

Matthew 23:23-35

Zechariah

Woes ...

I. Fathers & Prophets

- A. Murderous Tradition
- B. Bloody Heritage

II. Prophets & Martyrs

- A. Barachiah's Son
- B. Zechariah

III. Jesus & Disciples

- A. Teachers
- B. Targets

IV. Sons & Daughters

- A. Witnesses
- B. Counted Worthy

... and lament.

Children, Listen ...

1. What does Jesus say happened to many of God's prophets?
2. Were the leaders Jesus was speaking to taking good care of the people?
3. What did many leaders want to do to Jesus because He spoke the truth to them?
4. There are many places in the world where Christians are punished for worshipping Jesus and telling people about Him. Here are two countries among many where it is dangerous to be a believer – will you pray for the Christians North Korea and Afghanistan with your family today?
5. Will you specifically pray for the Christian children of those nations?

Evil Twins

The following excerpt borrowed from Christianity Today highlight two nations that are at the top of the list of many nations that persecute believers. Let's remember to pray for our brothers and sisters there and wherever they are counted worthy to suffer for the name of the Lord.

“For decades, North Korea has clearly been the world's worst persecutor of Christians. But now, another nation nearly matches it. Open Doors released today its 2018 World Watch List (WWL), an annual ranking of the 50 countries where it is most dangerous to follow Jesus. Approximately 215 million Christians now experience high, very high, or extreme levels of persecution; that means 1 in 12 Christians live where Christianity is “illegal, forbidden, or punished,” according to Open Doors researchers.

Kim Jung-un's country hasn't moved from the No. 1 spot on the list for 16 years in a row. “With more than 50,000 in prison or labor camps, such a ranking is little surprise for the totalitarian regime that controls every aspect of life in the country and forces worship of the Kim family,” Open Doors reported.

But rivaling it this year is Afghanistan, which ranked No. 2 in their violence rating. In the other five categories measured—private life, family life, community life, national life, and church life—both countries received the worst scores possible.

Reports of violence and human rights atrocities from North Korea are pervasive, while the situation faced by Christians in Afghanistan may be underestimated. It is hard for Westerners to imagine a second country could nearly meet the levels of persecution seen in North Korea, but Afghanistan has reached that level this year.”

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