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SIGNIFICANT EXEGETICAL ASPECTS OF THE SADDUCEES'
QUESTION TO JESUS REGARDING THE RESURRECTION

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

by

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INTRODUCTION

The resurrection of the body is one of the most important tenets of the Christian faith. It is confessed in each of the three ecumenical creeds of the Church. Indeed, the resurrection assumes a prominent position in the Church's entire calendar inasmuch as many of her liturgical seasons are governed by Easter. Because Christ has been raised from the dead, Christians can look to His resurrection as the first fruits, the guarantee of the full harvest to follow, of those who are asleep (1 Corinthians 15:20).

The Synoptic writers record that following Peter's great confession near Caesarea-Philippi, "Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised."¹ While Jesus predicted His own resurrection, comment is still made on the "notable scarcity" of reference to a more general doctrine of the resurrection in the recorded teaching of Jesus.²

¹Matthew 16:21; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22.

²C. F. Evans, Resurrection and the New Testament, Studies in Biblical Theology, Second Series, vol. 12

Part of the reason for that seeming scarcity may be due to the increased scrutiny which certain New Testament texts have had to undergo. Such is the case with the account of Jesus' answer to the Sadducees on the subject of the resurrection.³ Traditionally, this text has been used as a firm proof-text for Jesus' teaching of the resurrection of the body. As of late, however, a turn in the opposite direction has occurred and equivocation is frequently found. Jesus' quotation of Exodus 3:6 as an argument in favor of the resurrection has been, for example, variously viewed as "not altogether convincing,"⁴ and "strikingly inadequate."⁵ McNeile says it presents "difficulties."⁶

The purpose of this investigation, therefore, is to take a closer look at the pericope as presented by the

(London: SCM Press, 1970), p. 33. Easton asserts that Jesus' teaching must have contained more on the subject than the Gospels imply (Burton Scott Easton, The Gospel According to St. Luke: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926], p. 298). Cadbury says that the afterlife was "taken for granted" by Jesus (Henry J. Cadbury, "Intimations of Immortality in the Thought of Jesus," in Immortality and Resurrection, ed. Krister Stendahl, [New York: The MacMillan Co., 1965], p. 139).

³Matthew 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-38.

⁴Dennis E. Nineham, The Gospel of Mark. The Pelican New Testament Commentaries (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), p. 321.

⁵D. M. Cohn-Sherbok, "Jesus' Defence of the Resurrection of the Dead," Journal of the Study of the New Testament 11 (1981):64.

⁶Alan Hugh McNeile, The Gospel According to St. Matthew (London: MacMillan & Co., 1957), p. 322.

Synoptic writers, in order to ascertain if these disparaging comments (and others like them) are warranted. In essence, this thesis is a defense of the view which holds that Jesus' answer to the Sadducees' question was a direct and explicit proof of the resurrection of the dead.

In order to achieve this objective it will be necessary to investigate certain related issues. Since the Sadducees are presented here as the antagonists, an examination will be made of their history, activity, and beliefs as a way of determining the motivations and thoughts behind their question to Jesus. Secondly, a detailed exegetical analysis of each Gospel account will follow. Both common and individual emphases will be highlighted and placed into the whole exegetical picture by a comparison of each Synoptic with the others. Careful attention will be given to the historical context within which this event occurs. Thirdly, Hebrew, Greek, and Jewish views on resurrection and immortality will be presented so as to determine their influence (or lack of influence) on Jesus' statement, and to understand better the mindset of Jesus' hearers. A fourth section will deal with Jesus' use of Exodus 3:6 in His answer to the Sadducees, giving special attention to the reasons for Jesus' use of the passage, and the method of argumentation He employs. This section will integrate many of the findings of the previous sections as a way of synthesizing the investigation and putting forth final conclusions and observations.

CHAPTER I

THE SADDUCEES

Josephus and the New Testament as Sources of Information

Any study of the origin, history, and nature of the Sadducees must first deal with the fact that all information about the group comes from its opponents. The Sadducees, in a sense, have never had the opportunity to speak for themselves because none of their writings are extant. Therefore, since most references to the Sadducees occur in a disparaging or polemical context, scholars have questioned the objectivity of the sources. This is especially true of the comments made by Flavius Josephus (A. D. 37/38-ca. 110), the Jewish historian and apologist.

Josephus mentions the Sadducees in both his Jewish Antiquities, and The Jewish War.¹ The harsh, unequivocal judgments he makes have been called "oversimplified and oversystematized."² Because he claims³ to have been a

¹Flavius Josephus, Life and Works, trans. William Whiston. Philadelphia: John C. Winston, 1936. The references are: Antiquities 13.5.9; 13.10.5-7; 17.2.4; 18.1.4; 20.9.1; War 2.8.14.

²Marcel Simon, Jewish Sects at the Time of Jesus, trans. James H. Farley (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), p. 22.

member of the Pharisees his points of view, it is asserted, must be regarded with caution, for his real motive might have been to exaggerate the importance of the Pharisees at the expense of the Sadducees.⁴ On the other hand, Josephus may have been nothing more than a titular Pharisee. Louis Finkelstein says that he was "hardly a fervent partisan."⁵ If this is the case, his reliability would be enhanced. F. J. Foakes-Jackson aptly describes the cautious confidence one may have as he reads Josephus:

He is our only authority for a long and important period of human history; and though it is customary to disparage his abilities, the more one studies him, the more remarkable they appear to have been. His patriotism may have been exceedingly cold, his religion mechanical rather than spiritual, he may have profited unscrupulously by the labours of others, and be guilty of serious inaccuracies. Nevertheless, he should be carefully studied before he is condemned, or refused his place as the great historian of Judaism, and an invaluable contributor to our knowledge of antiquity.⁶

Implicitly this same charge of unreliability is also leveled against the New Testament references to the

³ Josephus, Life and Works: Life, paragraph 2.

⁴ A. C. Sundberg, "Sadducees." In The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible, 4 vols., (Nashville: Abindgon, 1962) 4:162.

⁵ Louis Finkelstein, "The Pharisees: Their Origin and Their Philosophy," Harvard Theological Review 22 (3, 1929):191.

⁶ F. J. Foakes-Jackson, Josephus and the Jews: The Religion and History of the Jews as Explained by Flavius Josephus (New York: Richard R. Smith, 1930), p. xvi.

Sadducees.⁷ Simon makes the most explicit denunciation against the New Testament when he asserts that it is of "questionable objectivity" and "little assistance." "The evangelists," he says, "were sympathetic neither to the Pharisees nor to the Sadducees, and were especially keen on pointing out their faults."⁸

Indictments such as these overstate the case. There is no evidence to support the view that any New Testament reference to the Sadducees is distorted or untrue. The presupposition that statements of disparagement must be logically colored with a certain degree of falsehood is not necessarily true. Moreover, the assumption is in direct opposition to the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures.

The comments of Josephus and the New Testament need to be examined on two different planes. As part of the divinely inspired Word, with its autopistic character, we can be confident that the New Testament references to the Sadducees, although not exhaustive, give an accurate picture of the group. The duty of the exegete, therefore, is to

⁷A. Gelston, "Sadducee," in Illustrated Bible Dictionary, 3 vols. (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1980), 3:1368; Rudolph Meyer, "Σαδδουκαῖος," in Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, 10 vols. [hereafter referred to as TDNT] ed. and trans. Geoffrey Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 7:36; Sundberg, "Sadducees," 4:162.

⁸Simon, Jewish Sects, p. 23.

determine what the text says without any extrapolation or imposition of his own ideas. When Josephus and the New Testament overlap we may conclude that Josephus is correct. When Josephus forges into new territory on his own he must be subjected to scrutiny and not automatically be either accepted or rejected.

In addition to the episode considered in this thesis, the Sadducees are mentioned in the New Testament only in the Gospel of Matthew and the Acts of the Apostles. In Matthew 3:7 the scene is the wilderness of Judaea where John the Baptizer was preaching and baptizing. Matthew stresses the growing interest in the Baptizer's activity when he says that Jerusalem was going out to him and all (πᾶσα) Judaea and all (πᾶσα) the surrounding region of the Jordan. In addition, the Sadducees and Pharisees came. When John saw them he censured them by saying, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

In Matthew 16, following Jesus' feeding of the four thousand, the Sadducees, again with the Pharisees, asked Him to show them a sign (σημεῖον) from heaven. Significantly, Jesus tells them that no sign will be given except "the sign of Jonah" (verse 4). He then left them and went away with His disciples, twice warning His disciples to "take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees" (verses 5, 11).

Other than his account of the Sadducees' question to Jesus on the resurrection, Luke does not mention the

Sadducees at any other place in his Gospel. He does, however, mention them three times in the Acts of the Apostles. In chapter four, verse one, the Sadducees, together with the priests and the captain of the Temple guard, are pictured as being disturbed (διαπονούμενοι) because Peter and John "were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead" (verse 2).

In Acts 5:17, the Sadducees again become emotionally agitated at the activities of the apostles. Because of the many signs and wonders that were done by the apostles, and the concomitant rise in public interest and belief (verse 16) the high priest and his associates, the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy (ἐπλήσαν ζήλου), and arrested and incarcerated the apostles.

Finally, in Acts 23 Luke describes Paul's appearance before the Jewish high court (συνεδρίον), which was composed partly of Pharisees and partly of Sadducees. Paul, perceiving this mixed composition, said, "I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; with respect to the hope of the resurrection of the dead I am on trial" (verse 6). Because of the doctrinal ramifications of this comment, Luke reports that dissension (στάσις) occurred and the assembly was divided (ἔσχίσθη).

In addition to these explicit New Testament references, scholars have hypothesized allusions to the Sadducees elsewhere in the New Testament. Following the

lead of Jacob Mann, G. H. Box views the parable of the Good Samaritan as anti-Sadducean.⁹ The "expert in the Mosaic law" (Luke 10:25 - νομικός) who asked Jesus, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" is probably, G. H. Box suggests, a Sadducean lawyer. Moreover, the whole parable can be viewed as a rebuke of the exaltation of the letter of the Law above the spirit of the Law. It is true that the Pentateuch orders priests, as representatives of God who offer sacrifices at His altar, to remain holy and avoid defilement by touching a dead body.¹⁰ Exceptions are made only for close relatives such as parents, children, brothers, and virgin sisters.¹¹

This proscription from the Pentateuch puts a somewhat different emphasis on Jesus' description of the priest and the Levite who passed by the fallen Samaritan. Unsure whether the Samaritan was dead or alive, their lack of assistance may have been due more to their concern for ceremonial holiness than to their inner callousness or lack of compassion. Box intimates that this parable, therefore, describes the legalistic mindset of the Sadducees. While

⁹Jacob Mann, "Jesus and the Sadducean Priests, Luke 10:25-37," Jewish Quarterly Review 6 (1915):417; G. H. Box, "Scribes and Sadducees in the New Testament," The Expositor 15 (1918); 16 (1918):67.

¹⁰Leviticus 21:1.

¹¹Leviticus 21:2, 3.

the Pharisees would see it as a duty to bury a dead person, strict Sadducean priests would not risk defilement.¹² In a less extensive discussion, Box also proposes that Jesus' comments about the poor widow's offering¹³ were also directed against the Sadducees, for they despised the insignificant gifts of the poor.¹⁴

T. W. Manson¹⁵ conjectures that the illustrative story of the rich man and Lazarus was really directed against the Sadducees.¹⁶ Jesus' rejoinder, "You who justify yourselves . . ." then, according to Manson, becomes a pun on $\rho\tau\delta$, the Hebrew word which may lie behind the naming of the Sadducees. Manson believes that a similar phrase ($\text{οἱ δίκαιοὶντες ἑαυτοῦς}$), which occurs in Enoch 102:10 and was addressed to the Sadducees, provides substantiation for his theory. The difficulty of Manson's theory, however, is that Luke specifically says the Pharisees were the antagonists in this episode.¹⁷ There is no textual evidence

¹²Box, "Scribes and Sadducees," p. 68.

¹³Luke 21:3-4; Mark 12:43-44.

¹⁴Box, "Scribes and Sadducees," p. 68.

¹⁵T. W. Manson, "Sadducee and Pharisee--The Origin and Significance of the Names," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library 22 (1, 1938):153, f.n. 1.

¹⁶Luke 16:14-31.

¹⁷Luke 16:14.

to support the view that the original reading of the text would be Σαδδουκαῖοι rather than Φαρισαῖοι.

Acts 23:12-14 describes a plot against Paul's life following his testimony before the council. The conspirators in this plot are named only as "the Jews." There were approximately forty of them. Based on the stir that Paul's testimony had aroused, it may be possible to conclude with Joachim Jeremias, that these unnamed plotters may have been Sadducees.¹⁸

All told, therefore, the New Testament speaks either explicitly or implicitly about the Sadducees on only ten occasions.¹⁹ Even on these occasions the Sadducees are often juxtaposed with the Pharisees - either in alliance against Jesus or in opposition to each other - so that the spotlight is very rarely on them alone. Jesus had no extended denunciation of the Sadducees similar to that of the Pharisees in Matthew 23. This general paucity of New Testament reference to the Sadducees leads to one of two conclusions: either the Sadducees were well known and

¹⁸ Joachim Jeremias, Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus: An Investigation into Economic and Social Conditions During the New Testament Period, trans. F. H. Cave and C. H. Cave (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), p. 230.

¹⁹ The explicit references are: Matthew 3:7; 16:1-12; 22:23-33 (and parallels); Acts 4:1; 5:17; 23:6-8. The implicit, conjectured references previously discussed are: Luke 10:25-37; Luke 21:3-4 (and parallel); Luke 16:14; Acts 23:12-14.

needed no explanation, or they were comparatively powerless and unknown. The former alternative is the more likely, as an investigation of the history of the Sadducees will show.

History

In order to obtain a more accurate picture of the Sadducees' activity and degree of influence at the time of Christ, an historical sketch, as far as it is attainable, is necessary. Like references to the group in the New Testament, facts about the history of the Sadducees present pieces of information rather than a comprehensive, complete picture. An historical investigation into the emergence and development of the Sadducees is closely bound up with the question of the origin of their name. Here, however, each of those aspects will be considered individually.

