**He is the God of the Living**

Luke 20:27-40

Key Verse 38

“He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.”

**Introduction**

In his gospel, Luke had already made references to the resurrection of the dead, either directly or indirectly. Herod feared that Jesus was John the Baptist, raised from the dead (9:7-9). Jesus taught that one’s actions ought to be based on the assurance of one’s resurrection, accompanied by one’s reward for obedience in this life. “But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind,and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.” (14:13-14) Awareness is also the first step in recognizing the problem. Although the Sadducees asked Jesus a question using a very sad story, their question already revealed their problem. Jesus helped bring awareness to their unhealthy perspective. May the Lord help us not to ignore the power of perspective that leads to action. May the Lord help us to go to our Lord, Jesus Christ so that our earth bound view and desire may be transformed into His wholesome perspective.

1. Read verses 27-33. What did the Sadducees say about resurrection? (27) Describe the sad story they used to question Jesus regarding Moses’ law. (28-32, Deuteronomy 25:5) What question did they ask Jesus in conclusion to their story? (33)

1-1, Read verses 27-33.

Some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus with a question.**28** “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. **29** Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman and died childless. **30** The second **31** and then the third married her, and in the same way the seven died, leaving no children. **32** Finally, the woman died too. **33** Now then, at the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?”

1-2, What did the Sadducees say about resurrection? (27)

***Some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus with a question.***

* The **Sadducees** (sedûqîm) were one of the three main Jewish political and religious movements in the years between c.150 BCE and 70 CE. (Other significant movements were the Essenes and the Pharisees.)
* They Sadducees had a conservative outlook and accepted only the written Law of Moses.
* Their sect of Judaism drew their name from [Zadok](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zadok), the first [High Priest of ancient Israel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_Priest_of_Israel) to serve in the [First Temple](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Temple). (Priests, the "sons of Zadok", descendant of [Eleazar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleazar), son of [Aaron](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aaron)).

Ezekiel 44:5 reads,

“But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister unto me, and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord God”

* In any event, the name Zadok, being related to the root צָדַק ṣādaq (to be right, just)could be indicative of their aristocratic status in society.
* The religious responsibilities of the Sadducees included the maintenance of the Temple in Jerusalem.
* Their high social status was reinforced by their priestly responsibilities, as mandated in the [Torah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torah).
* The Priests were responsible for performing sacrifices at the Temple, the primary method of worship in Ancient Israel.
* This also included presiding over sacrifices on the three festivals of pilgrimage to Jerusalem.
* Their religious beliefs and social status were mutually reinforcing, as the Priesthood often represented the highest class in Judean society.
* The Sadducees rejected the [Oral Law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oral_Law) as proposed by the Pharisees. Rather, they saw the [Torah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torah) as the sole source of divine authority.
* The written law, in its depiction of the priesthood, corroborated the power and enforced the hegemony of the Sadducees in Judean society.
* The Sadducees believed that: There is no fate, God does not commit evil, Man has free will; “man has the free choice of good or evil”, The soul is not immortal; there is no afterlife, and there are no rewards or penalties after death.
* Most importantly and related with today’s passage, the Sadducees did not believe in the [resurrection of the dead](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resurrection_of_the_dead), (From Wikipedia)

1-3, Describe the sad story they used to question Jesus regarding Moses’ law. (28-32, Deuteronomy 25:5)

***“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. 29 Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman and died childless. 30 The second 31 and then the third married her, and in the same way the seven died, leaving no children. 32 Finally, the woman died too.***

***If brothers are living together and one of them dies without a son, his widow must not marry outside the family. Her husband’s brother shall take her and marry her and fulfill the duty of a brother-in-law to her. 6 The first son she bears shall carry on the name of the dead brother so that his name will not be blotted out from Israel. (Deuteronomy 25:5, 6)***

1-4, What question did they ask Jesus in conclusion to their story? (33)

***Now then, at the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?”***

* The Sadducees were again intellectual, well-educated, and the leaders of the day.
* However they didn’t believe in the resurrection, or in angels or spirits. They had a common-sense approach to life, believing in what they see.
* They were like pragmatists or capitalists. But living this way, with no spiritual life, had a serious effect on their way of thinking and philosophy of life.
* Through their fabricated story, they implied that she would become the most sorrowful woman on earth. What a tragic view it was!

