

Matthew 22:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

Analysis

But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence (Οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι ἀκούσαντες ὅτι ἐφίμωσεν τοὺς Σαδδουκαίους/Hoi de Pharisaioi akousantes hoti ephimōsen tous Saddoukaious). The verb φιμώω (phimoō) means to muzzle, to silence completely, like putting a muzzle on an animal's mouth (used this way in 1 Corinthians 9:9 about not muzzling oxen, and Mark 4:39 where Jesus 'muzzles' the storm). Jesus had utterly silenced the Sadducees, leaving them speechless and defeated.

They were gathered together (συνήχθησαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό/synēchthēsan epi to auto). The Pharisees convene emergency council. Though they doctrinally opposed Sadducees (Pharisees believed in resurrection, oral tradition, angels, and spirits which Sadducees rejected), they unite against common enemy—Jesus. This alliance of opponents reveals Jesus's threat to the entire religious establishment. He exposes not just Sadducean skepticism but Pharisaic hypocrisy, challenging all human religious systems with divine truth and authority.

Historical Context

The Pharisees and Sadducees represented rival parties within Second Temple Judaism. Pharisees were middle-class lay teachers emphasizing oral Torah, resurrection, and meticulous legal observance. Sadducees were aristocratic priests controlling the temple, accepting only written Torah, denying resurrection, collaborating with Rome. These groups fiercely debated theology and competed for

influence. Yet both united against Jesus, who threatened their power, exposed their corruption, and offered salvation apart from their mediating institutions. This pattern repeats throughout history—theological opponents unite against gospel truth that threatens their religious authority and self-righteousness. The Pharisees should have rejoiced at Jesus vindicating resurrection against Sadducean denial; instead they plot to trap Him, revealing their real concern is preserving power, not pursuing truth.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What does the Pharisees' failure to rejoice at Jesus defending resurrection (which they believed) reveal about their true motives?
2. How do opponents of the gospel today unite across doctrinal differences when threatened by biblical truth?
3. When religious people seek to trap or silence Jesus's teaching rather than submit to it, what does this reveal about their hearts?

Interlinear Text

Oἱ	δὲ	Φαρισαῖοι	ἀκούσαντες	ὅτι	ἐφίμωσεν	τοὺς
G3588	But	when the Pharisees	had heard	that	he had put	G3588
G1161		G5330	G191	G3754	G5392	
Σαδδουκαίους	συνήχθησαν	ἐπὶ	τὸ	αὐτό		
the Sadducees	they were gathered	together	G3588	G846		
G4523	G4863	G1909				