Not much is known about the Sadducees before 200 B.C. However, it is generally thought that the Sadducees first emerged as a faction after the Maccabean rebellion, in support of the Hasmonean rulers.²⁰ After the Exile, believers in the supremacy of the high priesthood may be considered Sadducees,²¹ if a connection can be established

²⁰F. F. Bruce, New Testament History (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1980), p. 74; William L. Lane, The Gospel According to Mark. New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), p. 426; Sundberg, "Sadducees," 4:160.

²¹Solomon Zeitlin, The Rise and Fall of the Judean

between the word "Sadducee" and "Zadok" (see below). However, the real development of what the New Testament knows as Sadducees probably occurred during the second and first centuries of the intertestamental period when the group came into conflict with the Pharisees.²² Josephus presents an interesting and significant account in this respect.²³

John Hyrcanus I, the Hasmonean ruler (135-104 B.C.) was a disciple of the Pharisees and greatly loved by them. According to Josephus, Hyrcanus decided to entertain the Pharisees by inviting them to a feast. Seeing that they were in good humor, Hyrcanus asked the Pharisees whether there was anything they could find wrong with him. All of them, with the exception of one, responded that Hyrcanus was entirely virtuous. This one Pharisee, named Eleazar by Josephus,²⁴ boldly told Hyrcanus he should give up the high

State: A Political, Social and Religious History of the Second Commonwealth, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1968), 1:10; 3:156.

²²Jacob Z. Lauterbach, Rabbinic Essays (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1951), p. 87; Alfred Edersheim, Sketches of Jewish Social Life in the Days of Christ (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960), p. 242.

²³Antiquities 13.10.5-7.

²⁴Zeitlin (The Judean State, 1:168-170) points out contradictions between the account of Josephus and that of the Talmud. In the Talmud, for instance, the outspoken Pharisee is named Judah. He reconciles the differences by saying that the account in the Talmud, as the language makes clear, goes back to an old source, while Josephus probably took his account from a later period.

priesthood and content himself with the civil government of the people. When Hyrcanus questioned Eleazar as to the reason for this suggestion, Eleazar replied that it was rumored that Hyrcanus' mother was a captive during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes. Because this rumor was a falsehood and questioned both Hyrcanus' legitimacy and his mother's chastity, it angered not only Hyrcanus, but the rest of the Pharisees as well.

What is significant about this episode is that Hyrcanus had a friend named Jonathan who was a member of the sect of Sadducees. Jonathan told Hyrcanus that all the Pharisees in actuality believed what Eleazar had said about his mother. Thus, if Hyrcanus asked them what punishment Eleazar deserved, they would suggest a very minimal one. True to Jonathan's predictions, the Pharisees recommended only "stripes and bonds" as a punishment. This infuriated Hyrcanus so much that, according to Josephus, he left the party of the Pharisees and abolished the decrees they had imposed upon the people.

What can be concluded from this whole account is that the Sadducees and the Pharisees were both in existence at the end of the second century B. C. Based on Josephus, the presumption is that the Pharisees were the dominating group until this time. Once they had lost the favor of Hyrcanus, however, the tables were turned and the Sadducees

had the upper hand. It is possible, therefore, that this confrontation between the Pharisees and the Sadducees is the etiological basis for the adversarial relationship that existed between the two groups. Before this time, especially during the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes, it is logical to assume that the groups fought together against the oppressor.²⁵ At the very least, this incident helped more clearly to delineate the "party lines." Zeitlin sees a direct relationship between this event and Pompey's conquering of Jerusalem in 63 B. C.: "The downfall of the Judaeans had its roots in the efforts of John Hyrcanus I to assume the crown, and his resulting interference in the religious life of the Judaeans by suppressing the laws enacted by the Pharisees."²⁶

Following the death of John Hyrcanus (104 B.C.), the Sadducees remained the party of official favor through the reigns of Aristobulus I (104-103 B.C.) and Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.).²⁷ Jannaeus, in fact, has been described as the "lion of wrath" in the peshar of Nahum from

²⁵Ibid., 1:335.

²⁶Ibid., 1:355.

²⁷Bruce, History, p. 75; Zeitlin, The Judean State, 1:330, 335.

Qumran Cave Four.²⁸ In this text his enemies, called the "Seekers-After-Smooth-Things", are generally thought to be the Pharisees.²⁹ Jannaeus had them put to death by crucifixion. Josephus' account of "barbarous actions" concurs with this:

. . . for as he was feasting with his concubines, in the sight of all the city, he ordered about eight hundred of them to be crucified; and while they were living, he ordered the throats of their children and wives to be cut before their eyes. This was indeed by way of revenge for the injuries they had done him . . . However, this barbarity³⁰ seems to have been without any necessity . . .

This incident shows the extent to which the Sadducee-Pharisee controversy had gone.

When Salome Alexandra assumed the throne in 76 B. C. she appointed as high priest her eldest son, John Hyrcanus II. This signalled a turn of events from which the Sadducees would never fully recover. The laws of the Pharisees were restored, and they again became the "power elite in Judaea."³¹ Hyrcanus II kept his leadership after the Roman conquest in 63 B.C. With Herod's coming to power

²⁸Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "Crucifixion in Ancient Palestine, Qumran Literature, and the New Testament," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 40 (1978):501.

²⁹Fitzmyer, "Crucifixion," p. 501; Bruce, History, p. 75.

³⁰Antiquities 13.14.2.

³¹Zeitlin, The Judean State, 1:337; Bruce, History, pp. 76-77; Antiquities 13.16.2.

as King over all Palestine in 37 B.C., there was an initial decrease in the activity of the Pharisees and Sadducees. But gradually the Pharisees, because of their popular prestige, did not refrain from publicly announcing their opposition to Herod.³²

The Sadducees continued this subservient role throughout the rest of their history. There were many controversies with the Pharisees over sacrificial and ceremonial matters,³³ but the Pharisees retained the upper hand and represented the position of orthodox Judaism. In fact, the Sadducees were often compelled by reasons of expediency to make concessions to the Pharisees for, in Josephus' words, "the multitude would not otherwise bear them."³⁴

Compared to the Pharisees, the Sadducees were few in number. Josephus numbers the Pharisees at above 6,000,³⁵

³²Bruce, History, p. 78.

³³Finkelstein, "The Pharisees," p. 193-196; Lauterbach, Rabbinic Essays, pp. 51-83; John McClintock and James Strong, "Sadducee," in Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature, 12 vols. (New York: Harper & Bros., 1891; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970), 9:237-239; Emil Schürer, The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, revised English version by Geza Vermes and Fergus Millar, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973), 2:384-388; Zeitlin, The Judean State, 1:178.

³⁴Antiquities 18.1.4.

³⁵Antiquities 17.2.4.

the Essenes at approximately 4,000,³⁶ but simply says there are "few" Sadducees.³⁷ Interestingly, the three groups together are estimated to have composed only five percent of the Jewish population.³⁸ The Pharisees also enjoyed popular support, while the Sadducees were "able to persuade none but the rich."³⁹ The Sadducees were, therefore, confined to a few wealthy families. They emphasized genealogy and position in contrast to the stress of the Pharisees on piety and learning.⁴⁰ Consequently, the Pharisees may have even viewed the Sadducees as ignorant.⁴¹ If this is true, then it is equally probable that the Sadducees leveled their own charges against the Pharisees. It has been suggested, for instance, that the Sadducees may have contributed to the naming of the Pharisees by using the word parashim as a title of reproach, signifying either their separateness or

³⁶Antiquities 18.1.5.

³⁷Antiquities 18.1.4.

³⁸T. W. Manson, The Servant-Messiah: A Study of the Public Ministry of Jesus (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), p. 11.

³⁹Antiquities 13.10.6; 18.1.4.

⁴⁰Menahem Mansoor, "Sadducees," in Encyclopaedia Judaica, 16 vols. (New York: MacMillan, 1971), 14:621.

⁴¹Reuben Kaufman, Great Sects and Schisms in Judaism (New York: Jonathan David Publishers, 1967), p. 26.

their acceptance, to the Sadducean way of thinking, of certain tenets of the Persian religion.⁴²

All of this is not to say, however, that the Sadducees had no sphere of influence. Although their number was seemingly few and they were confined to families with wealth, they maintained a close control over their group. Not everyone desiring admission could gain it.⁴³ The real power of the Sadducees lay in their connection with the priesthood, especially the high priesthood. This meant they could exercise their influence on the Temple and its rites. The high priests, on the whole, were usually Sadducees, either in ideology or in social status and descent.⁴⁴ Acts 5:17 demonstrates this relationship. Here the Sadducees are described as associates of the high priest, literally "those together with him" (οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ). But it is a mistaken notion to conclude from this that all the Sadducees were clergy. Despite the fact that the chief priests were generally Sadducees, not all Sadducees were priests.⁴⁵ The

⁴²Zeitlin, The Judean State, 1:444h; Manson, "Sadducee and Pharisee," p. 156; Ellis Rivkin, A Hidden Revolution (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978), p. 165.

⁴³Jeremias, Jerusalem, p. 231.

⁴⁴Shmuel Safrai and Menahem Stern, ed., The Jewish People in the First Century: Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural and Religious Life and Institutions, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974, 1976), 1:384; 2:609.

⁴⁵Antiquities 20.9.1; Bruce, History, p. 78;

Sadducees included some of the "elders," leaders of important Jewish families and relationships. The house of Boethus was one such family.⁴⁶ Jeremias cites the silence of Josephus and the differentiation in Acts 4:1 between priests and Sadducees as evidence in favor of the conclusion that the group was a mixture of clergy and laity.⁴⁷

It is probable that there were also Sadducean scribes.⁴⁸ Because the New Testament speaks so often of the scribes of the Pharisees,⁴⁹ the assumption is made that this title implies there were also scribes of the Sadducees. Yet, a conclusion based on an argumentum e silentio such as this must leave room for a certain measure of hesitancy. At

Jeremias, Jerusalem, p. 229; D. S. Russell, Between the Testaments (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1960), p. 51; Schürer-Vermes-Millar, History, 2:404.

⁴⁶Some, if not all, of the Sadducees even became known as Boethuseans. This family emigrated from Alexandria, and produced eight members for the high priesthood, beginning with Simon in 142 B.C. The family was finally overtaken by the house of the high priest Annas (A.D. 6-15). See Jeremias, Jerusalem, p. 194.

⁴⁷Jeremias, Jerusalem, p. 230. If the reading ἀρχιερεῖς attested in Codex Vaticanus and Codex Ephraemi is adopted in Acts 4:1, the passage loses some of its argumentative force, for the differentiation would then be between the chief priests and the regular priests (Sadducees). However, ἱερεῖς is the preferred reading. In addition to B and C, only an Armenian and Ethiopic witness reads ἀρχιερεῖς.

⁴⁸G. H. Box, "Scribes and Sadducees," pp. 401, 408; Bruce, History, p. 79; Jeremias, Jerusalem, p. 231; Schürer-Vermes-Millar, History, 2:389-390.

⁴⁹Mark 2:16, 7:5; Luke 5:30; Acts 23:9.

any rate, the impact of Sadducean scribes on the events of the Biblical narrative, can be deemed to be negligible because of the lack of explicit reference.

In addition to the Temple, the chief sphere of influence of the Sadducees was undoubtedly their membership on the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Council. The Sanhedrin had its roots in post-exilic Judaism, when members of the priestly aristocracy joined with secular representatives to form a supreme judicial authority.⁵⁰ With Herod's reign as King of the Jews the Sanhedrin lost much of its authority, but in A.D. 6, when Judaea became a Roman province, some of that power was regained, and the Sanhedrin again had jurisdiction over internal Jewish affairs.⁵¹

Pharisees were also members of the Sanhedrin.⁵² Solomon Zeitlin claims that the Sanhedrin in Acts 23 is a state council, rather than a religious body:

It is unthinkable that a religious court would consist of both Pharisees and Sadducees, since their views on the halakah and their beliefs were in direct conflict. What the Pharisees held to be a religious offense would not have been so considered by the Sadducees.⁵³

This overlooks the fact, however, that Paul explicitly said in verse six, "I am on trial for the hope and resurrection

⁵⁰Jeremias, Jerusalem, p. 233.

⁵¹Bruce, History, p. 78.

⁵²Acts 23:6; see also Matthew 21:45; John 7:32.

⁵³Zeitlin, The Judean State, 2:221.

of the dead." Likewise, the Sanhedrin before which Jesus appeared was also concerned with a religious offense, namely, His alleged blasphemy. Zeitlin's logic assumes that the lack of unanimity between the Pharisees and the Sadducees on theological points meant that the Sanhedrin did not discuss religious issues. But, this view draws a forced distinction between the civil and the religious - two spheres which were for the Jew inextricably related. "The Sanhedrin was in charge of and supervised the established national religion."⁵⁴ Neither can it be maintained that two or more separate councils existed, with one hearing civil matters and the other hearing religious matters. There was only one true Sanhedrin.

. . . Neither does such an assumption [of multiple councils] accord well with the image of Judaism as it emerges in the Torah and the Halakah or Oral Law, which make no such distinctions among the various public activities, nor with Jewish history. No distinction is made between various religious matters, civil and private justice, and the public leadership in general. We have no choice but to assume the presence of one 'Sanhedrin' that appears under different names, although these might indeed indicate certain changes that took place in the institution in the course of time . . .⁵⁵

Human experience tells us that ideological agreement is not a prerequisite for debate in an assembly consisting of different factions or parties. The state and federal

⁵⁴Safrai and Stern, The Jewish People, 1:395.

⁵⁵Ibid., 1:381-382.

congresses of our governmental system are one example. Each party has its own particular agenda and ideology. Differences of opinion are expressed, not stifled, and effort is expended in order to effect compromise or change. The same phenomenon probably occurred on the Sanhedrin. It is best, therefore, to assert that the Sanhedrin, as the Jewish Council, considered a wide variety of issues. Its membership, which consisted of present and former high priests, elders, and scribes,⁵⁶ included people of both the Sadducean and Pharisaic conviction. The intensity with which the Sadducees pursued their objectives in Acts 4 and 5 shows that, although the Pharisees normally had the upper hand, the Sadducees were a force to be reckoned with. Indeed the Apostolic church might have had the most to fear from them.⁵⁷

Name

A study of the origin of the name of the Sadducees coincides with an examination of their history. It also serves as a helpful prelude to an investigation of their doctrinal system. Three theories for the origin of the name have been posited. The first view explains "Sadducee" as coming from the proper name Zadok, and referring to the

⁵⁶Mark 14:53; Luke 22:2; Acts 4:5, 23; Acts 22:30; Jeremias, Jerusalem, pp. 222-227.

