

The resurrection and marriage

[Luke 20:27-38](#)

A little bit of advance warning ... we are going to be jumping around a bit with the readings over the next few weeks. Mindful that we have been walking with Jesus on His journey to Jerusalem (the cross), we have skipped over several things, to be suddenly plunged into a fairly "heavy" reading. That's just part of lectionary tradition in the last few Sundays of the (man-made) church year, to deal with last times, which is a focus of this reading.

We get the impression that the incidents between the Zacchaeus story at the beginning of chapter 19 and this incident starting at Luke 20:27, probably all took place in the space of less than a week.

By the way some of the big things skipped over between those readings include:

- Parable of the talents - (we do get to come back to that one).
- Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday).
- Jesus' destruction of the temple.

In our reading for this week, Jesus is set to take on a new group of opponents - the Sadducees (not previously mentioned in Luke's Gospel.)

The **Sadducees** were a powerful group of people in Jewish Society, but very conservative in their religious views (or perhaps old-fashioned is a better term). They were not really part of main-stream Jewish religion. For them, their world of religious belief was dictated to, purely by the Torah - the first five books of the Old Testament. Unless a doctrinal point could be supported by the law of Moses and those five books, it had no basis. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection because there is no basis for it in the Torah.

It is interesting that the **Pharisees** who are perhaps taking a breather and recovering from being repeatedly put in their place by Jesus, are smugly sitting in the wings here, planning their next move, while they enjoy observing Jesus take apart these "new" opponents (see v 39 that follows.)

So what's the point here? Well it seems to me that while this passage clearly has a *last days* flavour, it is also about setting the Sadducees straight. With regard to end times, the passage is significant because Jesus is speaking about life after death without using a parable, so we are given a glimpse here of what we are in for. The eye-opening thing perhaps, is that we are talking about a new age, way beyond average human comprehension. Jesus clearly gives us a clue that heaven will be nothing like life as we know it here on earth.

For me, I'm happy to let this little battle with the Pharisees and Sadducees slide on through to the keeper ... and rather take some reassurance in a couple of key phrases:

1. ... *'those who are considered worth of taking part in that age'* (v 35 ... that's us - we can feel very confident about that as we view things from the opposite side of the cross.)
2. *'He is not the God of the dead but of the living ...'* (v38)

As we try to put this latest episode into some sort of perspective, can we imagine what emotional turmoil Jesus must have been going through in this sequence of events over the past week (also mindful of what lies ahead for Him in the next few days)?

For us today and for our schools? Not a bad foundation on whom to build our daily life ... a living God who walks beside us, provides our source of strength, wisdom and courage to engage with the "Pharisees" and "Sadducees" in our 21st century communities!

Have a good week!

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