



Luke 20:27-38

27 Some Sadducees - those who say that there is no resurrection - approached Jesus and they put this question to him, **28** 'Master, we have it from Moses in writing, that if a man's married brother dies childless, the man must marry the widow to raise up children for his brother. **29** Well, then, there were seven brothers. The first, having married a wife, died childless. **30** The second **31** and then the third married the widow. And the same with all seven, they died leaving no children. **32** Finally the woman herself died. **33** Now, at the resurrection, to which of them will she be wife since she had been married to all seven?'

34 Jesus replied, 'The children of this world take wives and husbands, **35** but those who are judged worthy of a place in the other world and in the resurrection from the dead do not marry **36** because they can no longer die, for they are the same as the angels, and being children of the resurrection they are sons of God. **37** And Moses himself implies that the dead rise again, in the passage about the bush where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. **38** Now he is God, not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all men are in fact alive.'

Other readings: 2 Maccabees 7:1-2,9-14 Psalm 16 (17) 2 Thessalonians 2:16-3:5

Once Jesus arrives in Jerusalem the three synoptic gospels (Mark, Matthew and Luke) give accounts of discussions and arguments that Jesus has with the religious leaders. These exchanges testify to the growing hostility of the Jewish leaders to Jesus. Our passage reports a discussion with the Sadducees, a group of Jews who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead.

Ideas about the after-life developed only slowly during Old Testament times, and received a significant boost at the time of the persecution of the Jewish faith in the second century BC and the subsequent Maccabean revolt. Our first reading narrates the martyrdom of seven brothers at this time and their strong faith in the resurrection.

Jesus is quick to point out that the life of the resurrection is quite different from earthly life. Above all, death will not bring this risen life to an end. He goes on to refute the position of the Sadducees in relation to the resurrection. They had sought justification from Moses. Jesus in his turn refers to the vision of the burning bush which Moses saw on Mount Horeb (Exodus 3). The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is God of the living, the God of the resurrection, the God who raises human beings from death. That God is indeed the God of the resurrection will be demonstrated in the events that will now unfold in Jerusalem.

Do I trust in the Christian hope that God's care and power go beyond death?

Do I respect the life of every human being?

Let us pray for those who live without hope.

Let us pray for all our deceased brothers and sisters.