⁵⁷Mansoor, "Sadducees," 14:622.

ruling priest under King David. Secondly, the possibility exists that the name might refer to some other Zadok instead of this Old Testament figure. The third explanation follows a totally different line of reasoning and looks for the origin of Sadducee in an Aramaic transliteration of the Greek word, *σούδικου*. Each of these explanations will be considered in turn.

The connection of the Sadducees with the Davidic priest Zadok has been the oldest and most frequently accepted explanation for the derivation of the name.⁵⁸

Zadok was a supporter of Solomon when the battle of David's succession took place, and later became the chief priest in

⁵⁸This view is accepted by Frederick W. Danker, Jesus and the New Age According to St. Luke: A Commentary on the Third Gospel (Saint Louis: Clayton Publishing House, 1972), p. 204; Helmut Koester, History, Culture, and Religion of the Hellenistic Age (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), p. 229; Mansoor, "Sadducees," 14:620; Meyer, TDNT, 9:36; Leon Morris, The Gospel According to St. Luke. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), p. 290; Robert H. Pfeiffer, History of New Testament Times With an Introduction to the Apocrypha (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1949), p. 46; Safrai and Stern, The Jewish People, 2:609; Schürer-Vermes-Millar, History, 2:405; Sundberg, "Sadducees," 4:160; and Julius Wellhausen, Die Pharisäer und die Sadducäer: Eine Untersuchung zur inneren jüdischen Geschichte, 2nd ed. (Hanover: Orient-Buchhandlung H. Lafaire, 1924; reprint ed., Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), pp. 46-51. Simon (Jewish Sects, p. 23) says this connection is "quite possible." Plummer affirms that Sadducee is derived from the name Zadok, but is hesitant to identify which Zadok is meant (Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Luke. The International Critical Commentary, 5th ed. [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1922], p. 467).

Jerusalem.⁵⁹ A priestly dynasty was established by the descendants of Zadok which was able to gain ideological victories over the priests outside of Jerusalem during the reforms of Josiah.⁶⁰ The Zadokites continued in a position of prominence through the next several centuries.

Ezekiel makes mention of Zadok several times in his prophecies.⁶¹ Chapter forty-four is especially prominent where Yahweh demands in verse 15 that ". . . the levitical priests, 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 minister to me." Zeitlin uses these passages in Ezekiel, and the link with Zadok, as proof that the Sadducees, as believers in the supremacy of the high priesthood, were in existence already in exilic times.⁶²

Several objections, however, have been raised against the direct connection between Zadok, the Davidic priest, and the Sadducees of the New Testament. First, there is a philological objection. Zadok in Hebrew is spelled $\rho\dot{\iota}\tau\ddot{\alpha}$. T. W. Manson and Charles Guignebert point out that Sadducee cannot derive from Zadok, because a double

⁵⁹2 Samuel 15:24-36; 1 Kings 1:32-40.

⁶⁰Meyer, TDNT, 9:36.

⁶¹Ezekiel 40:46; 43:19; 44:15-31; 48:11.

⁶²Zeitlin, The Judean State, 1:10; 3:156. It should be noted that the name Zadok also occurs in Ezra 7:2 and in Nehemiah 10:21; 11:11 and 13:13.

dahleth, which the Hebrew does not have, is needed.⁶³

Furthermore, the name Sadducee would then have to derive from the appellative, Zadokite. The more natural way of describing descent would be "sons of Zadok" (רִיבְרִי קִנְיָי).⁶⁴

Manson also objects to this derivation of the name Sadducee on historical grounds.⁶⁵ From 172 B.C. to A.D. 70, he says, Ananel and Phineas were the only high priests of Zadokite descent. In 170/169 B.C. the legitimate Zadokite priesthood transferred its activities to Leontopolis in Egypt in order to establish a sanctuary of its own.

Manson may be guilty of overstating his case. While there is admittedly an orthographic difficulty in moving from רִיבְרִי to Σαδδουκαῖος in terms of the double d, it should be pointed out that the Septuagint sometimes renders the Hebrew as Σαδδουκ as, for instance, in Ezekiel.⁶⁶ It is true also that the Hasmoneans were not of the Zadokite line but the John Hyrcanus I episode from Josephus shows that Hyrcanus, after leaving the Pharisees, was still able

⁶³Manson, "Sadducee and Pharisee," p. 145; Charles Guignebert, The Jewish World in the Time of Jesus (New York: University Books, 1959), p. 162.

⁶⁴Manson, "Sadducee and Pharisee," p. 145.

⁶⁵Manson, "Sadducee and Pharisee," p. 145; Servant Messiah, p. 13. For a list of High priests from 200 B.C. to A.D. 70 see Jeremias, pp. 377-378.

⁶⁶An alternative spelling Σαδῶκ also appears: e.g. 2 Kingdoms [2 Samuel] 15:24.

to ally with the Sadducees. His connection with them was based more on ideology than genealogy.

What all of this seems to imply is that the connection between the Davidic Zadok and the Sadducees can be maintained in a sort of loose, non-literal way. In that sense there were "Sadducees" even after the exile, for they were the ones clinging to the ideals of Zadok and the Davidic and Solomonic monarchy. In this connection a pun with רַדְּוּצִים may have also occurred. The Sadducees either thought themselves to be the "righteous ones" or the label was used by their opponents as a term of contempt. In the second century, B.C., however, largely as a result of their competition with and antagonism against the Pharisees, they gravitated more toward the position characterized by Josephus and the New Testament. Indeed, the Zadokite designation cannot be pushed too strongly, for as stated before, the New Testament indicates that not all Sadducees were priests.

It is also possible, but unlikely, that the Sadducees derived their name not from Zadok the high priest, but from some other Zadok who was active during the Greek period. This explanation would still encounter Manson's philological arguments but would avoid the historical difficulty of trying to trace and account for direct genealogical descent to the priest Zadok.

A tradition from Rabbi Nathan (A.D. 1030-1106) tells of a certain Antigonus of Soko, active at the beginning of

the second century B.C., who had two pupils named Boethos and Zadok. Antigonus taught them this principle: "Be not like slaves that serve their master for the sake of reward; be rather like slaves who serve their master with no thought of reward."⁶⁷ Boethos and Zadok, in turn, passed this principle on to their own students. Subsequent students began to interpret this teaching as a denial of afterlife and the resurrection. These students broke away from mainline Judaism and formed their own sects. This, according to Rabbi Nathan, was the origin of the Sadducees and Boethusians.

This account, however, has never been seriously accepted. Emil Schürer points out the inaccuracy of some of Rabbi Nathan's statements.⁶⁸ The absence of any information on Antigonus in Josephus or the Mishnah, coupled with the late date of Rabbi Nathan's writings, further make this account questionable. Moreover, it may be assumed that even if this account did have a kernel of truth, the sect that arose would have naturally called themselves "Antigonites" rather than Sadducees or Boethusians, for Antigonus was the original promulgator of the maxim in question. Any attempt,

⁶⁷From Aboth de-Rabbi Nathan 5 in Schürer-Vermes-Millar, History, 2:406, fn. 16.

⁶⁸Schürer-Vermes-Millar, History, 2:406, for example: "the Boethusians . . . derived their name from the High-Priestly family of Boethus in the time of Herod."

therefore, to trace the origin of the Sadducean name to some unknown Zadok is, as Manson says, an ignotum per ignotius.⁶⁹

The third explanation for the origin of the Sadducean name is championed by Manson.⁷⁰ Basing his hypothesis on a bilingual inscription from Palmyra dated A.D. 137 which describes the activities of a group of officials called $\chi^{\prime}\rho\tau\omicron$ in Aramaic, and $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\delta\iota\kappa\omicron\iota$ in Greek, Manson holds that the name of the Sadducees derives from the Greek translation of the Aramaic word. These $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\delta\iota\kappa\omicron\iota$ were prominent civic officials who were members of the Jewish senate. In Athenian history such officials can be traced back to the fourth century B.C. They are mentioned in documents of the Roman and Byzantine period as well, says Manson. Their positions involved giving legal advice, serving as representatives of the community in relations to the Roman authorities, and maintaining fiscal accountability. Because the Sadducees were later to perform many of these same functions, the $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\delta\iota\kappa\omicron\iota$, were their probable precursors, according to Manson.

Manson's theory is intriguing, and if not true, is remarkably coincidental with the information that is known about the Sadducees. On the surface it seems extremely

⁶⁹Manson, Servant Messiah, p. 15.

⁷⁰Manson, "Sadducee and Pharisee," pp. 147-153; Servant Messiah, pp. 15-16. Bruce (History, p. 74) accepts Manson's hypothesis.

tenable, but the difficulty lies in the drastic philological changes that are required to get from $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\delta\iota\kappa\omicron\iota$, the Greek form on the Palmyra inscription, to $\Sigma\alpha\delta\delta\omicron\upsilon\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\iota$, the form which Josephus and the New Testament use. A comparison of the Aramaic word $\chi^{\prime}\rho\tau\omicron$ with the Hebrew $\rho\dot{\iota}\tau$ shows that the former has just as many, if not more, difficulties than the latter which need to be overcome in order to show a connection with the word, Sadducee.

Manson himself concedes that the Tsade rather than the Samek is used in the Rabbinic literature for the spelling of Sadducee, but he asserts that \daleth and δ are interchangeable equivalents for the Greek sigma in Aramaic transliterations. The ν in $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\delta\iota\kappa\omicron\iota$ is problematic also, but he argues that if assimilated, it would account for the double τ that is needed.

All in all Manson's theory, while unique, is certainly not free from difficulty. Historically it may be less difficult than the first explanation which connects the Sadducees with Zadok the high priest. But philologically Manson's contention is still questionable. His explanation of the consonants of the New Testament and Josephan forms makes sense only with explanation and elaboration, and gives the impression of being forced. The vowel pattern of his words seem equally unnatural.

Before leaving this topic, passing attention should be given to the mention of Zadok in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Zadokites are mentioned in 1 QS 5:2-9 as "priests who keep

the covenant."⁷¹ Robert North, in an article entitled "The Qumran 'Sadducees'" interprets Sadducee on the basis of the Akkadian (saduk), to mean a person "just" in administering justice, who fulfills just precepts.⁷² This association with Zadok, however, was probably nothing more than a way in which the Qumran sectarians could claim the quality of legitimate priests.⁷³ These Qumran "Sadducees," therefore, have nothing in common with the Sadducees of the New Testament.⁷⁴

In assessing the evidence for the origin of the name Sadducee no firm conclusion can be made. There does seem to be a connection with Zadok, the Old Testament priest, but the New Testament Sadducees were neither all descendants of Zadok, nor were they all members of the clergy. Josephus, by his mention of the Sadducees in the John Hyrcanus incident, tacitly shows that the group was already in existence at that time, but his absence of reference to them in any other historical connection implies that the group

⁷¹Meyer, TDNT, 7:39. Other notable references to the leading role of the Zadokites are in the Rule of the Congregation (1 QSa 1:2, 24; 2:3) and the Manual of Righteousness (1 QSb 3:22).

⁷²Robert North, "The Qumran 'Sadducees'," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 17 (2, 1955):165-166.

⁷³Simon, Jewish Sects, p. 20.

⁷⁴Bruce, History, p. 115; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament (Missoula, MT: Scholars' Press, 1974), p. 272; North, "Qumran," p. 164.

had either not reached a state of complete crystallization or else they were not at the center of much public controversy and debate. The increased tension with the Pharisees which progressed into the New Testament period was probably a precipitating factor in the increasing polarization and development of each group. If a decision needs to be made as to which of the three theories of the origin of the name is most accurate, it is probably best to choose the first alternative, and favor a loose connection with the Davidic Zadok.

The New Testament Sadducees, like the Qumran sectarians, may have seen the title Zadokite as an emphasis on their legitimacy and their maintenance of the purity of the Davidic ideal for, as the next section will show, they were vigorously opposed to any doctrinal positions which were novel or which, in their opinion, went beyond the strict literal meaning of divine revelation in the Torah.

Doctrinal Position

There is some debate over the extent of the Sadducees' concern for doctrine. It is true that they might be categorized more as a party than a religious sect in the sense that their political role often seemed to be more prominent than their attention to doctrine.⁷⁵ Yet Matthew

⁷⁵Bruce, History, p. 74; Guignebert, The Jewish World, p. 163; Sundberg, "Sadducees," 4:162.

16:12, which speaks of "the teaching [$\delta\iota\delta\alpha\chi\eta\tilde{\nu}\varsigma$] . . . of the Sadducees" intimates that they did have a fully developed doctrinal system.⁷⁶ In fact, there may have been different schools of thought within their ranks, as was the case in Pharisaism with the followers of Shammai and Hillel.⁷⁷ Rudolph Meyer's statement that Sadducaism was, "atheism in practice" is a subjective judgment which approaches hyperbole.⁷⁸ Their real objective seems to have been to anthropomorphize God in order to bring Him nearer to the level of man.⁷⁹

The Sadducees' concern for doctrine was tempered by their vigilance in maintaining the status quo. They had a marked resistance to any sort of religious innovation. Danker labels the Sadducees the "Fundamentalistic-Conservatives" of the times and the Pharisees the "Liberals."⁸⁰ This conservatism was based on their attitude toward Scripture. In contrast to the Pharisees who gave oral tradition and the interpretations of the rabbis an

⁷⁶Jeremias, Jerusalem, p. 229. Moore also asserts that they were a religious party (George Foot Moore, Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, 2 vols. [New York: Schocken Books, 1958], 1:70).

⁷⁷Box, "Scribes and Sadducees," p. 56.

⁷⁸Meyer, TDNT, 7:46.

⁷⁹Lauterbach, Rabbinic Essays, p. 87.

