

Ignorance of Scripture

Mark 12:18-27

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Introduction

The resurrection from the dead is one of the chief Christian doctrines. Some religions believe that a soul cease to exist after death—once you die, that is it. However, Christians believe in the resurrection because Scripture teaches life after death. When we die we will continue life for eternity, either heaven or hell. Jesus Himself teaches about the resurrection.

John 6:44 *No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.*

John 11:25 *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies."*

The Apostles also teach the reality of the resurrection:

1 Peter 1:3 *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*

Paul writes a lengthy passage about the resurrection in **1 Corinthians 15**. He states that since Christ is resurrected from the dead, we will also be resurrected because Jesus has broken the power of death. Along with the resurrection, the writers of the NT believe that after our death, we will be resurrected into a new body that is the same as Christ Jesus' resurrected body. Our belief rests in the hope that God keeps all His promises.

In Jesus' time, the Jews certainly believe in the resurrection. The Old Testament has much to say about the resurrection. Here are a few verses.

Psalms 16:9-11 *Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, 10 because You will not abandon me to the grave, nor will You let Your Holy One see decay. 11 You have made known to me the path of life; You will fill me with joy in Your presence, with eternal pleasures at Your right hand.*

Job 19:26 *And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God;*

Isaiah 26:19 *But your dead will live; their bodies will rise. You who dwell in the dust, wake up and shout for joy. Your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.*

Daniel 12:2 *And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

The majority of the Jews in Israel at the time of Jesus believe in the resurrection. The Pharisees believe in the resurrection. However, they will take this topic and run off in strange directions in endless debates. For instance,

- If risen from the dead, would the person be clothed or naked?
- If clothed, then would it be new clothes or the clothes they had on when they died?
- Characteristics post-resurrection—the Pharisees would debate on whether marriage continued on after resurrection and if there would be children/family relationships.

However, we meet a new group of men that question Jesus, Sadducees. Now it is their turn to discredit Jesus when the Pharisees fail to get Him in trouble.

Mark 12:18-27

18 Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him with a question.

- Sadducees—Jewish sect
 - Mostly priests (High Priests and other chief priests were in this sect)
 - Minority in Judea but majority among priests
 - Friendly to Rome
 - Beliefs
 - Narrow view of Scripture—only Torah
 - Reject other OT books and oral traditions
 - They reject the reality of the resurrection (once you die...that's it)
 - They deny the supernatural elements (do not believe in existence of angels)
- Acts 23:8** For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.
- Why? Torah does not “mention” the resurrection
 - Antagonistic to Pharisees
 - Pharisees would debate with them and try to convince them of the reality of resurrection, but fail at it (do such a terrible job of it)
 - Asked Jesus
 - Sole purpose of making Jesus look stupid with their 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 have children for his brother.

- Teacher—hypocrisy, their intent was to make Him look stupid
- Moses wrote for us--levirate law
 - Brother-in-law marrying the widow of brother

Deuteronomy 25:5-6 If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. **6** And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel.

- The concept
 - If brothers still in family (living together...meaning that the brothers are single)
 - If brother dies, leaving behind widow with no son, then
 - One of the single brothers has the responsibility of marrying the widow
 - The first son will take over the inheritance of the dead brother's
 - This was done to continue the family line
 - To keep the inheritance within the family

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 whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?"

- Absurd scenario
- This was probably one of the Pharisees' arguments

24 *Jesus replied, "Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?"*

- Error
 - Gk—*planao*—(English, planet)
 - Means to wander, lead astray (wandering body)
 - You are being led astray by your Biblical ignorance
- You do not know Scriptures
 - You do not care to understand what Scripture says

Note: Sadducees pride themselves with the knowledge of Moses' writings.

- You do not know the power of God
 - God's power revealed in Scripture
 - Made universe out of nothing by speaking
 - Gave life to man by breathing into him
 - God can certainly raise men from the dead

Note: This is an interesting point because a few weeks before this confrontation, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. They know what Jesus had done.

25 *When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.*

- What happens to those who rise from the dead (believers)?
 - They will live a life different from this present life
 - Reproduction and sexual desires and unions will cease to exist
- Like angels in heaven
 - Does not mean that we become angels

Note: Sadducees do not believe in angels as stated earlier. Jesus throws this in their face.

- Eternal, heavenly beings—nobody dies and nobody is being born
- No reason for marriages in heaven (it is only for this life)

26 *Now about the dead rising—have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account of the 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!"*

- God of the living

Exodus 3:6 *And He said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.*

- Jesus refers to the Torah to show them that the resurrection is surely in there
- God did not say "I was the God of Abraham"

- He identifies with them presently as if they are alive and still in the covenant relationship (even though they have been dead for more than 400 years)
- You are badly mistaken
 - They are fools because they overlook this vital truth
 - He devastated their argument
 - They fade away

Conclusion

The resurrection is a glorious truth made real by Jesus' resurrection from the grave. It is all by grace!