

KINGDOM LIFE AND KINGDOM LORD

LUKE 20:27-47

REV. CHARLES R. BIGGS

Introduction

In our sermon last week we learned that Jesus is the authoritative Christ sent from God to save all who will believe. Jesus told the parable of the wicked tenants indicting and judging the leaders of Israel for failing correctly to teach and shepherd Israel. Jesus taught in the parable that these teachers will be destroyed for their lack of submission to God and for their insubordination to His authority in Christ and for their murderous intentions to kill the beloved son (20:9-18).

In fact, what was written about the stone that the builders rejecting becoming the capstone from Psalm 119:22 would be fulfilled in the teachers of Israel's rejection and murder of the Christ. Christ's humiliation and murder would be the cornerstone to a new temple made up of Jews and Gentile believers (a heavenly one "in Christ", Ephesians 2:17-23), and Christ's resurrection life would make Israel's vineyard fruitful in Him by His grace (Isaiah 5:1-7; 27:1ff; John 15:1-7).

Although the teachers of Israel are seeking to trap Jesus in his words and maliciously seeking to lay hands on him to kill him, nevertheless, he continues to teach and preach the Gospel of the Kingdom (20:1, 26).

Does Jesus have the authority to interpret rightly the Old Covenant Scriptures? In our passage from Dr. Luke's gospel today, Jesus Christ is revealed as the authoritative interpreter of the Old Covenant Scriptures. Our passage begins with Jesus answering a question concerning the resurrection that was put to him by the Sadducees.

The Sadducees who were intent in asking Jesus this question on the resurrection sought to undermine Jesus' authority and destroy his credibility with the people as an interpreter of Moses.

Yet Jesus has his own interpretive exam for them as well: *How can David's Son also be David's Lord?* He asks them (20:41-44). The passage continues to define Jesus' God-given authority from God (see last sermon on Luke 20:1-26), but more specifically and particularly with regard to Jesus' ability and right to authoritatively *interpret Moses and the Old Covenant Scriptures* (cf. Luke 24:25ff; 44-48).

The Sadducees ask Jesus a question concerning the resurrection in which they do not believe (vv. 27-40).

This is the first reference to the Sadducees in Dr. Luke's Gospel. These men were aristocratic leaders who lived in Jerusalem and exercised their influence over the people

there; they also were among the members of the Jewish Sanhedrin (for more on the Sanhedrin see last sermon on Luke 20:1-26). The Sadducees were more specifically priestly and lay aristocrats who revered only *Torah* or the Five Books of Moses and rejected the oral tradition of the Pharisees.

Professor Morris wrote that the Sadducees were the conservative, aristocratic, high-priestly party, worldly-minded and very ready to cooperate with the Romans, which, of course, enabled them to maintain their privileged position (*Luke*, pg. 316; some have compared them to bishops, barons and rulers of the Medieval period). The Jewish historian Josephus described Sadducees as “well-to-do”, “men of the highest esteem” and “more heartless than any other of the Jews” (*Antiquities*, 13.10, 18.1, 4, 17).

Dr. Luke characterizes the Sadducees as those who do not believe in the resurrection (v. 27- “...*Those who deny that there is a resurrection*”). The Sadducees ask our Lord an “in house” debate question between Israel’s teachers (Jesus is still teaching and preaching the gospel in the temple in Jerusalem, 20:1).

While the Pharisees and scribes believed in the resurrection, the Sadducees denied it (v. 27; cf. Acts 4:1-2; 23:6-8). This “problem question” (or “pseudo problem”- Bock) that the Sadducees ask Jesus might be compared to a question that is presented to modern day believers about the existence of God with a well-thought out and elaborate predicament of reality that seems to discount any belief in God (or whatever doctrine of truth is being undermined). This question here could be understood as an example of unbelieving *rationalism*. The second question the Sadducees could have asked Jesus was whether God could create a rock so big he could not lift it himself! ☺

We should understand the background of the Sadducees question as an opportunity they are seeking to discredit and destroy Jesus’ interpretation of Moses (v. 28- “...*Teacher, Moses wrote for us...*” Apparently they had heard Jesus speak of his own resurrection from the dead and Jesus’ resurrection theology was at the heart of the Gospel of the Kingdom message *because Jesus’ Kingdom was eternal!* The Sadducees may not be unified with the Pharisees and scribes theologically, but they do indeed unite in their pursuit of and opposition to Jesus Christ.

