Think of it, the same God that watched over Jerusalem and Judah, delivering them from Assyria, is the same God that we can trust today. The Lord said he would defend Jerusalem and he did just that. He sent one angel into the camp of the Assyrians and killed a hundred and eighty five thousand of them. It was a hard lesson for the ungodly to see that the God of the Jews was for real and that indeed this was no useless idol like the gods of the other nations. The Lord did, does, and always will, watch over those who put their faith in him and obey him. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever. (**Hebrews 13:8**).

No, the Assyrians didn't know God, and didn't believe what they had heard of Him. Many people today are the same way: they don't come and hear God's word and reject what they hear of Him from believers. Trusting in what they know and what they have they think that they are doing good and have no need to change the way that they live. The Assyrians learned the hard way and those who don't come to Him will learn too. For all will stand before Him as we are told in His word.

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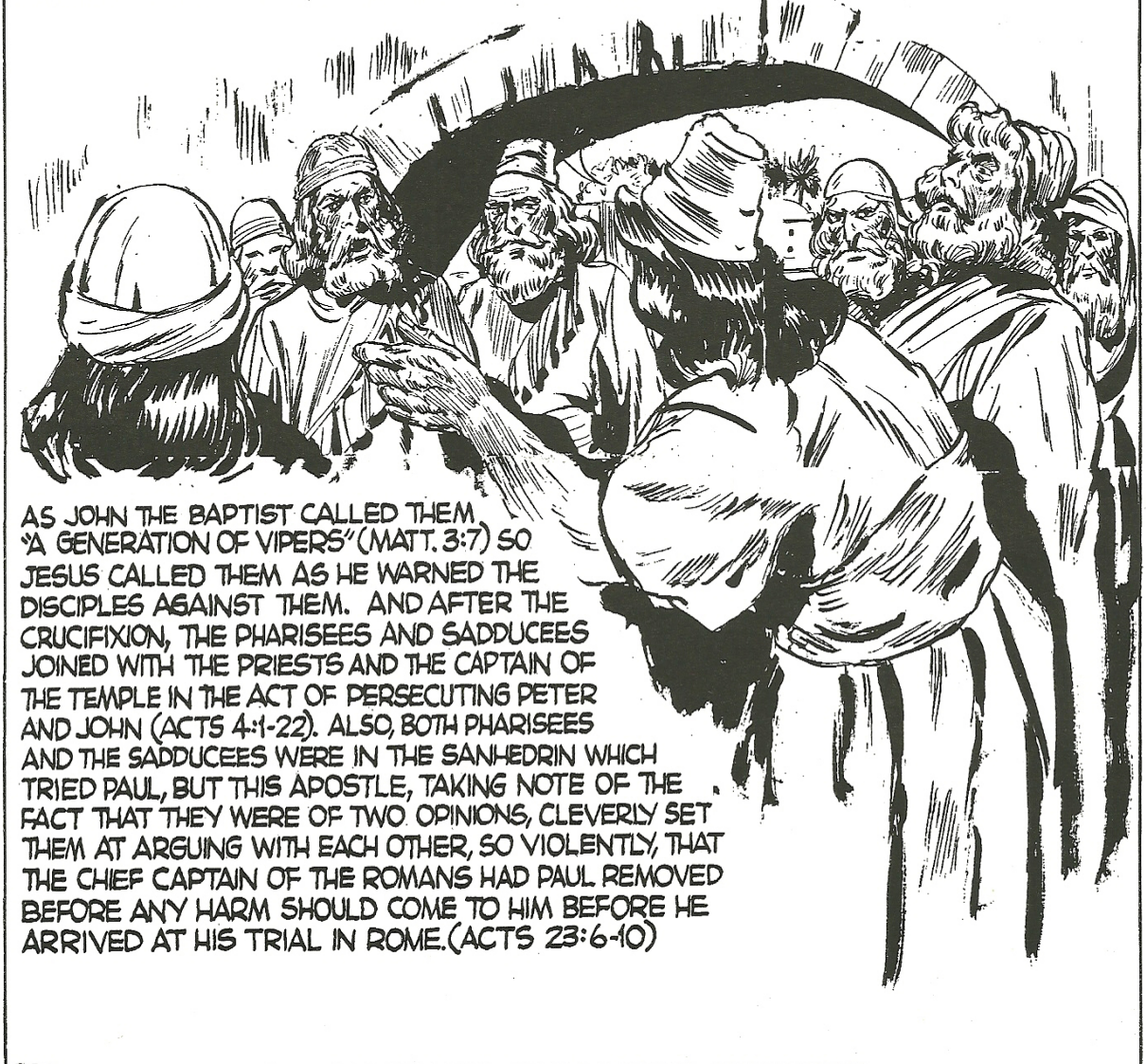
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PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES...

THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT POLITICAL PARTIES IN ANCIENT JERUSALEM, THEY WERE DIRECTLY OPPOSED TO ONE ANOTHER IN MATTERS OF SPIRITUAL FAITH—THE PHARISEES BELIEVED IN THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL AND IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY—IN OPPOSITION, THE SADDUCEES DENIED ANY LIFE AFTER DEATH OR RESURRECTION, ASSERTING THAT THE SOUL DIED WITH THE BODY—ALTHOUGH OPPOSING EACH OTHER IN MOST MATTERS, THE PHARISEES AND THE SADDUCEES CAME TOGETHER ON THE MATTER OF JESUS OF NAZARETH AND PLOTTED TOGETHER TO BRING ABOUT HIS DOWNFALL!



AS JOHN THE BAPTIST CALLED THEM "A GENERATION OF VIPERS" (MATT. 3:7) SO JESUS CALLED THEM AS HE WARNED THE DISCIPLES AGAINST THEM. AND AFTER THE CRUCIFIXION, THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES JOINED WITH THE PRIESTS AND THE CAPTAIN OF THE TEMPLE IN THE ACT OF PERSECUTING PETER AND JOHN (ACTS 4:1-22). ALSO, BOTH PHARISEES AND THE SADDUCEES WERE IN THE SANHEDRIN WHICH TRIED PAUL, BUT THIS APOSTLE, TAKING NOTE OF THE FACT THAT THEY WERE OF TWO OPINIONS, CLEVERLY SET THEM AT ARGUING WITH EACH OTHER, SO VIOLENTLY, THAT THE CHIEF CAPTAIN OF THE ROMANS HAD PAUL REMOVED BEFORE ANY HARM SHOULD COME TO HIM BEFORE HE ARRIVED AT HIS TRIAL IN ROME. (ACTS 23:6-10)

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