

Hope of Heaven

Mark 12:18-27

¹⁸ Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. ¹⁹ "Teacher," they said, "Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother." ²⁰ Now there were seven brothers. The first one married and died without leaving any children. ²¹ The second one married the widow, but he also died, leaving no child. It was the same with the third. ²² In fact, none of the seven left any children. Last of all, the woman died too. ²³ At the resurrection [d] whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?"

²⁴ Jesus replied, "Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God? ²⁵ When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. ²⁶ Now about the dead rising—have you not read in the Book of Moses, in the account of the burning bush, how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'?" ²⁷ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken!"

Introduction

Do you believe in life after death? If so, why?

And how important is this belief?

In other words, how does one live if there is or is no resurrection?

Context

Pharisees had a crack at Jesus

The question of taxes involved their opponents -

The Sadducees who were the governing sect that ran the temple
and liaised with the Romans.

Sadducees also were responsible for the collection of taxes.

Now it's the Sadducees turn.

They are going to return tit for tat.

The Sadducee's Riddle

The Sadducees are not only testing Jesus,

they are digging at the Pharisees.

They tell a hypothetical yarn about a woman and the laws of heredity
in order to mock the Pharisees and present how silly resurrection is.

The reason why Sadducees did not believe in resurrection were:

- A. It is not explicit in the Torah - a heresy
- B. It is a dangerous teaching and threat to their power
 - people who believe in heresy may live with reckless abandon
 - i.e. oppose the powers that be - martyrdom.

Jesus' Response

Jesus accuses them of:

- A. Being Ignorant of Scripture (They are the ones who are wrong)
 - B. Denying the Power of God (They are all about power aren't they?)
- He sees through their riddle to the heart of where they are coming from.
Ouch.

Marriage in Heaven

Jesus affirms resurrection.

Jesus states there will be no marriage in heaven.

And that they will be like the angels in heaven.

This has led to speculative theology:

People will be sexless, disembodied, not in marriage relationships, etc.

Once verse can be pushed further than is contextually allowed.

What was Marriage in Jesus' Time compared to ours?

People did not marry for affection/love.

It was a socio-economic transaction.

It was an act of power transition, not of affection.

Sex & Marriage were about procreation - socio-economic succession.

This woman was the property of the Husbands.

She was the key to all their economic fortunes.

In light of this, Jesus' reply indicates

the washing away of the present societal systems.

This woman would be free of socio-economic-cultural constraints.

In other words, the walls, restrictions and rules will be different.

We will relate differently, even as families.

Human interaction will be one of mutuality, one family under God.

How that looks like?

I dare not speculate too far but it is going to be good.

And the Comment about being like the Angels:

It is not about no gender nor about no physicality.

We are told that we will have bodies.

But then how like the angels?

They do not operate within the confines of human culture/society.

The live completely in the Kingdom of God with God.

Resurrection

Jesus, is very clear - We will be resurrected from the dead.

He uses the texts most respected by the Sadducees re. the patriarchs.

The promise of life to come.

Afterlife

So why does Resurrection matter?
Jesus does not only teach resurrection,

He demonstrates it.

And what ultimately is resurrection?
It is not merely life beyond death.
It is hope for the hopeless.

For those who are stuck.
In a world of difficulty, in a world of war and pain.
They put Jesus down but they didn't put him out.
We are the people of hope.

And we are to live in such a way that however bad it gets,
Even in face of death and darkness,
We will have courage to live and give life

because we know what it means to live in the resurrection.

We will be resurrected from the dead.

So what are you afraid of?
Rejection? Discomfort? Not being liked? Failure?
Death?
A person unafraid of death is dangerous!
The Sadducees knew it!

Are you going to live the resurrection life?

Children's Message:

Let's play a game.
Stand up.
When I touch your head, pretend you got knocked down.
but then I want you to get up again.

Let me teach you a Greek word.

anastasis
resurrection

What is it?

It means to get up again.
when someone knocks you down.
You get up again.

when death knocked Jesus down.
He got up again.

And so will you.
Nothing will keep you down.
There will be hard days in your life.
Days that may you feel sad and make you cry.
When you fall off your bike or someone hurts your feelings.
When you feel all alone.
Like you've been knocked down.

Death will come for all of us.
I'm going to look like this. (lie down)
But ANASTASIS, resurrection.

I'm going to get up again.

We will live again.