The starting point of the Sadducees question comes from Moses’ instructions to Israel concerning levirate marriage in Deuteronomy 25:5-10. The implication here is not only *How will you interpret Moses?* But also on perhaps a deeper level *Will you reveal yourself as one who undermines or disagrees with Moses, the Great Prophet of Israel?*

^{ESV} Deuteronomy 25:5-10: "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. ⁷ And if the man does not wish to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate to the elders and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to perpetuate his brother's name in Israel; he will not perform the duty of a husband's brother to me.'⁸ Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him, and if he persists, saying, 'I do not wish to take her,'⁹ then his brother's wife shall go up to him in the presence of the elders and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face. And she shall

answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who does not build up his brother's house.'¹⁰ And the name of his house' shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal pulled off.'

“Levirate” comes from the Latin term *levir* which means “husband’s brother” or “brother-in-law”. The purpose of Moses’ instructions on the levirate marriage in Deuteronomy 25 was so that the deceased husband’s name might live on through the children his wife and brother would conceive (Deut. 25:6); this would give the husband’s name an “afterlife” (Beale and Carson, pg. 366; also Green, pg. 719).

We should also consider the writings of Moses in Genesis 38:8 which was considered in rabbinical interpretation of Deuteronomy 25 during Jesus’ time:

ESV Genesis 38:8 Then Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother."

ESV Mark 12:19 "Teacher, Moses wrote for us that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife, but leaves no child, the man' must take the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.

In biblical culture (and also more broadly in the ancient Near East where this kind of marriage was also practiced), after the death of the husband, the widow’s firstborn son from the dead husband’s brother would be considered the firstborn son of the dead husband essentially, and his name would live on even though he was dead. This law as designed to perpetuate the name of a man who died childless (Bock, Vol. II, pg. 1619; Deut. 25:5; cf. Ruth 4:1-12). However, by the time of Jesus, this practice was not as common, and so this question by the Sadducees is to be understood as a mere hypothetical “in-house” academic debate question – the Sadducees disagree with the Pharisees and scribes on the truth of the resurrection.

The Sadducees are testing Jesus’ authority specifically in how he interprets Moses and the Old Covenant. The question is concerned with essentially: *Will Jesus interpret Moses and the prophets according to the other “teacher-rabbis” and the accepted interpretation of the day (like the Pharisees and the scribes), or will he lose credibility because of his inability rightly to interpret Scripture.*

The question that the Sadducees ask Jesus was probably one that they had debated with the Pharisees and scribes and in their estimation had not gotten a good and reasonable answer to it- -and therefore were confident that there could be no resurrection (that is why they were “sad you see”?! I was once taught that to memorize who the Sadducees were; they were called Sadducees because they denied the resurrection and were “sad you see”!).

Their question is also a trick question because the Sadducees believe that if Jesus accepts the interpretation of the “levirate marriage” then that would undermine the fact of the resurrection that the Pharisees taught (and their interpretation of Moses).

If Jesus believed in the “levirate marriage” of Moses and there truly was an afterlife and resurrection, that would seem to make for a great mess in familial relationships in the age

to come: “...*Whose wife will the woman be?*” - v. 33). Because the Sadducees focused only on the *Torah* or *Five Books of Moses*, they think that the teaching on the resurrection presents problems for the realization of this Mosaic Law: “*For the seven had her as wife*” –v. 33). No children have been produced through seven different spouses (v. 30).