⁸⁰Danker, Jesus and the New Age, p. 204.

authority equal to the Scriptures, the Sadducees accepted only the written word. Josephus says:

. . . the Pharisees have delivered to the people a great many observances by succession from their fathers; which are not written in the laws of Moses; and for that reason it is that the Sadducees reject them, and say that we are to esteem those observances to be obligatory which are in the written word, but are not to observe what are derived from the tradition of our forefathers.⁸¹

This quotation from Josephus has been the source of much incorrect interpretation. It assumes a crucial importance in the pericope being investigated by this thesis, since Jesus responds to the question about the resurrection raised by the Sadducees with a verse from the Pentateuch. Throughout history many of the Church Fathers have interpreted Josephus' remark to imply that the Sadducees accepted the Pentateuch, but rejected the prophets.⁸² Several modern commentators have followed

⁸¹Antiquities 13.10.6.

⁸²Schürer-Vermes-Millar (History, 4:408, fn. 24) gives the pertinent quotations from Origen, Jerome, Hippolytus, and Pseudo-Tertullian.

suit.⁸³ Others, however, reject this view and say the Church Fathers were in error.⁸⁴

Josephus' comments are not meant to limit the Sadducees' canon. Rather, they simply point out the difference between the Pharisees and Sadducees on the question of the place of oral tradition. It may be conceded that the Pentateuch held a special place of prominence among the Jews, especially because of its importance as a legal source, but this does not de facto mean that they rejected the rest of the sacred Scriptures.⁸⁵ Present day ministers, for instance, may preach and teach far more frequently from the Gospels and Epistles than other parts of the Bible, but

⁸³G. B. Caird, The Gospel of St. Luke. The Pelican Gospel Commentaries (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), p. 224; Norval Geldenhuys, Commentary on the Gospel of Luke. New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), p. 513; Pfeiffer, New Testament Times, p. 56; Eduard Schweizer, The Good News According to Mark, trans. Donald H. Madvig (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1970), p. 246; Edmund F. Sutcliffe, The Old Testament and the Future Life (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1946), p. 150.

⁸⁴William F. Arndt, Bible Commentary: The Gospel According to Luke (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956), pp. 409, 411; Bruce, History, p. 150; Danker, Jesus and the New Age, p. 204; Kaufman, Sects and Schisms, p. 25; McNeile, Matthew, p. 323; Morris, Luke, p. 290; Plummer, Luke, p. 467; Schürer-Vermes-Millar, History, 2:408; Simon, Jewish Sects, p. 25; Sundberg, "Sadducees," 4:162; Vincent Taylor, The Gospel According to St. Mark, 2nd ed. (London: The Macmillan Press, 1966), p. 481.

⁸⁵Danker, Jesus and the New Age, p. 204; Koester, Hellenistic Age, p. 230; Plummer, Luke, p. 467; Safrai and Stern, The Jewish People, 2:793.

this does not imply a rejection of those lesser-used sections.

The existence of the Septuagint, which was begun in the third century B.C., is another factor to consider. Morris says, "The Septuagint is evidence that before New Testament times the canon of the Old Testament was practically fixed, and there seems no reason why any major Jewish party should have rejected most of it."⁸⁶

The most salient point of the Sadducees doctrinal system was their rejection of the immortality of the soul and resurrection of the body. "They also take away the belief of the immortal duration of the soul, and the punishments and rewards in Hades."⁸⁷ In the account of the Sadducees' question to Jesus about the resurrection all three Synoptics add the appositional phrase which identifies the Sadducees as deniers of the resurrection. Acts 23:6 also affirms this.

It is difficult to understand precisely why the Sadducees rejected all belief in the afterlife. The answer need not be tied, however, to the debate over their acceptance or rejection of the prophetic writings. Rather, a partial solution is probably found in their approach to

⁸⁶Morris, Luke, p. 290. Simon (Jewish Sects, p. 25) follows the same line of thought.

⁸⁷Josephus, Wars of the Jews, 2.8.14; see also Antiquities 18.1.4.

Scripture. The Sadducees were rationalists.⁸⁸ They rejected anything that was contrary to reason. They were also very literalistic in their interpretation of Scripture. This is evidenced by their disagreement with the Pharisees over the day for the waving of the omer at Passover, one of the chief controversies between the two groups. Leviticus 23:11 says that "on the day after the Sabbath" the priest should wave the omer of the first fruits. The Sadducees took Sabbath in its literal sense to mean Saturday, while the Pharisees understood it more figuratively to refer to the first day of the festival.

This literalistic hermeneutical method, coupled with a rationalistic mindset would make it possible for the Sadducees to reject the doctrine of the resurrection, as well as any other related idea. Nevertheless, it is difficult to understand how the Sadducees would deal with such clear resurrection passages as Job 19:26, Daniel 12:3, and Isaiah 26:19. Conceivably in these instances their utilitarian political concerns overruled their exegetical instincts. If the possibility of an afterlife was admitted, then it was imaginable that they might be denied a place of importance in it. That was a thought on which the Sadducees certainly did not want to dwell.

⁸⁸Arndt, Luke, p. 409.

Josephus also says that the Sadducees denied fate:

. . . they take away fate, and say there is no such thing, and that the events of human affairs are not at its disposal; but they suppose that all our actions are in our own power so that we are ourselves the causes of what is⁸⁹ good, and receive what is evil from our own folly.

But the Sadducees . . . take away fate entirely, and suppose that God is not concerned in our doing or not doing what is evil; and they say that to act what is good or what is evil is at men's own choice, and that the one or the other belongs⁹⁰ so to every one, that they may act as they please.

The New Testament has no similar description of this point of Sadducaic doctrine. This observation may help to understand the motive for the Sadducees' involvement in politics. If man's destiny is really in his own hands, it is only prudent to participate in statecraft and the political process, thereby attempting to control the course of worldly events for one's own good.

The only other doctrinal particularity of the Sadducees that is known is, ". . . they say there is no angel nor spirit." This information is only given in Acts 23:8. Several different nuances of meaning have been suggested here. Manson says, "It is unlikely that the Sadducees denied outright the existence of angels and demons; for such beings are mentioned in Scripture. What they rejected was the developed doctrine of the two kingdoms

⁸⁹Antiquities 13.5.9.

⁹⁰Wars, 2.8.14.

with their hierarchies of good and evil spirits."⁹¹ Others interpret this as a rejection of magical and astrological speculation⁹² or a disavowal of the belief in the incarnation of angels in the latter days.⁹³ Zeitlin's explanation appears to describe most accurately the Sadducean mindset. In opposition to the Pharisees who held that the heathen nations, even though they did not accept God, were under His providence through the care of an angel, the Sadducees had no angelology because they interpreted the Biblical covenant literally and believed that Yahweh was an ethnic god who cared only for those who were actual descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by birth.⁹⁴

Besides these few loci there are no other descriptions of the doctrinal tenets of the Sadducees. Nevertheless, their guiding principle was obvious: strict literal adherence to the written Word alone (with opportunity provided for circumvention of this principle when called for by reasons of personal expediency).

Their Ultimate Demise

Scholarly opinion is virtually unanimous that the Sadducees disappeared from the scene in A.D. 70 with the

⁹¹Manson, Servant Messiah, p. 17.

⁹²Simon, Jewish Sects, pp. 26-27.

⁹³McClintock-Strong, "Sadducee," 9:236.

⁹⁴Zeitlin, The Judean State, 1:186-187.

fall of Jerusalem.⁹⁵ Because of the destruction of the temple their one greatest sphere of influence was eliminated. When increasing numbers of people were turning to Christianity and its message of resurrection and hope, the Sadducees and their denial of the resurrection was then - more than ever - rejected. They, and everything they stood for, were destined for oblivion.

Summary

How has this information helped give a better understanding of the Sadducees, the chief antagonists in the account to be investigated here? It has shown several important considerations. First, the Sadducees were a group with a mixture of religious and political concerns. They had a doctrinal system, but their theology often had to suffer or be neglected because of their political "posturing." For this reason it is safe to assume that

⁹⁵John Bowker, Jesus and the Pharisees (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 10; Jeremias, Jerusalem, p. 232; Koester, Hellenistic Age, p. 230; McClintock-Strong, "Sadducee," 9:241; Mansoor, "Sadducees," 16:622; Schürer-Vermes-Millar, History, 2:414; Simon, Jewish Sects, p. 24; Sundberg, "Sadducees," 4:161-162; Zeitlin, The Judean State, 3:158, 264. Epstein believes their demise came earlier - perhaps in A.D. 60-61 in a controversy with the high priest Ishmael over the red heifer ritual (Victor Epstein, "When and How the Sadducees Were Excommunicated," Journal of Biblical Literature 85 [1966]:222).

their interest in Jesus was not merely to test His theological erudition. They were concerned with the ramifications of His ministry and popularity on their position and power within the structure of their society.

Secondly, the Sadducees were a group on the wane. The zenith of their history was long past. A coup d'état to Jesus could at least give them a glimpse back at their golden days and win a modicum of popular support. At best, they could humiliate not only Jesus, but also their arch-rivals, the Pharisees, in whose shadow they often stood. The Sadducees, although the definite minority, were not powerless. Yet their efforts were often stymied by the Pharisees. All these elements contributed to the decisiveness and significance of their approach to Jesus and the question they offered.

CHAPTER II

A COMPARISON OF THE SYNOPTIC ACCOUNTS OF THE SADDUCEES' QUESTION TO JESUS

Textual Variants

The textual condition of the account of the Sadducees' question to Jesus in each of the Synoptic Gospels is relatively free of variant readings. Where alternatives do exist they are not radical enough to alter substantially the basic meaning of the text. Discussion, therefore, will be limited to those variant readings common to the latest editions of the United Bible Societies and Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament texts.

In Matthew 22:23 there is a question over the presence of the definite article. Strong external support from a wide variety of manuscripts favors the existing reading which leaves $\Sigma\delta\delta\upsilon\kappa\alpha\tilde{\iota}\omicron\iota$, and the participle following it, anarthrous. Yet the articular participle, to which Koridethi, K, L, and the corrector of Sinaiticus (among others) bear witness, would be more similar to Mark's and Luke's appositional manner of pointing out the Sadducees' denial of the resurrection. This goal of uniformity, however, might have been just the factor which motivated a copyist to insert deliberately the $\omicron\iota$ before

λέγοντες. The UBS editorial committee points out that if the article is retained, this would be the only place in his Gospel where Matthew provides such an explanation of Jewish affairs.¹

The definite article could also have been an accidental insertion, arising from a dittography of the last two letters of Σαδδουκαῖοι. In either case the possibility is much stronger that the ^{οἱ} before λέγοντες was originally absent. Matthew thereby continues his generally more detailed account of the incident by pointing out that the Sadducees professed their denial of the resurrection already at the beginning of their encounter with Jesus, and then put forth their question about the woman and the seven brothers.

Matthew 22:30 contains another textual question which focuses on the definite article. But here there is no real difference in meaning between the variant readings. The anarthrous reading, ἄγγελοι has the limited, but important support of Vaticanus and Bezae, the two chief representatives of the Alexandrian and Western text types, respectively. The less impressive support for the articular form comes chiefly from Θ and family 1. Sinaiticus, L, family 13 and various miniscules append the genitive Θεοῦ

¹Bruce Metzger, ed., A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament (London: United Bible Societies, 1975), p. 58.

to ἄγγελοι. It is probably correct to assume, as does the committee, that if this Θεοῦ were originally part of the text it would not likely have been omitted.² The preferred reading, therefore, is ἄγγελοι by itself.

The last variant of note in Matthew twenty-two is verse thirty-two. This occurs in a significant position. It is here that Jesus is explaining the full implications of His quotation from Exodus 3:6. Each variant reading, in its own way, gives a particular emphasis to the citation. The reading of Vaticanus, L, Δ, family 1, and other miniscules with the articular noun give special attention to Θεός. Sinaiticus, Beza, and several lesser manuscripts read ἔστιν Θεός. This anarthrous use permits one to maintain that the emphasis falls back on the ἔστιν, an important link in the logical progression of Jesus' defense of the resurrection (see Chapter IV). The addition of the extra Θεός in K and many miniscules is for greater precision and, for that reason, is disqualified from possibility as the original reading when the "shorter, more difficult" shibboleth is applied. A choice between the first two alternatives is not entirely clear-cut. Possibly inclusion of the definite article is to be favored because of its consistent use earlier in the verse. The omission in some manuscripts may be due to a copyist's attempt to harmonize

²Metzger, Textual Commentary, p. 59.

Matthew with Mark and Luke and their anarthrous $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$. Both the United Bible Societies and the Nestle-Aland texts include the definite article but put it within single brackets to express a doubtful presence.

The one textual problem in Mark twelve is found in verse twenty-three. The Sadducees have just finished presenting their case. They pose the question, "In the resurrection whose wife will she be?" Some of the lesser manuscripts add the pleonasm, "when they rise," ($\acute{o}\tau\alpha\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\ \&\ \sigma\tau\acute{\omega}\sigma\iota\nu$). It should be noted that this pleonasm is found in four variations in these lesser manuscripts. Although this addition seems tautological and redundant, many commentators feel it should be a part of the text because it is a Semitic idiom and reflects Mark's style.³ The editorial committee of the United Bible Societies sees the absence of the clause from such reliable manuscripts as Sinaiticus and Vaticanus a "deliberate" scribal omission.⁴ Their inclusion of the phrase within brackets shows a respect for the readings of the lesser manuscripts. The pleonasm does sharpen the dialogue. It gives extra

³C. E. B. Cranfield, The Gospel According to St. Mark. The Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), p. 374; Lane, Mark, p. 426; Taylor, Mark, p. 482. Metzger (Textual Commentary, p. 110) gives 13:19 as an example.

⁴Metzger, Textual Commentary, p. 110.

terseness and sarcasm to the question of the Sadducees, almost as if they are sure they will prove Jesus wrong.

The textual variant in Luke 20:27 is similar to the Markan variant just discussed. The simple reading λέγοντες has, by far, the strongest external support (including Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Ephraemi, Bezae, and Koridethi). But both the United Bible Societies and Nestle-Aland texts chose to include ἄντι as a prefix to λέγοντες within brackets. The prefixed reading may fit the maxim: lectio difficilior probabilior. It causes a difficult, but not impossible, double negative. If this were the original wording, Luke might have used it to emphasize the Sadducees' absolute rejection of the doctrine of the resurrection. Howard Marshall points out that Luke does use this prefix in other instances.⁵ Furthermore, the shorter reading might have been a scribal attempt to follow more closely the Matthean parallel in 22:23.⁶ Although the presence of ἄντι could, in fact, be supported, the evidence is not totally conclusive for a decision either way in this passage as well as the one from Mark 12:23.

