

**Life in Heaven  
Matt 22:23-33**

23 The same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him,

1. **Round 2 – Introducing the Sadducees – The Pharisee’s and Herodians having been silenced by the Lord Jesus, we see round two being taken up by the Sadducees.**
  - a. **Sadducees were an interesting mix – on the one hand they were strict literalists with the first five books of the OT – the Torah.**
  - b. **But on the other hand they took exception to several doctrinal truths that the Pharisees held in high esteem:**
    - i. **They believed that God was not concerned with the affairs of men, and it didn’t really matter if you did good or evil.**
    - ii. **They did not believe in the resurrection of the saints. They believed that once you died, you went into nothingness.**
    - iii. **This stemmed from their rejection of existence of heaven and hell. So it really didn’t matter what you did because there would be no punishment, or reward, in the afterlife.**
  - c. **Hence the comment by Matthew, “...the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection...”**
  - d. **Again... an interesting coalition!**
2. **So this group, who doesn’t believe in the resurrection, asks Jesus a question about the resurrection:**

24 saying: "Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother. 25 Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother. 26 Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh. 27 Last of all the woman died also. 28 Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her."

3. **Sounds like a mixed up soap opera!**
  - a. **They were referencing Deut 25:5-10, the law of “levirate marriage”, where if a married man dies without having fathered a son, it is the duty of his brother to have a child with the dead man’s wife.**
  - b. **I know, that sounds weird. But the purpose of this was to preserve a man’s name should he die without a male heir.**
  - c. **In a society where family inheritance was a huge deal, it was importance for each home to have an heir, otherwise that leg of the family would die out.**

- d. It was actually considered a disgrace for a man to refuse to do this.
- 4. But the point is that in trying to trip up Jesus, the Sadducees had described a situation that was simply ridiculous!
  - a. Sort of on the same level as asking “Is it possible for God to create a rock so big that He couldn’t lift it?”
  - b. But rather than tell them what I would have told them ...”that is just stupid...”, Jesus tells them:

29 Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. 30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. 31 But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 32 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

- 5. This little verse tells us two things...
  - a. First it lays out a basic theological premise about God – God is “not the God of the dead, but of the living”
  - b. See, when God said “I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” – “I am” is *present tense*”
  - c. In other words, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are not “gone”, they LIVE, not here, but they are with the Lord
  - d. If they had died and gone into nothingness, like the Saducees believes, God would have said “I was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob”
- 6. But second, and just as important, it gives us a glimpse into heaven...
  - a. In other words, the Sadducees main problem was not their strange example about the seven brothers and the one wife.
  - b. The problem was that they were trying to equate heaven to our life here on earth.
  - c. If we think about it, we all have this tendency. We look at our life here, and we imagine that heaven will be some sort of “improved version” of our life here.
  - d. I’ll be younger, healthier, smarter, run faster...
  - e. And I’ll have all of the great things of this world, none of the bad, I can eat all I want and won’t have to exercise or diet.
  - f. ...that’s a nice thought, but not exactly biblical.
- 7. See while we may view heaven as a place with clouds, and people lazing around, the bible actually tells us quite a lot about heaven.

## **#1 Heaven is a literal place where God dwells**

**Job, the oldest book in the bible, describes an event occurring in heaven:**

**Job 1:6**

*Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD*

**Isaiah describes Satan, previously known as Lucifer, the greatest of all the angels and the worship leader, being evicted from heaven:**

**Isa 14:12-13**

*"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north;*

**Jesus talks about heaven as a place He had just came from, and a place He was returning to:**

**John 14:2**

*In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you.*

**The writer of Hebrews describes the sanctuary in heaven:**

**Heb 8:1-2**

*We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.*

**Heaven is a place that Jesus promised He would take us to**

**John 14:1-4**

*"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know."*

**The present heaven and earth will be replaced**

**Rev 21:1-4**

*Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.*

**...who will be in heaven?**

**Only the righteous will be in heaven**

**Matt 25:31-34**

*"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:*

**Gal 5:19-21**

*Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

**People of all nations will dwell in heaven**

**Rev 7:9-10**

*After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"*

**In heaven we will be eternal**

***Throughout history man has desired to find the secret to eternal life. There is a reason we long for that – we were created as eternal beings. Adam and Eve did not have a lifespan, it was only after sin did death come into the reality of man. But we still long for eternity...***