The Sadducees interpreted this Mosaic legislation as being inconsistent with an afterlife or a resurrection from the dead. How can this woman who has had seven different spouses remain monogamous in the resurrection? How can there be such a thing as a resurrection *if these kinds of situations could occur by being obedient to the Law of Moses?* How can Moses teach about a levirate marriage and also teach a resurrection? *This seems ridiculous to us!* The Sadducees are implicitly saying.

This is why Jesus will use Moses’ teaching in Exodus to answer them and to prove by his authoritative interpretation of the Old Covenant that there is indeed a resurrection from the dead (more on this later...). Jesus is teaching the Sadducees (and we today) that the infallible rule of interpreting the Holy Scriptures is that ***Scripture interprets scripture!*** Even if an interpreter of God’s Holy Word comes to a particular conclusion from a portion of scripture that seems to undermine a doctrine, she should seek to interpret that scripture in light of the larger context of God’s revelation.

Jesus contrasts in his authoritative answer and interpretation of the Scriptures the fact that God’s revealed will for his people in ***this age*** (v. 34- αἰῶνος τούτου) should not necessarily be compared with the social conditions for understanding ***that age*** (or “age to come”, v. 35- αἰῶνος ἐκείνου).

Jesus teaches that in our interpretation of the Scriptures, and especially truths relating to eschatological matters (which is about everything!) we must take into consideration the two ages, or *two aeons* that are revealed in Scripture. There are two different ages, or two different aeons that have ***some continuity***, but drastic and ***eternal discontinuity*** must also be recognized! The false presumption of the Sadducees is that the resurrection life that they have heard others in Judaism teach from the Old Testament is ***the same kind of life as the present.***

These are two different ages and what God has provided in marriage and for the continuation of the family name is not the same reality that will be experienced in the ***“regeneration of all things”*** or the new creation. We should remember that the distinction between this age and the age to come (cf. Matt. 12:32; 1 Cor. 2:6; Eph. 1:21ff) is the distinction between this age characterized by sin and misery and the age to come characterized by a new creation where God dwells with his people, where sin, suffering, misery and temptation are absent. The Apostle Paul refers to the two ages in his prayer for the Christians to realize God’s resurrection power found in Christ at Ephesus in Ephesians 1:

...that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ ***far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.*** ²² ***And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church...***

So Christ teaches that there is indeed the provision of God for “levirate marriage” for the sons of this age *as Moses taught*, but this does not undermine the fact that the sons of the resurrection who are deemed worthy by God (v. 35) will not experience the resurrection from the dead and a blissful eternal afterlife in the presence of God. In fact, marriage and life will not be experienced in the same way (v. 36). “*Because [the sons of the resurrection] cannot die anymore*” (v. 36) there will be no need of food for sustenance or procreation to continue the family name!

Marriage is an institution for this present age that exists for the glory of God, the enjoyment of sons (and daughters) of this age, and for procreation of the human race because of the reality of death in this age. But in the age to come (“that age”) death “cannot” (v. 36) touch the lives of the people because resurrection life is found in union with Jesus Christ for eternity!

Rejoice! Sons of the resurrection cannot die anymore!

I am reminded of the Apostle Paul’s glorious words:

ESV 1 Corinthians 15:53-57: For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” ⁵⁵ “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is no dilemma concerning the “levirate marriage” possibly causing a widow eternally to have many husbands and to be an *eternal polygamist!!* Matthew records in his gospel more of what Jesus said to the Sadducees in response to their question: The Sadducees were wrong about the resurrection because although they interpreted the scriptures, they did not truly know and understand them; nor did they know (believe!) the resurrection power of God (found especially in His revelation to mankind in Jesus Christ):

ESV Matthew 22:29 But Jesus answered them, “You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God.

We should note here that Jesus authoritatively teaches the truth of Scripture, the true meaning of Scripture as the Son of Man and Son of God, and he teaches that in the age to come or new creation life and the continuation of life will not be by procreation, but will be a life that is granted to them in a new existence that is similar to the angels in heaven (v. 36; also in the apocryphal book of *1 Enoch* 104:6 there was revealed a belief in the resurrection state being like the angelic state: “For you shall become companions of the host of heaven...”).