⁵I. Howard Marshall, Commentary on Luke. New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), p. 790.

⁶Metzger, Textual Commentary, p. 171.

Context

An analysis of the context in which the Sadducean question to Jesus occurs is extremely important. The influence of Jesus has been mounting, and opposition to Him has been intensifying. This episode is a vital link in the chronology of the Passion Narratives. Matthew is the only Synoptic writer to give an historical frame of reference to the encounter between Jesus and the Sadducees. His Ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ refers to Tuesday of Holy Week, as a reconstruction of both preceding and subsequent events will show. The Gospel of John, together with the Synoptics, is useful in formulating a chronology of the Passion.

John reports that six days before the Passover Jesus and His disciples came to Bethany.⁷ Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead in Bethany.⁸ Great crowds of people were coming there when they learned that Jesus had returned to the town. These people came to see Lazarus as well as Jesus.⁹ The chief priests saw this commotion and made plans to kill Lazarus, "because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus."¹⁰ If these chief priests were Sadducees, already here a glimpse is given of their resolve to stifle the effects of Jesus' teaching.

⁷John 12:1.

⁸John 11:1-44.

⁹John 12:9.

¹⁰John 12:10, 11.

All four Gospel writers record the dramatic account of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Sunday.¹¹ Luke, however, reports that as Jesus and the crowd approached Jerusalem at the descent of the Mount of Olives some Pharisees objected to the outbursts of cheering and asked Jesus to rebuke His disciples.¹² John reports that the Pharisees were discussing Jesus among themselves: "The Pharisees then said to one another, 'You see that you can do nothing; look the world has gone after him.'"¹³ Matthew alone adds the detail that Jesus was teaching and healing in the temple, with the result that boys (τῶν παιδῶν) were crying out, "Hosanna to the Son of David."¹⁴

On Monday other significant events occur. On His way back to Jerusalem from Bethany Jesus sees a fig tree. Looking for fruit and finding nothing but leaves, Jesus pronounces a judgment on the fig tree, "May no fruit ever come from you again."¹⁵ When He arrived in Jerusalem He

¹¹Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-44; John 12:12-19.

¹²Luke 19:37.

¹³John 12:19.

¹⁴Matthew 21:14-15.

¹⁵Matthew 21:18-19; Mark 11:12-14. When Mark 11:14 says that "it was not the season for figs" this does not mean that Jesus had no right to look for fruit. Rather it means that this tree was prematurely in leaf while the others were only beginning to bud. Therefore, fruit could

entered the temple and drove out all the money-changers, telling them that they had made His house a "den of robbers."¹⁶

This cleansing of the temple was a tremendous precipitating fact in the polarization of Jesus and those in authority. In the first place, what He had done was not authorized by the council. Secondly, His action would disrupt a source of their income. Jesus thereby again aroused the indignation of those in authority. From that time, the chief priests and the scribes and the "principal men of the people" (οἱ πρῶτοι τοῦ λαοῦ) began to seek a way to destroy Him, but their efforts were frustrated because of Jesus' growing popularity.¹⁷

All three Synoptics report that when Jesus arrived in the temple on Tuesday the Jewish officials approached Him with a challenge.¹⁸ The chief priests, scribes, and elders came to Jesus as He was teaching and questioned His authority. This interrogation was caused by Jesus' expulsion of the merchants from the temple, together with

be expected. There was no deception on Jesus' part. Fruit could even appear before the leaves (see Richard St. Barbe Baker, Famous Trees of Bible Lands [London: H. H. Greave, 1974], p. 59).

¹⁶Matthew 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-58.

¹⁷Luke 19:47-48; Mark 11:18.

¹⁸Matthew 21:23-27; Mark 11:27-33; Luke 20:1-8.

the growing popular response to Him. When these officials asked if Jesus was doing this on His own authority or if someone else gave authority to Him, they really wanted to know why He was performing seemingly official acts if He had no official sanction. They hoped that His reply would bring Him into disfavor with the people. But Jesus replied to their question with a troubling counter-question about the source of John's baptism. The members of the group deliberated among themselves, but they were unable to respond without further incriminating themselves. Jesus had again thwarted their offensive.

In addition, this situation gave Jesus the opportunity to speak to them in parables.¹⁹ Matthew alone records the parable of the two sons²⁰ and the parable of the marriage of the King's son.²¹ All three Synoptics include the parable of the wicked lessees of the vineyard.²² It is after the members of the council understood the meaning of this parable and realized that it was directed to them that they tried to arrest Jesus. Again, however, they hesitated

¹⁹Mark 12:1.

²⁰Matthew 21:28-32.

²¹Matthew 22:1-14.

²²Matthew 21:33-46; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19.

because of the favorable attitude of the crowds toward Jesus.²³

It is after all of these events occurred that three questions were posed by the Pharisees and Sadducees. The first question was asked by the Pharisees. It concerned paying tribute to Caesar.²⁴ The second question is the one specifically studied in this thesis. It came from the Sadducees and pertained to the marriage-tie in the resurrection.²⁵ A third question, put forth by a Pharisaic lawyer, asked about the greatest commandment. This question is recorded in Matthew and Mark,²⁶ but is absent in Luke. Following these three questions, each of the Synoptics includes a discussion about the Messiah being the son of David.²⁷ This discussion resulted from a question Jesus asked.

²³Matthew 21:46; Mark 12:12; Luke 20:19.

²⁴Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26; Box ("Scribes and Sadducees," p. 66) posits that this question was asked by Sadducean scribes because of its political nature. He says there is a confusion in the Matthean and Markan parallels to Luke 20. According to Box, the whole of Luke 20 is directed against the Sadducees. However, no textual evidence supports the omission of the word Pharisee in either Matthew 22:15 or Mark 12:13.

²⁵Matthew 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-38.

²⁶Matthew 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34.

²⁷Matthew 22:41-46; Mark 12:35-37; Luke 20:41-44.

Questions and discussions such as these may have been a fairly common occurrence in New Testament times.²⁸ A teacher could expect inquiries on virtually any subject. Moreover, students often framed their questions in such a way as to trap their teacher. Therefore the teacher would often suspect that a question may be a trick-question whether it was or not.

David Daube suggests that this fourfold scheme in the Synoptics is influenced by early Rabbinic Judaism.²⁹ According to the Talmud a group of Alexandrians asked Rabbi Joshua ben Hannaniah, a rabbi active in the immediate decades after A.D. 70, twelve different questions.³⁰ These

²⁸J. Duncan M. Derrett, Jesus's Audience: The Social and Psychological Environment in Which He Worked (New York: Seabury Press, 1973), p. 138; Josephus (Antiquities 18.1.4) says that the Sadducees "think it an instance of virtue to dispute with those teachers of philosophy whom they frequent."

²⁹David Daube, The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism (London: The University of London Athlone Press, 1956), pp. 158-163; see also Fitzmyer, Semitic Background, p. 124; and H. Benedict Green, The Gospel According to Matthew. The New Clarendon Bible (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 183.

³⁰Bab. Nid. 69b. Rabbi Joshua settled at Pekiin, a small town between Jabneh and Lydda, after the destruction of the temple. Strack classifies him among the older group of the second generation of Tannaim (Herman L. Strack, Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash [New York: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1931; reprint ed., Atheneum, NY: Temple Books, 1969], p. 111).

can be categorized into four types.³¹ The first type labelled hokhma (wisdom) were halakhic questions which concerned points of Law. A second type of question was the haggadha. It dealt with apparent contradictions between different verses from Scripture. Thirdly, boruth, or questions of vulgarity, were designed for the sole purpose of mocking and ridiculing a belief of a Rabbi. Interestingly, each boruth in this rabbinic account was directed against the belief in the resurrection. For example the Alexandrians asked Rabbi Joshua if the child brought back to life by Elisha conveyed uncleanness as a corpse. The fourth type of rabbinic question related to derekh 'eres, principles of moral and successful life such as, "What shall a man do to become rich?"

According to Daube's reconstruction, the Pharisees' question about tribute to Caesar is a hokhma, the Sadducees' question about the seven husbands is a boruth, and the question from the lawyer about the greatest commandment is a derekh 'eres.³² The question posed by Jesus about David's Son is, accordingly, a haggadha. Daube does point out some differences between the New Testament and Talmudic scheme of questions.³³

³¹Daube, Rabbinic Judaism, p. 159.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid., pp. 159-162.

The first and most obvious difference is that the Talmud has twelve questions while the New Testament has only four. In addition the Talmudic order is different. Hokhma comes first, and is followed by haggadha, boruth, and derekh 'eres. In the New Testament the order would be: hokhma, boruth, derekh 'eres, and haggadha. The fact that the fourth question is asked by Jesus Himself, rather than His listeners, is also somewhat difficult to justify with this reconstruction.

Daube comes to the conclusion that this fourfold scheme may be of Greek origin.³⁴ He feels the fact that in the Talmudic account the questioners are from Alexandria, where the influence of Hellenism was greatly felt, lends credence to his view. Moreover, questions similar to derekh 'eres were highly cultivated in Hellenism. The derision of the resurrection displayed in the boruth questions would also be a prominent characteristic of Hellenized Jews.

Daube's hypothesis is interesting, but as he very openly concedes, the connection between this Talmudic account and the Pharisees' and Sadducees' questions to Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels involves a certain amount of alteration and adaptation. He believes that the four questions in the Synoptics do not date from the same

³⁴Ibid., p. 161.

historical occasion.³⁵ He suggests that Christ's unanswered question about the Messiah being the son of David was originally independent of the others because both Matthew and Mark begin it with a new description of occasion and place. Daube holds that at a later date an editor, who was mindful of the aforementioned Talmudic account, arranged the Gospel material in its present fourfold scheme.³⁶

Daube's theory involves hermeneutical operating principles which militate against the divinely inspired nature of the Biblical account. He understands the present text to be a result of a process of significant editing and reworking. John Bowman displays a similar presupposition when he holds that these questions show how the forces of opposition were closing in on Jesus, but they were also "a literary device to bring out Jesus' teaching on various topics."³⁷ Eduard Schweizer is even more radical in his criticism. Although he reluctantly admits that Jesus may have used the statements which the Gospel writers record, it

³⁵Ibid., p. 158.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷John Bowman, The Gospel of Mark: The New Christian Jewish Passover Haggadah. Studia Post-Biblica, vol. 8 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1956), p. 229.

is most likely, he says, that these statements "rose in the polemic of the church."³⁸

Critical arguments such as these can be rejected on presuppositional grounds alone. However, they can also be rejected on the basis of textual evidence. The Synoptic writers give every indication that these were actual historical events which were chronologically consecutive. Especially Matthew's Ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ³⁹ and Mark's crisp parataxis⁴⁰ anchor the historicity of the questions of the Pharisees and the Sadducees with the surrounding context. Moreover, it is only logical to assume that all of these questions occurred on the same occasion.⁴¹ The Pharisees and Sadducees, as the official representatives of Judaism, realized that Jesus' popularity was increasing. They must do something soon to stop his growing influence. His success could be disastrous to the nation as they saw it.⁴²

³⁸Schweizer, Mark, p. 246. See also Eduard Schweizer, The Good News According to Matthew, trans. David E. Green (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975), p. 424. Here he intimates that the Gospel of Matthew was written sometime after A.D. 70 when the Sadducees were no longer active.

³⁹Matthew 22:23.

⁴⁰Mark 12:1, 13, 18, 28, 35, 37.

⁴¹Matthew 26:1-2 gives chronological information: "When Jesus had finished all these sayings [of Tuesday], he said to his disciples, 'You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.'"

⁴²Arndt, Luke, p. 409.

John describes the earlier mindset which may have motivated their opposition to Jesus:

"If we let him go on like this every one will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation." But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all; you do not understand that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish." He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. So from that day on they took counsel how to put him to death.⁴³

It is natural, therefore, that this Tuesday turned into a day of theological questioning.⁴⁴ The Pharisees as well as the Sadducees were equally determined to trick Jesus and cause Him to fall into disfavor with the populace and/or the Roman authorities. One question prompted another. In the end, however, each question backfired. They intensified rather than lessened the prominence of Jesus.

Levirate Marriage as the Framework for the
Question on the Resurrection

In each of the Synoptics, the Sadducees' question about marriage in the Resurrection follows the question of the Pharisees on paying tribute to Caesar. Like the other

⁴³John 11:48-53; Eppstein ("Sadducees," p. 214) correctly suggests that Caiaphas was a Sadducee.

⁴⁴William Strawson, Jesus and the Future Life: A Study in the Synoptic Gospels (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1959), p. 203.

questions this one, too, was aimed at destroying Jesus' influence. If the Sadducees' question is a rabbinic boruth, as Daube (see above) has suggested, its main purpose was to humiliate Jesus. Yet, by their attack on the resurrection, the Sadducees question a doctrine which both Jesus and the Pharisees upheld.⁴⁵ If Jesus was unable to answer their question, the Sadducees would also win an ideological victory over their rivals, the Pharisees.

Superficially, the Sadducees' question appears to be less dangerous than the preceding question of the Pharisees.⁴⁶ It dealt with a doctrinal matter, and concerned a topic of exegesis rather than politics. The Pharisees' question about tribute to Caesar had the potential for controversy and dissent with the governing authorities. The question of the Sadducees did not. This is in accord with the realistic attitude which the Sadducees generally showed toward those with political power. This is not to say, however, that the Sadducees were any less shrewd than the Pharisees in their questioning of Jesus.

⁴⁵Zeitlin (The Judean State, 1:476) asserts that the Pharisees did not believe in the resurrection of the body. This view, however, is not in accord with Josephus (Antiquities 18.1.3), the New Testament (Acts 23:8), and the witness of the Pseudepigrapha and Apocrypha (2 Baruch 49-52).

⁴⁶Plummer, Luke, p. 467.

The Sadducees frame their question to Jesus about the resurrection around the concept of levirate marriage. Their intent is to pose a reductio ad absurdum which forces Jesus to deny either the Old Testament teaching on levirate marriage⁴⁷ (see below) or the doctrine of the resurrection. In their presentation of the Sadducees' question, each of the Synoptics uses the example of seven brothers who married a woman in turn. Lane points out that this specificity, which is not necessary in order for the thrust of the question to be understood, may signal that the story is adapted from a version in the book of Tobit, almost as if it were a theme in folklore put to new use.⁴⁸ In Tobit⁴⁹ a certain Sarah, daughter of Raguel, was given to seven husbands, but the evil demon Asmodeus had successively slain each of them before the marriage was sexually consummated.