2. Read verses 34-36. How different will our resurrected life be? (34, 35) Who are worthy of taking part in the age to come? What do the following words/expressions show about our resurrection: “like the angels,” “God’s children,” and “children of resurrection”?

2-1, Read verses 34-36.

Jesus replied, “The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. **35** But those who are considered worthy of taking part in the age to come and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, **36** and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God’s children, since they are children of the resurrection.

2-2, How different will our resurrected life be? (34, 35)

***Jesus replied, “The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. 35 But those who are considered worthy of taking part in the age to come and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage,***

* Jesus states that there are two ages or worlds. In the present age God has given marriage.
* God gave marriage so we would complete the task he has given us. As we live in this age in marriage, we grow in the knowledge and love of God.
* We learn sacrifice, service, respect and love. We are able to complete the task God has given us to be fruitful and increase in number.
* Jesus talks about another age, the glorious age of the resurrection. As Jesus taught, he will return someday as Christ and Lord.
* In that day, all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out (Jn 5:28). It will not be like this current age.
* There will no longer be a need for marriage, for we will be married to Jesus for good.
* Family relationships will still be known in life in the world beyond. The rich man Jesus described in the afterlife was aware of his family relationships ([Luke 16:27-28](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Luke+16:27-28&t1=en_nas)).
* The glory of heaven will be a relationship and connection with God that surpasses anything else, including present family relationships ([Revelation 21:22-23](https://www.studylight.org/desk/index.cgi?q1=Revelation+21:22-23&t1=en_nas)).
* If it seems that life in the resurrection that Jesus spoke of here does not include some of the pleasures of life we know on earth, it is only because the enjoyments and satisfactions of heaven far surpass what we know on earth.
* We can’t be completely certain of what life in glory beyond will be like, but we can know with certainty that no one will be disappointed

Revelation 22:1-5 reads,

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. **2** And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. **3** And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. **4** And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. **5** And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.”

* Most importantly, troubled relationships will be gone, for our sinful nature will be gone. We will love and be loved in the presence of God and our Lord Jesus.
* Jesus says in that age people will no longer die. We will have a glorious resurrection body that is imperishable.
* We will be free of the human limitations of our weak and deteriorating bodies and we will have a new resurrection body.
* The resurrection is not just a continuation of this life as the Sadducees thought. Rather, this life is the very preparation for the life to come.
* That is why with that right perspective and awareness we value our one and only life. We see it as our only chance on earth to prepare for the age to come.

2-3, Who are worthy of taking part in the age to come?

***But those who are considered worthy of taking part in the age to come and in the resurrection***

* The Sadducees also made other critical mistakes that all people would take part in the age of resurrection.
* But, not everyone will be allowed to participate, only those who are worthy. In fact, due to man's sins, there is no hope for resurrection.
* The wages of sin is death (Ro 6:23), and all have sinned (Ro 3:23). This is why death reigned from the time of Adam until the time of Jesus.
* However those who are considered worthy are God’s children.
* Jesus gave the right to become children of God through the completed work of the gospel.
* Jesus paid the penalty for our sin. God raised Jesus Christ from the dead.

John 1:12 reads,

“Yet to all who receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”

Romans 10:9 reads,

“If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

* Now we have a living hope in the kingdom of God. The destination of our lives will be to live forever with Christ and his people.

2-4, What do the following words/expressions show about our resurrection: “like the angels,” “God’s children,” and “children of resurrection”? (36)

***and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God’s children, since they are children of the resurrection.***

* There is a radical difference between our earthly body and resurrection body.
* The best way to think about our heavenly body is that we will be “like angels.”
* We can see a preview of this difference when Jesus first rose from the dead.



* People did not recognize Jesus after his resurrection. Mary Magdalene thought Jesus was the gardener and even asked him about finding the body of Jesus. (John 20:14-15) She did not recognize him until he spoke.
* The two disciples on the road to Emmaus did not recognize Jesus until the breaking of the bread (Luke 24:13-35).
* Not only did Jesus look different after his resurrection but he could pass through walls and doors.
* On Easter Sunday evening the disciples were gathered together with the doors closed but Jesus came among them (John 20:19).
* Yet it is clear that Jesus did have a body; he needed to eat (Luke 24:41-42; Acts 10:41), and he showed them the wounds in his hands and feet (Luke 24:39).
* Jesus’ body after the resurrection was transformed as Jesus was in the mount of transfiguration.