The reason Jesus uses an example of the angels here is that the Sadducees not only denied a resurrection from the dead but also denied angels (Acts 23:8). Jesus does not say that *we will be angels*, but like them are equal to them (v. 36)! What are the angels like? They

live eternally praising and worshipping God, never dying and without threat of death or corruption; they are glorious creatures who cannot experience death, pain, suffering, temptation or corruption- -and we who believe in Jesus *will be like them, or equal to them.*

The family name or person will not merely “live on” through the widow and the husband’s brother in the way that it is done in this present age, but the person will live on by virtue of the eternal life of God given in the resurrection *like the angels.* But marriage is characteristic of ***this age - - not the age to come.*** The age to come or new creation is a different kind of life found in God’s gift of eternal life, and life takes on a new order where marriage is not needed. Relationships in this age and relationships in the age to come will be different because of a resurrection-transformation change for those who believe; as the Apostle Paul taught:

ESV 1 Corinthians 15:51-52: Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

We should notice here that there is a division between two types of people that Jesus makes: “*Those who are considered worthy*” (v. 35) and implicitly those who are not worthy of resurrection life. As there are two ages, so there are two kinds of people in this world: ***All mankind belongs to this present age, but not all of mankind is worthy to belong to the age to come.*** One type of person’s orientation is just to this present age and is defined biblically as “worldly” whereas another type person’s orientation is to Christ and His Eternal Kingdom. How is one considered worthy of eternal life in God’s presence in the age to come?

The Jews of Jesus’ time who did believe in the resurrection such as the Pharisees and scribes tended to think that they were worthy of the resurrection by virtue of them being descended ethnically from Abraham (and being part of the covenant, and worshipping in the temple, etc; see Phil. 3:1-7). Jesus is saying that ***not all will be resurrected as sons*** (or children of God) as many Jews thought in Israel at Jesus’ time (*even if they do believe in the resurrection this does not mean that they will take part in it!*).

Belief in the Son of God- -belief that ***He is the Resurrection and the Life***- -only he who comes to the Son by faith, though he may die in this present age, will live again (whether one is a Jew or a Gentile)!

One is considered worthy not because of worthiness in one’s self, or because one is a Jew (cf. Phil. 3:3-14), but one is made “worthy” because of faith and ***being made worthy, that is, accounted worthy in Jesus Christ!***

ESV John 3:16 "For God so loved the world,¹ that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

ESV John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live...

Life in “that age” will be much different than the present age (contrary to the eschatological expectations of many in Israel at that time). The Sadducees question of predicament is shown by Jesus to be faulty because of their presuppositions and presumptions of thinking that the life to come is the same as the present life.

In verse 37, Jesus explains that Moses also taught in the Book of Exodus that the dead are raised, particularly in “the passage about the bush” (this was the way to refer to what we know as Exodus 3-4 before chapters and verses were added to Scripture). Now some folks plea for the interpreters of Scripture to look for the plain meaning of a text, but interpretation can be more complicated than that (there are also implicit teachings that God reveals as we compare a portion of scripture with the larger teaching and context found throughout the Bible).

Here we see an example in Jesus’ interpretation that there is sometimes NOT a plain meaning- -that is, on the surface and at first glance in a passage (and thus another reason why we must compare scripture with scripture as we interpret; particularly we must compare the unclear passages with the clearer ones).

The plain meaning of Exodus chapters 3-4 does not necessarily upon first glance teach a clear presentation of the resurrection from the dead – *until Jesus interprets it and shows how the resurrection is part of this revelation from God*. Yet Jesus says that this is what the passage *means* when he quotes Exodus 3:6 in Luke 20:37:

ESV 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. (See also Exodus 3:15, 16; 4:5; 1 Kings 18:36; 1 Chronicles 29:18).