⁴⁷McClintock-Strong ("Sadducee," 9:236-237) suggest that the question of the Sadducees was attacking the Pharisaic teaching on levirate marriage in addition to the doctrine of the resurrection. The Sadducees restricted levirate marriage to cases of betrothal, but denied it when the marriage had been sexually consummated. Therefore a woman's relation to the most recent brother-in-law was the most intimate because, according to the Sadducees, she had cohabited with him. She was merely betrothed to the others. The Pharisees did not have this restriction. A man could perform the duty of the levirate even if sexual union had occurred between his brother and wife. In their view, then, a woman would be the real wife to all of the brothers involved in the levirate marriage.

⁴⁸Lane, Mark, pp. 426-427.

⁴⁹Especially chapters 3 and 4.

In the end, Tobit's son Tobias exorcises Sarah's demon, and marries her himself.

Before the Sadducees actually pose this question, however, they allude to the Mosaic legitimation of levirate marriage.⁵⁰ The first incidence of levirate marriage in the Pentateuch occurs in Genesis 38. There Er, the oldest son of Judah, marries Tamar. Er is a wicked man and is slain by the Lord before he has children with Tamar. After Er's death Judah, in verse eight, urges Onan, another son, to "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." Onan was unwilling to comply fully with this demand. Eventually Tamar took deceitful steps to make Judah perform the levirate duty.

The second mention of levirate marriage in the Pentateuch occurs in Deuteronomy 25:5-10:

If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead 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. And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his brother who is dead, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. 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." 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," then his brother's wife shall go up to him in the presence of the elders, and pull

⁵⁰Matthew 22:24; Mark 12:19; Luke 20:28.

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." And the name of his house shall be called in Israel, The house of him that had his sandal pulled off.

Because the Sadducees quotation neither of these passages verbatim it is possible that they had them both in mind when they put their question to Jesus.⁵¹ In any event, they abridge and modify the Old Testament prescriptions in a way that suits their needs. No mention is made, for instance, of the requirement in Deuteronomy 25:5 that the brothers must live together (וְיָרְדוּ אִתּוֹ וְיִשְׁבוּ אִתּוֹ). The Sadducees also imply that a brother is required to marry his deceased brother's wife if there are no children.⁵² But the Old Testament gives a procedure for cases where the man is unwilling to take his brother's wife, as Deuteronomy 25 shows.

Other than Deuteronomy 25 and Genesis 38, levirate marriage occurs in the Old Testament only in Ruth 3:9. There Ruth's marriage to Boaz is related to the concept of

⁵¹Fitzmyer (Semitic Background, p. 65) labels this inquiry a "conflated question;" Pesch calls it a "Zitatkombination" (Rudolf Pesch, Das Markusevangelium. Herders Theologischer Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament [Freiburg: Herder, 1977], 2:231).

⁵²F. Blass and A. Debrunner, A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, trans. Robert W. Funk (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), paragraph 470 classifies the ἵνα λαβῆ in Mark 12:19 and Luke 20:28 as "imperatival." Matthew's use of the future tense (ἐπιγομβρεύσει) in verse 24 also has an imperatival thrust.

goel, as well as to levirate marriage. The goel prevented the land of the deceased relative from being lost to his heirs.⁵³

Other ancient Near Eastern cultures had practices similar to levirate marriage. The Code of Hammurabi does not mention it, but parallels are known in Assyrian, Hittite, and Canaanite sources.⁵⁴ This raises the question of the extent of their influence on the Israelite practice. Millar Burrows asserts that Israelite levirate marriage originated with the Canaanites, and is bound up with ancestor worship.⁵⁵ The לֵוִי clause in Deuteronomy 25, he says, shows that levirate marriage is a casuistic law. According to Albrecht Alt's theory, this confirms a Canaanite etiology.⁵⁶ O. J. Baab neither affirms nor denies a totemistic etiology.⁵⁷ He is also less than certain that

⁵³Leviticus 25:25.

⁵⁴Roland deVaux, Ancient Israel, vol. 1: Social Institutions (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), p. 37; O. J. Baab, "Marriage," in The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible 4 vols. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), 3:282.

⁵⁵Millar Burrows, "Levirate Marriage in Israel," Journal of Biblical Literature, 59, (1940): 13, 31, 32.

⁵⁶Alt held that Canaanite law was secular and casuistic, in contrast to the apodictic, religious nature of Israelite law (Albrecht Alt, "The Origins of Israelite Law," in Essays on Old Testament History and Religion, trans. R. A. Wilson [Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1967], pp. 103-171).

⁵⁷Baab, IDB, 3:282.

levirate marriage is a casuistic law, but intimates that if it can be proven as such, a Canaanite influence is likely.

The solution to this issue can be found in the purposes which different cultures attached to levirate marriage. The Canaanites practiced the custom for reasons of inheritance.⁵⁸ A widow was merely part of the deceased husband's estate. Deuteronomy 25:6 points out, however, that the purpose of levirate marriage for the Hebrews was the preservation of the name of the dead (καὶ οὐκ ἔξειφθῆσεται τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐξ Ἰσραηλ). Since the name was intimately tied to a man's personhood, the extinction of self was avoided when a man had a son.⁵⁹ The Hebrew practice also may have been related to their desire to prevent the marriage of an Israelite girl to a pagan outsider.

Thus, even if the marriage of widows to brothers or other near relatives of the husband was common in the Ancient Near East at the time of Moses,⁶⁰ the Israelite practice of levirate marriage had a distinctively superior uniqueness because of the covenant context in which it stood.

⁵⁸Burrows, "Levirate Marriage," p. 28.

⁵⁹Isaiah 66:22; deVaux, Social Institutions, p. 38; Baab, IDB, 3:282.

⁶⁰Burrows, "Levirate Marriage," p. 27.

The status of levirate marriage in New Testament times is a final consideration that needs to be discussed here. Matthew 22:25 has the Sadducees saying that there were seven brothers "among us" (παρ ἡμῶν). This seems to imply that the problem they pose is an actual occurrence.⁶¹ The omission of the phrase by Mark and Luke gives the impression that the Sadducees were asking a mere hypothetical, academic question, but their account need not be seen in contradiction to Matthew, for their use of ἡσαν does not preclude the possibility of an actual occurrence. The conclusion one can draw from this is that levirate marriage, although rarely occurring,⁶² was still a legal and theoretical possibility. If this were the case, the Sadducees would be aware of it because of their concern for a strict, literalistic adherence to the written word.

The Resurrection

After the Sadducees asked their question, Jesus began His reply by describing the state of men and women in the resurrection. Each of the Synoptic writers uses

⁶¹Claude Joseph Montefiore, The Synoptic Gospels, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London: Macmillan and Company, 1927), 2:291; McNeile, Matthew, p. 321.

⁶²Morris, Luke, p. 290; McNeile, Matthew, p. 321; Pesch, Markusevangelium, 2:231. Easton (Luke, p. 299) refers to Jerusalem Yebamoth 6b which tells of a man who had thirty-six children by a series of levirate unions.

slightly different language to refer to the resurrection. Matthew uses the dative case with the preposition ἐν and the definite article in verse 30, and the genitive case with the definite article in verse 31. Mark uses the second aorist active subjunctive of the verb ἀνίστημι in verse 25, and the present passive indicative of ἐγείρω in verse 26 as synonyms.⁶³ Luke's language is the most specific. In verse 35 he talks of "the resurrection from the dead" (τῆς ἀναστάσεως τῆς ἐκ νεκρῶν).

These observations are meant to underscore the point that in His response to the Sadducees' question Jesus is talking specifically about the resurrection of the righteous.⁶⁴ Jesus uses the quotation from Exodus 3 to talk of the living (ζώντων).⁶⁵ Luke's inclusion of the aorist passive participle καταζωθέντες in verse 35 limits the

⁶³ Both of these words are used of a resurrection from the dead in other places in the New Testament: ἀνίστημι is used of believers in John 6:40, 44, 54; 11:24 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16, and of unbelievers in Matthew 12:41. ἐγείρω is used of the resurrection of believers in Matthew 27:52; John 5:21, 1 Corinthians 15:15, 16, 29, 32, 35, 42, 43, 44, 52; 2 Corinthians 1:9 and 4:14; and of unbelievers in Matthew 12:42. Taylor (Mark, p. 482) and Cranfield (Mark, p. 375) classify ἐγείρονται here as a gnomic present, which signifies either a general truth or future certainty.

⁶⁴ Arndt, Luke, p. 410; Morris, Luke, p. 291; Strawson, Future Life, p. 209; Taylor, Mark, p. 483.

⁶⁵ For a discussion of the significance of this quotation see Chapter IV of this thesis.

resurrection from the dead to those who are "accounted worthy."

This is not to say, however, that this account stands at variance with such passages as Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 20:11-15; and John 5:28-29 which speak of the resurrection of all people. In His answer to the Sadducees, Jesus put the resurrection in a positive light, focusing more on the hope of the faithful than the ultimate punishment of the wicked. Floyd Filson comments, "The attention of Christians normally centered not on the doom of the wicked, but on the positive expectation of what the last day would bring to believers. They could speak often of that side of coming events without denying their fuller picture."⁶⁶ Jesus here could legitimately speak only of the resurrection of the just because the resurrection of the unjust "is practically no resurrection at all, as it is but the gateway to eternal death, the judgment which the lost receive in a state of bare existence, which is totally different from spiritual life, for they have no personal intercourse with God."⁶⁷

In describing the state of the just in the resurrection Jesus makes a comparison between people and

⁶⁶Floyd V. Filson, Jesus Christ the Risen Lord (Nashville: Abingdon, 1956), p. 271.

⁶⁷Geldenhuys, Luke, pp. 513-514.

angels.⁶⁸ It is important to note that He does not say that men and women will become angels. Rather He says that they will be similar or equal to angels. Matthew 22:30 and Mark 12:25 use ^ςὡς as a comparative conjunction with the noun ἄγγελοι. Luke puts the two together in the compound ἰσαγγελοι.⁶⁹ Some discussion has focused on what Jesus meant to be the precise tertium comparationis. Three basic emphases are possible.

The first alternative understands the point of comparison to be immortality.⁷⁰ According to this view the

⁶⁸This would not be a completely new thought to Jesus' hearers if they were familiar with the intertestamental literature. Strack and Billerbeck (Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, Das Evangelium Nach Matthäus. Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament Aus Talmud und Midrash [Munich: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1965], p. 891) cite similar ideas in Enoch 51:4; 104:6; and the Apocalypse of Baruch 51:10. Hengel notes that on the basis of Wisdom 3:7 the Essenes believed the pious to live in close communion with angels. (Martin Hengel, Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine During the Early Hellenistic Period, 2 vols., trans. John Bowden [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974], 1:197).

⁶⁹Blass-DeBrunner (Grammar, paragraph 118[1]) cite this as an example of a word formation where the first element of the word governs the second element. They state that this Lukan form corresponds to the participle, and is equivalent to ἴσος τῶν ἀγγέλων. The similarly formed words in 2 Peter 1:1 (ἰσοτίμος - "equally privileged") and Philippians 2:20 (ἰσοψυχός - "sharing the same feelings") fall into a different category than ἰσαγγελοι.

⁷⁰Arndt, Luke, p. 411; Easton, Luke, p. 300; Geldenhuys, Luke, p. 514; George E. Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), pp. 47, 74, 195; Marshall, Luke, p. 741; Franz Musser, "The Synoptic

resurrected righteous will be similar to the angels because they are delivered from mortality and its consequences. Luke stresses this emphasis by his word order. In verse 36 the emphatic phrase *οὐδέ γὰρ ἀποθανεῖν ἔτι δύναται* ("for neither are they able to die any more") is followed immediately by *ἰσάγγελοι γὰρ εἰσιν*. If this latter phrase is meant to be appositional to the former, then the quality of angels upon which Luke is primarily focusing is immortality.

Matthew's and Mark's word order give a slightly different nuance, and form the basis for a second emphasis in terms of the point of comparison.⁷¹ In their accounts the phrase *οὔτε γαμοῦσιν οὔτε γαμίζονται* precedes the reference to angels. This hearkens back to the real thrust of the Sadducees' question about levirate marriage. Jesus tells His hearers that because the resurrected righteous are as the angels, who are ever-living spirits and do not propagate their kind,⁷² the Sadducees' question is irrelevant since marriage will then be superceded.

Account of Jesus' Teaching on the Future Life," in Immortality and Resurrection, ed. Pierre Benoit and Roland Murphy (n.p.: Herder & Herder, 1970), p. 52; Plummer, Luke, p. 470; Henry Barclay Swete, Commentary on Mark (London: Macmillan, 1913), p. 281.

⁷¹R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), p. 873.

⁷²Moore, Judaism, 1:406; Enoch 15:4-7.

A third emphasis can be posited as the point of comparison. Jesus may have compared the resurrected righteous to the angels in order to show that the whole purpose and center of their life is communion with God.⁷³

Important in this respect is Luke's phrase *καὶ υἱοὶ εἰσὶν θεοῦ τῆς ἀναστάσεως υἱοὶ ὄντες*. This use of the word *υἱός* as a term of eschatological relationship hearkens back to such passages as Matthew 5:9 where Jesus pronounces the peacemakers blessed because they will be called sons of God. In Luke 6:35 Christ says that those who love their enemies will be sons of the most High.⁷⁴ Frederick Danker⁷⁵ lists Genesis 6:2,⁷⁶ Job 1:6; 38:7; Psalm 39:1 and 89:6 as among the places where the Old Testament uses the phrase "sons of God" to refer to angels.

Understood in this way, a son is one who enjoys the bliss of everlasting communion with God. Luke's account helps the exegete to put more stress on the *ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς* in Matthew 22:30 and Mark 12:25. The first book of Enoch

⁷³Lane, Mark, p. 428.

⁷⁴Arndt (Luke, p. 410) calls this a Hebraic use of *υἱός* and lists Matthew 8:12; 13:38; Luke 5:34; 10:6; 16:8 as other parallels.