Luke 9:29 reads,

“As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning.”



* An angel was described as the symbol of beauty.
* Jesus said that at the resurrection people neither marry nor will be given in marriage.
* But they will be like the angels in Heaven.
* In other words, their beauty, joy, and glory are boundless thanks to Jesus.
* They won’t know worry, anxiety, stress, or conflict.
* They will only think of how to rule the cities with Jesus Christ.
* We will be “little Jesus,” for Jesus is our prototype just as a proceeding model of a chain restaurant will be followed by more of the same in various locations.

3. Read verses 37-40. Why did Moses call the Lord, “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”? (37) What did Jesus conclude about God and His children? (38) How did the people respond? (39, 40)

3-1, Read verses 37-40.

But in the account of the burning bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+20#fen-NIV-25817b)] **38** He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.”

**39** Some of the teachers of the law responded, “Well said, teacher!” **40** And no one dared to ask him any more questions.

3-2, Why did Moses call the Lord, “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”? (37)

***But in the account of the burning bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’***

* Jesus quotes from Exodus 3:6.

“Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.”

* Today’s passage shows that Moses called the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’
* It seems that Moses personally accepted who God is as the living and holy God, especially when he had lost his track due to wilderness training.
* These patriarchs had all died hundreds of years before Moses was born. But God was pleased to introduce himself as the present God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
* It could be that God was considered to those who are dead, as God of the dead, considering what had happened to Moses.
* But at that moment He was speaking to Moses in person. He is the God of the living.
* Our God is the God of the living. He is the living God, who called Abraham in his generation.
* He is the living God who heard Isaac’s prayer in his generation.
* Jesus demonstrated the reality of the resurrection using only the Torah; the five books of Moses, which were the only books the Sadducees accepted as authoritative writings.
* If Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did not live on in resurrection, then God could not say that He is the God of Abraham. Instead, he would have said, I ***was*** the God of Abraham.
* This tells us that those departed from this life in the Lord, live.
* They live personally - they are still individuals in the life to come.
* They are mentioned by their names - they are known and not anonymous.
* He is the Lord who worked with Moses to deliver His people. Moses trembled before the living God. He knew God is the author of all life and the Creator.
* He is holy, perfect, powerful and wonderful. In contrast, I am totally wicked, flawed, weak and mundane.
* Yet Our Almighty Creator God sent his one and only Son that we might know him. Through Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, God proved that he loves sinful mankind.
* That is not all. God raised Jesus from the dead, and opened a way to him for all who believe. He has sent his Holy Spirit as our friend, comforter, and guide.
* As he was the living God of the patriarchs, he is our living God. He carries out his own work in our lives.
* He is orchestrating our history and our lives for his glorious purpose.

3-3, What did Jesus conclude about God and His children? (38)

***38 He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.”***

* Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all those who have lived and gone by faith before us are alive with God.
* Since God sees us as our living shepherd, we can live in hope. We can give ourselves fully to the work of the Lord, growing in his image and relationship with him and his people.
* While the world and the clever schemes of Satan deceive and attempt to suppress the truth, our living God will not be contained.
* Praise and thanks be to God in whom we have hope through the resurrection!

Acts 17:28 reads,

“For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'”

3-4, How did the people respond? (39, 40)

***Some of the teachers of the law responded, “Well said, teacher!” 40 And no one dared to ask him any more questions.***

**Conclusion**

People in this world are all sorrowful because this world is temporal. Whatever people have achieved and acquired are bound to perish. But the kingdom of God is forever for our God is the guarantor. Our God is the God of eternity. The Sadducees were all earthbound and refused to know the spiritual reality. They were the most miserable people for they were preoccupied with death. People nowadays are eager to see who will be the president of the United States of America. But our disappointment will be inevitable. Only our living God is more than able to lead us to glorious resurrection hope without fail. Amen.

**One word: The God of Living**