Jesus authoritatively interprets Moses for the Sadducees and gives scriptural evidence for the truth of the resurrection from Exodus chapters 3-4. We should be reminded that the Old Testament clearly teaches a resurrection of the righteous, and so Jesus could have chosen any of these texts such as Job 19:25ff or Daniel 12:1-2:

The Old Covenant Scripture clearly teach the resurrection of the dead:

ESV Daniel 12:2-3: 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.³ And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above;¹ and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

ESV Job 19:25-27: For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth.^{1 26} And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in¹ my flesh I shall see God,²⁷ whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!

ESV Isaiah 26:19 Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a dew of light, and the earth will give birth to the dead.

Jesus chose a passage from the *Torah* to support belief in the resurrection because this was the only book (or *Five Books of Moses*) that the Sadducees believed was Holy Scripture.

In Judaism of Jesus' time, Exodus 3:6 which says "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob..." was included in the main prayer of Jews and recited three times daily and constituted the central prayer of the synagogue service (Beale and Carson, pg. 369). This prayer was linked to a second benediction that began with the words "Lord, thou art almighty forever, who makest the dead alive." Thus the main prayer of Judaism understood that the names of the three patriarchs should be linked with the hope of the resurrection of the dead.

God is the God of the Living

Exodus 3 or "the passage about the bush (v. 37) teaches the resurrection of the dead. Why? Jesus says authoritatively that it is because God is the God of the living (v. 38) and in the passage where YHWH reveals himself covenantally to Moses and to all his people who will believe, the promise is that all those who believe like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (the patriarchs who believed the covenantal promises of God) will experience life with God.

Eternal life with God was included in the covenant because God's summary covenant promise was that those who believe would be God's people and he would be there God and eternally dwell with them (we should also be reminded that Jesus taught that Abraham was not dead but living in his story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:22- "Abraham's side" speaking of the afterlife).

We are taught in the New Testament Scriptures that Abraham in his lifetime was constantly looking for and persistently seeking the eternal "things above" that were to be revealed in the age to come! Abraham (like Moses!) hoped in the resurrection:

ESV Hebrews 11:10, 16-19 For he [Abraham] was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God....

¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city. ¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, ¹⁸ of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named." ¹⁹ He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.

Jesus is teaching authoritative from the Scriptures written by Moses that those God covenantally commits himself to even though they are dead to this age or this world, are always alive to God by virtue of the covenant relationship of life that God has granted them. Jesus can speak of the patriarchs who are truly dead to this age and this world, but who are still alive to God because they trusted and believed his covenant promises to them! Remember Jesus' words from John 8?

ESV John 8:51 Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death. ^{ESV} John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.

God not only has a covenant commitment to the believing patriarchs, but in this promise it is realized that a covenant of life and grace with God is promised and granted to all who believe God's covenant promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and ultimately

realized in Jesus Christ (cf. John 8:51ff; Gal. 3:16, 26-29). This is part of our inheritance as believers because of Christ our Lord!

We can surmise from this teaching that although men who believe in God's covenant promises die, yet they live with God and have a future in "that age" (v. 36) of being like the angels and never dying as part of the New Creation that God has inaugurated in Jesus Christ (cf. Isaiah 65-66).

Jesus reveals the clear hope of all who believe! For those who believe God's promises in Jesus Christ already has life now, but will never die in their relationship to God and will one day be physically and bodily resurrected.

ESV John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live..."

God has sworn covenantally by himself (Heb. 6:16ff) that he will grant eternal life to all who believe his covenant promises that are realized in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ. God is the God who has life in Himself and in Christ we find this life of God that makes us immortal by faith:

ESV Acts 17:28 for "In him we live and move and have our being";¹ as even some of your own poets have said, "For we are indeed his offspring."²

ESV Romans 11:36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

The scribes who have been listening, commend Jesus for his answer to the Sadducees (v. 39). As we learned earlier, the scribes and the Pharisees did indeed believe in a resurrection from the dead taught in the Old Covenant Scriptures. Another group of Israel's respected teachers, the Sadducees, could not trap or confound the LORD's wisdom incarnate in Jesus Christ! Once again attempts to undermine Jesus' authority have failed!