**Eccl 3:11**

*He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts,*

***Thing is, eternal life would not be good in a fallen world – evil be more evil – imagine if Stalin or Mao or Hitler were immortal – OK let's NOT have immortality in this world!***

***But immortality in heaven is a completely different animal, because of the fact that only the righteous will receive it, in a sinless reality, it will be ours:***

**John 11:25-26**

*"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.*

**What Jesus mentions to the Sadducees is that in heaven we will not experience life as we do here on earth. Being eternal, I don't think we'll be getting married to procreate, because there will be no need to repopulate if no one dies. Jesus also mentions that we will be "like the angels"**

***In heaven we will have new, incorruptible bodies***

***He doesn't say we will "be angels", but will be "like the angels", which seems to mean our bodies will be immortal, as the angels are. No corruption means our bodies will not be subject to entropy – the law that all matter decays.***

**1 Cor 15:50-52**

*Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed -- in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

***In heaven we'll have new identities***

***Not only will we be eternal, and incorruptible, we will have new identities...***

**Rev 3:12**

*He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.*

***In heaven there will be no pain, sorrow or death***

***I am not sure exactly how God accomplishes this, but somehow there will be a "partial memory erase" in heaven...***

**Rev 21:3-4**

*And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."*

***If this weren't the case, heaven would be a glaring contrast for us whenever we thought of our loved ones that never accepted the gospel, and thinking of them in hell, well that would be a downer!***

***Because of the verse I just quoted, some people think that we know remember anything of our life here on earth, but that is not true:***

***In heaven we won't have amnesia!***

**1 Cor 13:12**

*For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.*

***In heaven there will be reward and honor***

**Matt 6:19-21**

*"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

**2 Cor 5:9-10**

*Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad*

***In heaven we will reign with Christ***

**Rev 5:9-10**

*Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying:*

*"You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."*

***This seems pretty clear that we wont be lounging around on clouds, eating grapes and playing harps, but will be involved in social life in the Kingdom of God. Those who have been faithful to Christ will be rewarded with positions of responsibly and oversight in the Kingdom.***

**Rev 21:24-26**

*And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. Its gates shall not be shut at all by day(there shall be no night there). And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.*

## **Heaven will be a paradise**

### **Rev 22:1-5**

*And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.*

## **Heaven is our home**

### **Phil 3:20-21**

*For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.*

8. **When we get there we will instantly connect with all that we have longed for.**
  - a. **We have caught glimpses of it here in there in this world, moments when we experienced peace, purpose, beauty**
  - b. **Those moments when all is right and perfect – those moments that we wished could last forever – then we would be dashed back to the reality of our fallen world.**
  - c. **When we arrive, we wont have to thing “well tomorrow I have to go back to work”, back to the struggles of life.**
  - d. **We will have the pure elation of awareness “this is forever!”**
9. **And our loved ones who are in the Lord will be there, remember 1 Cor 13:12: *Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.***
  - a. **That is what makes a house into a home – the people we love.**
  - b. **When we move to Wilmington, we bought an older home. The family we bought it from built it in 1972, and raised their family there. The couple that raised that family have passed away, and every once in a while I think about the lives they had in that house – the kids, the meals...**
  - c. **And the fact that all of that is now history – echoes in time. 30 years from now another family may live there, and our family imprint will be gone as well.**

**10. But in heaven, all of God's children will be united into a great family that will never hurt us, never leave us, never abandon us!**

***Suggested reading – Rev 21-22.***

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