⁷⁵Danker, Jesus and the New Age, p. 205. Other occurrences include Job 2:1 and Daniel 3:25.

⁷⁶It is also tenable that in this verse "sons of God" refers to the line of Seth, described in Genesis 5.

which says, "You shall have great joy as the angels in heaven (104:4)," also sheds light on this emphasis.

Ultimately, each of these three explanations for Jesus' point of comparison with the angels in His answer to the question about the resurrection overlap with each other. Immortality, for instance, would be desirable only if communion with God is involved (and vice versa). Likewise, the abolishment of the marital relationship is fully understood only in light of the eternal duration of the resurrection age. For if those who are resurrected never die, the need for reproduction, one of the purposes of the union of husband and wife, is eliminated. It is best, therefore, to conclude that each of these emphases has a part in Jesus' use of this comparison.⁷⁷

Jesus very skillfully uses this comparison with the angels, first of all, to prove the fact of the resurrection, which the Sadducees were challenging. In so doing He gave His hearers a glimpse of the state of men and women in the

⁷⁷Clearly, one point of comparison Jesus is not making here is that, like angels (Psalm 104:4), those who are resurrected will be spirits. This would defeat the whole point of His argument with the Sadducees, for He means to show that the resurrection involves the body. See D. H. Van Daalen, "Some Observations on Mark 12, 24-27," Studia Evangelica (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1968), 4:242.

resurrection life. Secondly, the comparison also served to correct the Sadducean misunderstanding of angels.⁷⁸

Summary

The textual condition of this episode in each of the Synoptics is good. A comparison of the Synoptic accounts shows that this event occurred on Tuesday of Holy Week. The problem which the Sadducees posed was one of a series of questions asked Jesus by representatives of official Judaism on that day. Critical hypotheses which reject the historicity of these events use hermeneutical operating principles which militate against the divinely inspired nature of the Biblical account.

The Sadducees abridged and modified Old Testament prescriptions on levirate marriage in a way that served their desire to bring Jesus into disfavor with the populace. Mark and Luke give the impression that the Sadducees were asking a merely hypothetical question, but Matthew leaves room for the possibility that the problem they pose was an actual occurrence. The conclusion one can draw from this is

⁷⁸Plummer, Luke, p. 470. See also Bernard J. Bamberger, "The Sadducees and the Belief in Angels," Journal of Biblical Literature 82 (1963):433 and Gerhard Kittel, "The Doctrine of Angels in Judaism," in TDNT, 1:80. Both Bamberger and Kittel try to diminish the likelihood of this two-fold purpose in Jesus' comparison by discounting Acts 23:8, the only place where this point of Sadducaic doctrine is mentioned. Kittel says this verse is "a little exaggerated." Bamberger says Luke may have been "speaking loosely" here.

that levirate marriage, although rarely occurring, was still a legal and theoretical possibility. Jesus' comparison of the resurrected righteous with angels suggests three emphases: immortality, the supersession of present earthly relationships, and the communion of the resurrected with God.

CHAPTER III

RELATED ISSUES IN HEBREW, GREEK, AND JEWISH THOUGHT

Hebrew Anthropology

Old Testament anthropology is an important ancillary consideration in an examination of Jesus' defense of the resurrection of the dead. The logical development of His rejoinder to the Sadducees proceeds along lines of thought which reflect the Hebrew concept of the intrinsic unity of the human personality. Using a verse from Exodus chapter three, Jesus asserts that the dead will be raised because Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are now alive.¹ To the Greek mind, this would only serve to reaffirm the notion of the immortality of the soul. However, to one knowledgeable of the Old Testament's statements on the nature and composition of man, it would be a striking substantiation of the belief in the resurrection of the body.

One of the most important words for an understanding of Old Testament anthropology is נֶפֶשׁ.² Originally the word

¹Chapter four of this thesis deals with the many issues surrounding Jesus' use of Exodus 3:6 in His defense of the resurrection.

²Edmond Jacob, ("The Anthropology of the Old Testament," TDNT, 9:620) says the word has "priority" in the anthropological vocabulary.

had anatomical overtones, referring to the neck, throat, or gullet.³ Later this was expanded and נִפְשׁ came to refer to breath, that which came out of the throat. This emphasis is present in Genesis 2:7. There Moses says that when God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life he became a "living being" (נִפְשׁ אַיִם).⁴

The traditional translation of נִפְשׁ as "soul" may give the wrong impression of the meaning of the word. Throughout the Old Testament נִפְשׁ comes to be associated simply with life.⁵ Thus, when Saul was seeking to kill David, Michal told David, "If you do not save your life

³Walther Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, trans. J. A. Baker (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967) 2:134. Waltke points out that Ugaritic and Akkadian cognates also have this meaning. In the Old Testament, he feels, Isaiah 5:14; Habakkuk 2:5; and Psalm 69:2 may carry this nuance. However, Jacob, (TDNT, 9:618-619) says this is always a derived sense and "in no Hebrew text does it express the original meaning." (Bruce K. Waltke, "נִפְשׁ" in Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, 2 vols. ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke [Chicago: Moody Press, 1980] 2:588).

⁴1 Kings 17:22 may also have this connection between breath and נִפְשׁ: ". . .and the Lord hearkened to the voice of Elijah; and the נִפְשׁ [breath, life] of the child came into him again and he revived."

⁵In this sense the word is even associated with animals, for they too have life. See, for example, Genesis 9:4 and Leviticus 24:18. Leviticus 17:11 explains the theological basis of the Old Testament proscription against the eating of blood. The Revised Standard Version translates, "the life [נִפְשׁ] of the flesh is in the blood [דָּמָא]." However, if the נִפְשׁ is understood as stressing essence, the translation becomes, "the life is the blood." Waltke ("נִפְשׁ," 2:590) says that here נִפְשׁ denotes "the vitality, the passionate existence."

[בְּיָשָׁרָה], tomorrow you will die."⁶ Likewise in pronouncing judgment on Israel, Amos gives שְׁכֵן this same connotation when he says, "and the strong shall not retain his strength, nor the mighty save his life [שְׁכֵן]." ⁷ The שְׁכֵן as one's life may be that which one's enemies seek or that for which they lie in wait.⁸

In a stricter sense, שְׁכֵן as "life" is equivalent to the person himself. When the men whom Joshua sent to Jericho as spies found refuge in Rahab's house, she made them promise to save alive "my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives [בְּיָשָׁרָה] from death."⁹ Here שְׁכֵן is nearly synonymous with the first person plural pronoun, "us." In his satire against idolatry, Isaiah talks about the person who "cannot deliver himself [שְׁכֵן]," again showing שְׁכֵן as being equivalent to the person.¹⁰ The Psalms bear further witness to this fact. Of the one hundred forty-four occurrences of שְׁכֵן in the Psalter, the first person suffix is added over one hundred times.¹¹

⁶1 Samuel 19:11.

⁷Amos 2:14.

⁸Exodus 4:19; Psalm 59:4.

⁹Joshua 2:13.

¹⁰Isaiah 44:20.

¹¹Waltke, "שְׁכֵן," 2:590.

A second significant word for an understanding of Hebrew anthropology is רוּחַ. In a neutral sense it simply means wind or air.¹² However, it also has important overtones in terms of the constituent make-up of man. First of all, it may refer to an attitude or disposition of the mind. In describing rebellious Israel, Hosea says that a "spirit of harlotry" (רוּחַ זְנוּנוֹת) had led them astray.¹³ Joshua is marked by a "spirit of wisdom."¹⁴ Caleb was granted admission to the Promised Land because of his obedience and "different spirit" (רוּחַ אַחֵר).¹⁵

Closely associated with this meaning of רוּחַ is its association with the will and/or intellect. Moses describes the offerings and laborers for the tabernacle: "And they came . . . every one whose רוּחַ moved him, and brought the Lord's offering to be used for the tent of meeting . . ."¹⁶ In the same sense, God is said to have stirred up the רוּחַ of Pul and the רוּחַ of Tiglath-pileser, kings of Assyria.¹⁷ Isaiah may be highlighting the intellectual aspect of רוּחַ

¹²For instance in Genesis 8:1 after the Flood, God made a רוּחַ "blow over the earth and the waters subsided."

¹³Hosea 4:12.

¹⁴Deuteronomy 34:9.

¹⁵Numbers 14:24.

¹⁶Exodus 35:21.

¹⁷1 Chronicles 5:26.

when he says, "Those who err in רָוַן will come to understanding [בִּינָה]." ¹⁸ רָוַן can move even further in this direction and be used in a religious or spiritual sense. Ezekiel talks of the new רָוַן which Yahweh will give His people. ¹⁹ In fact, Yahweh is sometimes said to influence man's רָוַן. ²⁰

Thirdly, brief consideration must also be given to the word בָּשָׂר. בָּשָׂר is commonly translated, "flesh." This word primarily indicates the nature of man as creature. ²¹ Yet, it is something characteristic of both man and beast since over one hundred of the word's two hundred seventy-three occurrences relate to animals. ²² בָּשָׂר as an element of the human composition refers simply to the external form of a person. In Job 2:5 it is juxtaposed to עֵצוֹן (bone) to convey the idea of body. When he describes the cleansing of the Levites, Moses prescribes a razor to be

¹⁸Isaiah 29:24.

¹⁹Ezekiel 11:19; 18:31; 36:26.

²⁰Haggai 1:14; Jeremiah 51:11; 2 Chronicles 21:16; also 1 Chronicles 5:26 mentioned above.

²¹Glenn E. Whitlock, "The Structure of Personality in Hebrew Thought," Interpretation 14 (1, 1960):3.

²²Hans Walter Wolff, Anthropology of the Old Testament, trans. Margaret Kohl (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), p. 26. Thus, בָּשָׂר is commonly used in Leviticus when sacrificial practices are described. See, for example, Leviticus 7:17.

used over their entire $\text{גִּשְׁתָּ}.$ ²³ Here, too, the entire body is meant.

A study of the ramifications and usages of each of these three words could continue. However, what especially concerns us here is the interrelatedness of שָׁרֵף , נֶפֶשׁ , and גִּשְׁתָּ as constituent elements of the human being. Since נֶפֶשׁ is associated with life and personhood, it is closely related to גִּשְׁתָּ . There is no dichotomy between these two words, because life is bound up with a body. Likewise, נֶפֶשׁ is an important part of the person. While נֶפֶשׁ may emphasize the intangible aspect of personhood, and גִּשְׁתָּ may stress its corporality, there is no irreconcilable dichotomization between these words either.

All of this is to say that there is an essential unity in man according to the Old Testament. "Israelite anthropology is monistic. Man is always seen in his totality, which is quickened by a unitary life. The unity of human nature is not expressed by the antithetical concepts of body and soul but by the complementary and inseparable concepts of body and life."²⁴ This assertion

²³Numbers 8:7.

²⁴Jacob, TDNT, 9:631. See Andre'-Marie Dubarle, "Belief in Immortality in the Old Testament and Judaism," in Immortality and Resurrection, ed. Pierre Benoit and Roland Murphy (n.p.: Herder & Herder, 1970), p. 37; Eichrodt, Theology, 2:148; Ladd, Theology, p. 458; Whitlock, "Personality," p. 9; Wolff, Anthropology, p. 10.

can be substantiated by an examination of Old Testament statements on death and Sheol.

It is significant that the dead are not referred to as שְׁׁוֹל or שְׁׁוֹלֵי in the Old Testament.²⁵ Thus, when Rachel died after giving birth to Benjamin, her שְׁׁוֹל departed.²⁶ In Numbers 19:13 reference is made to the שְׁׁוֹל , the entire nature of a dead man, rather than to a dead שְׁׁוֹל . Furthermore, שְׁׁוֹל is never used to describe the inhabitants of Sheol.²⁷ However, it is sometimes said that the שְׁׁוֹל goes down to Sheol, or is rescued from it.

In Psalm 30:3[4] the writer praises the Lord because "thou hast brought up my soul [שְׁׁוֹל] from Sheol." Psalm 86:13 closely echoes this with the words, "thou hast delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol."²⁸ Yet, as Walther Eichrodt suggests, when Sheol is used in this way it may simply be a sort of poetic diction for mortal danger, rather than a reference to actual death. שְׁׁוֹל would then be either a circumlocution for the personal pronoun, I, or a picturesque way of signifying the life which already seemed to have succumbed to death.²⁹

²⁵Eichrodt, Theology, 2:214.

²⁶Genesis 35:18.

²⁷Jacob, "Anthropology," p. 621.

²⁸See also Psalm 16:10; 49:15[16]; 89:48[49].

²⁹Eichrodt, Theology, 2:214.

In other places in the Old Testament, Sheol may mean nothing more than the end of life or the grave.³⁰

Hezekiah's prayer for deliverance from his illness begins with the words, "I am consigned to the gates of Sheol."³¹

The subsequent verses make it clear he is drawing distinctions between life and death. Job pictures Sheol as a tomb, using words like darkness, worm, and dust.³²

Significantly, both evil men and good men go to Sheol. After Joseph's brothers had conspired against him and reported to Jacob that he was dead, Jacob said, "I shall go down to Sheol to my son mourning."³³ On the other hand, Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and the others who rebelled against Moses were swallowed alive by the earth so that they "went down alive to Sheol."³⁴ Therefore, despite the fact that Sheol may have negative implications at times, it cannot always be equated with Hell, in the sense that it is the abode of only the unbelieving.

Furthermore, Sheol should not be viewed simply as some sort of dark, dismal realm where the dead live a benign

³⁰Moore, Judaism, 3:289-290; Wolff, Anthrology, p. 103.

³¹Isaiah 38:10.

³²Job 17:13-16; 24:19-20.

³³Genesis 37:35.

³⁴Numbers 16:31-33.

existence, totally cut off from God. The teaching of the New Testament on the intermediate state militates against this view. Immediately upon earthly death, the righteous enjoy the bliss of communion with God, and the wicked suffer pain and torment.³⁵ Jesus' reply to the Sadducees, the incident receiving the special attention of this thesis, also substantiates the view that God continues to have a relationship with His people after their earthly deaths.

