

Mark 14:43

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.

Analysis

And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve—the title **one of the twelve** (εἷς τῶν δώδεκα, heis tōn dōdeka) stings with tragic irony. Mark repeatedly emphasizes this throughout chapter 14 (vv. 10, 20, 43), underscoring that betrayal came from within the inner circle. **And with him a great multitude with swords and staves** (ὅχλος μετὰ μαχαίρων καὶ ξύλων, ochlos meta machairōn kai xylōn)—the armed crowd suggests expected resistance, revealing their misunderstanding of Jesus' mission.

From the chief priests and the scribes and the elders—the Sanhedrin's three constituent groups unite against Jesus. This unholy alliance of religious authorities sending armed men at night reveals their guilt-consciousness; righteousness doesn't require midnight arrests. The "swords and staves" (implements of violence) carried by religion's representatives dramatize how far Israel's leadership had fallen from God's purposes.

Historical Context

The Sanhedrin was Judaism's supreme court (71 members). Chief priests represented the Sadducean aristocracy, scribes the legal experts (often Pharisaic), and elders the lay nobility. Their unanimous opposition fulfilled Psalm 2:2—"The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the

LORD, and against his anointed." Jewish law prohibited nighttime trials, but expediency trumped legality.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What does the phrase "one of the twelve" repeated four times in Mark 14 teach about the tragedy of insider betrayal?
2. How does the religious establishment's use of weapons and nighttime operations warn against religion divorced from righteousness?
3. What modern expressions of religiosity might parallel the chief priests' midnight arrest—appearing righteous while opposing God's purposes?

Interlinear Text

καὶ εὐθὲως, ἔτι αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος παραγίνεται
And immediately while he yet him spake cometh
G2532 G2112 G2089 G846 G2980 G3854

Ἰούδας εἷς ὅν τῶν δώδεκα καὶ μετὰ αὐτοῦ ὅχλος
Judas one of the twelve And with him multitude
G2455 G1520 G5607 G3588 G1427 G2532 G3326 G846 G3793

πολὺς μετὰ μαχαιρῶν καὶ ξύλων παρὰ τῶν ἀρχιερέων
a great with swords And staves from the chief priests
G4183 G3326 G3162 G2532 G3586 G3844 G3588 G749

καὶ τῶν γραμματέων καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων
And G3588 the scribes And G3588 the elders
G2532 G1122 G2532 G4245

Additional Cross-References

Acts 1:16 (Word): Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

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