In Jesus' answer here we find hope for all who believe. We all realize that we are one day going to die and then face judgment as Hebrews 9:24-28 teaches. Yet in Jesus Christ, who reveals himself here not only as Wisdom Incarnate but the Life of God incarnate (John 1:1-4), we who believe find hope not in this age, but in the age to come where we shall live with God eternally.

While we await Jesus' return, we walk by faith, looking to Christ for grace and strength, until the day we meet our Lord face to face and shall be changed, and shall never die! What great hope that Jesus gives to all who believe!

Jesus not only ably and authoritatively interprets Moses rightly, but authoritatively from God gives information of the afterlife and the resurrection of the sons of God who believe! This is knowledge that only God could know and Jesus reveals it to us today in this passage.

The Sadducees might be compared to modern materialistic atheists who deny the spiritual realm because of their supposed reason. The Sadducees in their denial of the resurrection and of angels were actually denying themselves any hope; when eternal hope is denied all you have to live for is the present “here and now”. When one dies, they die with no hope (1 Thess. 4:13ff).

We must understand that the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is a historical and biblical reality. Those who believe in Christ, although their lives are full of pains, disappointments, bodily and social and financial problems, they will live again, ***and this present age will give way to the eternal “that age” or age to come in the new creation!*** What glorious hope!

But for those who die without this hope, there is only the judgment of God. All of their ingenuity in denying the existence of God, the clear revelation of Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection, will come to hopeless end. As the rich man learned when he found that there were consequences for the way he selfishly lived his life, Abraham who believed in God’s promises had found hope, while he suffered in torment and misery. When he asked Abraham who was in eternal bliss in God’s presence to make this known to his brothers still living so that they might avoid hell, Abraham responded:

ESV Luke 16:29 But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’

Do you hope in the resurrection of the sons of God? Do you believe Abraham, as well as Moses and the prophets who witness to this reality? Do you believe Jesus Christ who confirmed the teaching of Moses and rose from the dead as a first fruit of all who believe?

Jesus asks the Scribes a question to reveal himself as David’s Messianic Son and Messianic Lord (vv. 41-44)

In response to the Sadducees’ question that sought to test Jesus on his authority in interpretation, Jesus now gives them (and the scribes!) an interpretation question (this also includes the scribes who we find at the end of the passage are present as well- -this probably was happening before large crowds and these were the two most interested groups as far as Israel’s leadership was concerned).

He asks them to interpret the Messianic Psalm 110 (verse 1); (The teachers didn’t dare ask Jesus another question after his authoritative interpretation- -it was Jesus’ turn to quiz the teachers!- v. 40!!). Jesus asks them:

“How can they say that the Messiah-Christ is David’s son when Psalm 110 has David calling the Christ ‘Lord’. How can the Christ be David’s Son and Lord? –vv. 41-44

Rather than asking them a question from Moses, Jesus chooses an interpretive question from the Psalms. We should keep in mind Jesus’ words at the end of Dr. Luke’s Gospel:

ESV Luke 24:27, 44: And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.... "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

In Jesus' time, Psalm 110 was classified by Israel as a 'Royal Psalm' which means that it was what we call a 'Messianic Psalm' or a psalm that specifically taught about the Messiah-Christ. In the Psalm David is revealed a king who rules as vice-gerent (or vice-regent) over Israel on behalf of God.

After David's death this Psalm's fulfillment was highly anticipated because it was believed the Messiah would fulfill this "Royal Psalm" and make Israel militarily glorious and victorious militarily over all her enemies when the Lord placed all of his enemies under this king's feet.

