

Who Warned You To Flee?

“Now John himself had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about the Jordan; and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said unto them, Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham” (Matthew 3:4-9).

John was indeed a man of passion when it came to proclaiming the will of God. There were “many...coming to his baptism.” But there was something about this group that John exposed, when he said, “who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance.”

This group was not just any old group of people: it was comprised of the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Lord warned his disciples about the Pharisees, when he spake, “to the multitudes and to his disciples, saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses seat: all things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe: but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not” (Matthew 23:3). As was the case with John, so with Jesus, he identified an inconsistency between their doctrines, and their actions. The Sadducees, on the other hand say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit (Acts 23:7).

These two parties were like the vain talkers and deceivers, and those who were defiled during the days of the apostle Paul, who said, “They profess that they know God; but by their works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate” (Titus 1:16).

Where would you have “fit in” during the days of the Lord: the multitude who came to John with righteous intentions, or the Pharisees and Sadducees?

Remember the words the apostle Paul was instructed to deliver to the Gentiles, saying, “that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance” (Acts 26:20). ret