During Jesus' time the Jews regarded the Messiah-Christ (from this Psalm) to be the son of David (as is clearly taught in 2 Samuel 7:14-17; 23:1-7; Psalm 89:29-37; Isa. 9:6-7; 11:1-10; Jeremiah 23:5-8; Dan. 9:25; Micah 5:2). But Psalm 110:1 states that Messiah-Christ is to be the Lord of David. Jesus' quotation in Luke 20:42 says:

"The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool."

When Jesus asks the Sadducees and scribes "How is he his son" in verse 44, *Jesus is not undermining the correct Jewish understanding that Christ will be David's son.* He is indeed giving more of an authoritative interpretation and understanding of the passage. The Messiah-Christ will not *only be David's Son, but also with authority, he will be greater than David, that is, he will be David's Lord.* In patriarchal biblical culture a son was "under" the father, not Lord "over the father- -so how can David call his son "Lord"?

It is interesting to note that Psalm 110 is quoted more times in the New Testament (some bible scholars have found as many as thirty-three NT quotations and allusions to the psalm!). When Psalm 110 is quoted in the New Testament, it is declared and refers to being fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ's exaltation-vindication in his resurrection, ascension to God's right hand and glory enthronement as Eternal King of kings and Lord of lords on David's Eternal Throne in heaven (see specifically Acts 2:25-36)

Jesus here encourages the teachers of Israel to ponder and reflect upon this Messianic Psalm. Jesus does not specifically say he fulfills the Psalm at this point in his revelation of himself, although he will later at the time of his death:

ESV Luke 22:69 But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God."

Jesus wants the people of Israel to understand that he is not only David's son (one who is less important than David) but he is also David's Lord with authority (one greater than David!) who they should listen to, and humbly submit to as his disciples. Again, Jesus asserts his Kingdom authority as Messiah-Christ before the teachers of Israel.

In the larger context, it is to be understood that to bow to Jesus as not only David's son (Messiah) but David's Lord (Messiah King), one will experience all of the benefits of salvation and be considered worthy of eternal life in the presence of the living God.

The hope of the resurrection is for those who not merely recognize Jesus to be David's son, that is a Jewish teacher who descends from David genealogically. The hope of the resurrection is to believe that Jesus is the very Son of God, David's Lord- -and the only hope of mankind! As God's King who has come to set up His Kingdom and to make his will known, Jesus Christ is One greater than David, and one who sits eternally as King of kings and Lord of lords at God's right hand.

As Jesus has revealed himself as one greater than Moses, now he reveals himself as one greater than David. In fact, as much as Israel respected the memory of David and as a great a king as he was, David prophetically in the Psalms submitted to Christ the King as Lord- -not only David's son, but also David's Lord! As was fully revealed about Jesus Christ after his resurrection and ascension by the Apostle Peter:

ESV Acts 2:30-36: Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne,³¹ he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.³² This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses.³³ Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.³⁴ For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, "' The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand,³⁵ until I make your enemies your footstool.'³⁶ Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Is there a resurrection from the dead? Yes! Abraham, Moses and David witnessed to it! The three most revered and honored men of the Old Covenant economy witnessed to the resurrection from the dead and experienced life in God themselves by faith in the coming Christ!

Who is the authoritative interpreter of the Old Covenant Scriptures? Who has the right to be the True Rabbi-Teacher of Israel? Who is the one who is faithful to God's revelation to Abraham, Moses and David? The Lord Jesus Christ who is Abraham's seed, the One greater than Moses, David's Son and David's Lord, that's who!

Is this resurrection your hope? Is your hope in Jesus Christ? If you believe in Jesus Christ you are already now part of the resurrection of the just and worthy because of the righteousness of Jesus Christ and your union with his life (Romans 6:4-5, 11-13; Eph. 2:6). The Apostle Paul says that believers have already been raised up with Jesus Christ:

ESV Colossians 3:1-4: If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.⁴ When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

People of God: As Christians, we live between two ages: this age and the age to come. This age is characterized by sin, misery and temptation- -but the age to come is characterized by eternal bliss and happiness in the presence of the Lord. This age is characterized by suffering, bodily pain, and death, but that age is characterized by eternal Kingdom life in God and everlasting hope because of Jesus Christ- -the glorification of our bodies where there will be no hoary hairs threatening to cover our heads (or no hairs at all!).

Even now if you have been raised with Christ (that is experienced resurrection because of Christ), you are seated with Christ in the heavenly places. Your life is hidden with Christ in God and when Christ who is your very life appears, you too will appear with him in resurrection glory- -this is the hope of all who believe in David's son and David's Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ!

^{ESV} John 5:20-21, 24-29: For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. ²¹ For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will....²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. ²⁵ "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. ²⁶ For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. ²⁷ And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. ²⁸ Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice²⁹ and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

Praise be to the resurrected-ascended Christ who rules and reigns on David's eternal throne at God's right hand!

CRB

www.aplacefortruth.org

Bibliography- For Further Reading

Beale, G. K. and D. A. Carson. Editors: *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. Baker, 2007.

Bock, Darrell L. *Luke: Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, Volumes 1-2, Baker, 1994.

Bromiley, G. Editor: *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE)*, Volumes 1-4, Eerdmans, 1982.

Geldenuys, Norval. *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke (New International Commentary on the New Testament, NICNT)*, Eerdmans, 1952.

Green, Joel B. *The Gospel of Luke (NICNT)*, Eerdmans, 1997.

Green, McKnight, and Marshall. Editors: *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*. IVP, 1992.

Hughes, R. Kent. *Luke, Volumes I-II (Preaching the Word Series)*, Crossway, 1998.

Marshall, I. Howard. *The Gospel of Luke (The New International Greek Testament Commentary)*, Eerdmans, 1978.

Morris, Leon. *Luke: The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, IVP Academic, 1988.

Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman. Editors: *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, IVP, 1998.

CRB

Scripture Lesson

Exodus 3:6, 11-15: 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...But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?"¹² He said, "But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain."¹³ Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?"¹⁴ God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM."¹ And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"¹⁵ God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'The LORD,¹ the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.

^{ESV} **Deuteronomy 25:5-10:** "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. ⁷ And if the man does not wish to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate to the elders and say, 'My husband's brother refuses to perpetuate his brother's name in Israel; he will not perform the duty of a husband's brother to me.' ⁸ Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him, and if he persists, saying, 'I do not wish to take her,' ⁹ then his brother's wife shall go up to him in the presence of the elders and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face. And she shall answer and say, 'So shall it be done to the man who does not build up his brother's house.' ¹⁰ And the name of his house¹ shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal pulled off.'

^{ESV} **Psalm 110:1** A PSALM OF DAVID. The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool." ² The LORD sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies! ³ Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power, ¹ in holy garments; ² from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours. ^{3,4} The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." ⁵ The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. ⁶ He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter chiefs¹ over the wide earth. ⁷ He will drink from the brook by the way; therefore he will lift up his head.

^{ESV} **Daniel 12:2-3:** 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. ³ And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; ¹ and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

^{ESV} **Job 19:25-27:** For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. ^{1,26} And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in¹ my flesh I shall see God, ²⁷ whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!

^{ESV} **Isaiah 26:19** Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For your dew is a dew of light, and the earth will give birth to the dead.

^{ESV} **Acts 4:1-2:** And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, ² greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

^{ESV} **Acts 23:6-8:** Now when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial." ⁷ And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the

assembly was divided. ⁸ For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.

^{ESV} **Luke 24:27, 44:** And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.... "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

^{ESV} **Acts 2:25-36:** For David says concerning him [the Christ], "' I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; ²⁶ therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope. ²⁷ For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption. ²⁸ You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.' ²⁹ "Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, ³¹ he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. ³² This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. ³³ Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. ³⁴ For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, "' The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, ³⁵ until I make your enemies your footstool.' ³⁶ Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

^{ESV} **John 11:25** Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. ¹ Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live..."