There are, therefore, many elements which must be considered in order to develop an accurate understanding of Sheol. Concepts such as the intermediate state and the destiny of the wicked are chief among these considerations. Reference to Sheol in this study serves to reaffirm the holistic character of Hebrew anthropology. Even in death man's constituent parts are not looked at individually by the Old Testament, as if a part of him survived and another part did not. Although a person is no longer classified as a נֶפֶשׁ, the whole man is still in view. Eichrodt asserts, "That, however, which lives on in the grave is not a soul which had once been present in the living person, but the whole man."³⁶ Greek and Hebrew thought are markedly different in this respect.

³⁵Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:23; Luke 16:23-31.

³⁶Eichrodt, Theology, 2:214.

Greek Dualism

Contrary to Old Testament anthropology, Greek thought made a sharp distinction in human nature. As early as the sixth century B.C. with the teachings of Orpheus a dichotomy began to develop between the body and the soul. The Orphic religion was founded as a "way of life to keep the soul pure and immaculate during its habitation of the body, in order to enable it to return to its divine home after death."³⁷ The immortal soul was opposed to the transitory body. Because it viewed the body as the tomb of the soul, Orphism said that men needed to seek deliverance from bodily life. Orphism had a system of transmigration of the souls, but this was only a form of spiritual punishment and discipline.³⁸ The soul's ultimate goal was to free itself from this cycle of rebirths and live eternally in God.³⁹ Before this never-ending existence with God is

³⁷Werner Jaeger, "The Greek Ideas of Immortality," Harvard Theological Review 52 (3, 1959):140.

³⁸Robert Henry Charles, A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity, 2nd ed. (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1913), p. 147; T. Francis Glasson, Greek Influence in Jewish Eschatology: With Special Reference to the Apocalypses and Pseudepigraphs (London: SPCK, 1961), p. 26.

³⁹Charles, A Critical History, p. 147; Koester (The Hellenistic Age, pp. 160-161) notes that there is a tendency toward monotheism in Orphism.

realized, retributive judgment will be experienced in the underworld.⁴⁰

The idea of an immortal soul was refined and popularized by Plato (d. 348/347 B.C.).⁴¹ For him the soul was a purely spiritual being which was uncreated (ἀγέννητος) and eternal (αἰδώς).⁴² The soul was also set in sharp antithesis to the body, in which it lived as in a prison. In his early thought Plato developed a trichotomy of the soul: reason (λογιστικόν), courage (θυμοειδές), and desire (ἐπιθυμητικόν).⁴³ However, in later years these two latter characteristics were seen to be too mundane to be associated with the soul, so that λογιστικόν alone assumed prominence.

Like Orphism, Plato held that immediately after death the soul would be judged and would receive either rewards or punishments. He, too, posited that the soul must pass through a series of transmigrations, the nature of which were determined by the soul's character in the

⁴⁰ Charles, A Critical History, p. 147; Glasson, Greek Influence, p. 28; Koester, The Hellenistic Age, p. 162.

⁴¹ Jaeger ("Immortality," p. 144) discounts a direct connection between Orphism and Platonism: "Nothing could be more wrong than to make Plato an Orphic."

⁴² Charles, A Critical History, p. 152.

⁴³ Charles, A Critical History, p. 153; Albert Dihle, "Ψυχή, in the Greek World," TDNT, 9:612.

previous life. The ultimate goal of the soul was to be freed from this cyclical routine, and be incorporated into the realm of the divine.

Plato's body-soul dualism is succinctly given in his Phaedo. In this writing Plato had Socrates chronicle the arguments for immortality and for the duality of soul and body by means of a dialogue with Simmias and Cebes. In the end Socrates puts his teaching into practice by calmly drinking the hemlock with the conviction that his soul will now find release from the prison of his body.

(Socrates to Simmias). . . our souls must also have existed without bodies before they were in the form of man, and must have had intelligence.

(Socrates to Cebes). . . Then reflect, Cebes, of all which has been said is not this the conclusion - that the soul is in the very likeness of the divine, and immortal, and intellectual, and uniform, and indissoluble, and unchangeable; and that the body is in the very likeness of the human, and mortal, and unintellectual, and multiform, and dissoluble, and changeable. Can this, my dear Cebes, be denied?

(Socrates to Cebes). . . That soul, I say, herself invisible, departs to the invisible world--to the divine and immortal and rational; thither arriving, she is secure of bliss and is released from the error and folly of men, their fears and wild passions and all other human ills, and for ever dwells, as⁴⁴ they say of the initiated, in company with the gods.

The differences between Old Testament anthropology and Greek body-soul dualism are striking. A dichotomization of the human personality as occurs in Greek thought is not

⁴⁴Plato, "Phaedo," in Philosophies of Religion, ed. William S. Sahakian (Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Publishing Company, 1956), pp. 292, 295, 296.

found in the Old Testament.⁴⁵ The נִשְׁמָה is bound up with the entire life, including the body. It is not equivalent to the Greek concept of a soul imprisoned in a body. Neither is the נִשְׁמָה intrinsically evil. Moreover, the Greek idea of immortality is not present in the Hebrew Bible.⁴⁶ It can be argued that both the Old and New Testaments focus on bodily resurrection rather than immortality.

Resurrection Versus Immortality

Oscar Cullmann's 1955 Ingersoll lecture at Harvard University entitled "Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead: The Witness of the New Testament," aroused a great amount of discussion and controversy. Cullmann's purpose was to attack what he called the "widespread misunderstanding that the New Testament teaches the immortality of the soul."⁴⁷ He asserted that for the first

⁴⁵Ecclesiastes 12:17, ". . . the spirit [נִשְׁמָה] returns to God who gave it," must not be understood in terms of Greek dualism either. See Robert Martin-Achard, From Death to Life: A Study of the Development of the Doctrine of the Resurrection in the Old Testament, trans. John Penney Smith (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1960), p. 31. Martin-Achard says, "The breath of which the writer is speaking is in reality that of the Living God, an impersonal life force that always remains His own. Here Ecclesiastes is strictly conforming to the Yahwistic doctrine, his words betray no influence of Hellenistic thought; he does not believe in the immortality of the soul; on the contrary, the tendency of his work is towards its complete denial."

⁴⁶Jaeger, "Immortality," p. 146.

⁴⁷Oscar Cullmann, "Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead: The Witness of the New Testament,"

Christians the soul was not intrinsically immortal, but rather became so only through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and faith in Him.⁴⁸ Juxtaposing the death of Jesus with the death of Socrates, Cullmann attempted to show "the radical difference between the Greek doctrine of the immortality of the Soul and the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection."⁴⁹

It is not the purpose here to give a detailed analysis of Cullmann's essay. Instead it serves as a useful frame of reference from which to begin a discussion of this topic especially as it relates to the incident studied in this thesis, namely, the Sadducees' question to Jesus.

Superficially, Jesus' reply to the Sadducees may appear to give credence to the Greek position on the immortality of the soul, and actually seem to fall short of definitively proving a resurrection of the body. But closer examination reveals that this is not the case. However, such a thought does suggest that at least a modicum of Platonic dualism has infiltrated our present-day conceptions concerning the fate of man after death. Immortality may be unconsciously and inadvertently stressed at the expense of

in Immortality, ed. Terence Penelhum (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1973), p. 58.

⁴⁸Ibid, p. 59.

⁴⁹Ibid, pp. 60-64.

resurrection. Therefore, this section will outline the prominence of the doctrine of the resurrection in both the Old and New Testaments in order to show that Jesus' defense of this teaching in the incident studied here was and is consistent with the rest of Sacred Scripture. Attention will also be given to the concept of the resurrection in the intertestamental period.

The presence of the doctrine of the resurrection in the Old Testament is an issue that is often inextricably bound up with such isagogical-hermeneutical issues as dating, and allegiance to some manner of Form or Redaction Criticism. One's view on the unity of Scripture is also of paramount importance. The scholar who believes in the fundamental oneness of the message and content of both testaments will a priori be more likely to interpret certain Old Testament passages as witnessing to the bodily resurrection than the person who begins with the presupposition that this doctrine was the result of a slow evolutionary process.

It is significant in this respect that the Old Testament itself gives a clear record of dead persons coming back to life.⁵⁰ Elijah restored the life of the son of the

⁵⁰ Alfred Edersheim (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, 2 vols. [London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1883], 2:397) prefers to call these instances of "resuscitation" rather than resurrection. However, there is no indication that this terminological particularity is indicative of a

widow of Zarephath.⁵¹ Elisha performed a similar miracle for the son of the Shunnamite woman.⁵² Thirdly, sometime during the reign of Jehoash of Israel an unnamed dead man who was being buried came back to life when he was hurriedly thrown into Elisha's grave.⁵³ These three incidents serve to point out the power of Yahweh and His messengers over death.

In addition to these accounts, the Old Testament can also be said to bear witness to the future resurrection of the dead. Passages from each division of the Hebrew Bible contain this emphasis. It is our intent in the following paragraphs only to give representative samples of these passages.

skepticism on his part for the miraculous nature of these events.

⁵¹1 Kings 17:17-22. It must be maintained that the child was actually dead, not merely unconscious. Some translations leave this ambiguous by a literalistic rendering of the Hebrew idiom. For instance, the Revised Standard Version's "there was no breath in him" and New International Version's "he stopped breathing," although reflecting the Hebrew are less direct than the rendering of verse seventeen in Today's English Version, viz., "he died." The "breath" (נְשָׁמָה) which left the boy is that which God breathed into Adam (Genesis 2:7) when he became a living being. Moreover, in verse twenty life (חַיָּוִת) returns to the boy. The verb הִחַיָּה need not simply mean "to get well." It may imply a coming back to life again (see its usage in 2 Kings 13:21).

⁵²2 Kings 4:35.

⁵³2 Kings 13:21.

In the Pentateuch, Exodus 3:6 must assume prominence as a proof-text of the resurrection because of Jesus' later use of it. Edmund Sutcliffe says that the Pentateuch contains few references which describe man's future existence after death, but concedes that, "It is clear that from the beginning the Israelites knew that man survived death, but the thought of this survival does not seem to have played any part in shaping a man's moral conduct."⁵⁴ Yet the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says that Abraham "considered that God was able to raise [ἐγείρειν] men even from the dead [ἐκ νεκρῶν]."⁵⁵ This fact would appear to disprove Sutcliffe's assertion. One could also point to the recurrent emphasis on the Sabbath in the Pentateuch as an intimation of the resurrection and future life.⁵⁶ Typologically, the Sabbath is a sign which points

⁵⁴Sutcliffe, Future Life, p. 22. See also Hans C. Cavallin Life After Death: Paul's Argument for the Resurrection of the Dead in I Corinthians 15. Part I: An Enquiry Into the Jewish Background. Coniectanea Biblica: New Testament Series 7:1 (Lund, Sweden: CWK Gleerup, 1974), p. 23. Cavallin too easily and quickly dismisses the subject when he says, "It is a well-known fact that belief in the resurrection of the dead appears only on the fringe of the Hebrew Bible."

⁵⁵Hebrews 11:19.

⁵⁶Exodus 20:8; 23:12; 31:15; Leviticus 19:3; 23:3; Deuteronomy 5:12-15.

to the great heavenly rest that awaits all believers at the resurrection.⁵⁷

Job 19:25-26 also can be asserted to point to a bodily resurrection. According to the Revised Standard Version these verses read: "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at last he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then from my flesh I shall see God." It is true that the passage does present exegetical difficulties,⁵⁸ which lead some to reject the view that it refers to a bodily resurrection.⁵⁹ To a large extent, one's decision is based on the א prefixed to רָאִיתִי in verse twenty-six. Those who prefer not to understand this as a bodily resurrection interpret the min

⁵⁷See Hebrews chapter four.

⁵⁸For example, the meaning of רָאִיתִי and רָאִיתִי אֱלֹהִים .

⁵⁹Martin-Achard (From Death to Life, p. 172) says, "Job wants vindication here in this world, and before he dies; in this text he is referring neither to his resurrection, nor . . . to a judgment of which he would be a far-off and posthumous witness; doubtless he is [author's emphasis] calling for healing . . . he is looking for God to appear to him, and to being able to come to an understanding with Him once and for all." Moore (Judaism, 2:291) says the expectation of a bodily resurrection here is "read into the text, not in it" (author's emphasis); Sutcliffe (Future Life, pp. 133-134) posits that the words "After my skin has thus been destroyed" need not imply death, but rather "the miserable condition to which Job's body was reduced by the horrible disease that preyed upon him." See Walther Zimmerli, Man and His Hope in the Old Testament. Studies in Biblical Theology, Second Series, vol.20 (London: SCM Press, 1971), p. 24. He also rejects the thought of resurrection in this passage, and says it only shows "possibilities" with God.

in a privative sense to mean "without" or "apart from." Job's language then becomes only a spiritual beholding of God. The alternative is to understand the prefixed preposition as a min of source, meaning "from" my flesh. This would support the interpretation of the passage in bodily terms. The surrounding context, with its mention of other bodily parts, seems to favor this latter view.⁶⁰

Certain passages from the Psalter also speak of a future life which, by virtue of the Old Testament's holistic anthropology, also imply a resurrection. The Wisdom Psalms especially set forth and contrast the ultimate destinies of both the righteous and unrighteous. Psalm 1:5, for instance, says that the wicked "will not stand [עֹמֵד] in the judgment." Admittedly, עֹמֵד may mean nothing more than "to stand up" or "be upright." Coupled with the use of עֲשֵׂה אֵלֶיךָ in this verse a courtroom picture is developed where the defendant, when sentenced, stands to hear the verdict. Yet, it is difficult not to make an eschatologically forensic application here as well.⁶¹ At the Parousia the wicked will

⁶⁰Horace D. Hummel, The Word Becoming Flesh: An Introduction to the Origin, Purpose, and Meaning of the Old Testament (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1979), p. 479.

⁶¹See H. C. Leupold, Exposition of Psalms (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1969), p. 38. He says this verse refers "primarily to one outstanding judgment which is the climax of them all, and whose verdicts are ultimate, the final judgment. By referring chiefly to the last great judgment, the psalm merely cites the most outstanding example of how the ungodly will be dealt with."

not stand, but will be crushed under the guilt of their sin and unbelief. However, the righteous will stand in the fullest sense of the word, by their participation in the resurrection into eternal life.⁶²

Psalm seventy-three is another Wisdom Psalm which continues this thought. Verse twenty-four states, "Thou dost guide me with thy counsel, and afterward [ךָ אֶלֶּם] thou wilt receive me [$\text{יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי} \text{]}^{\text{63}}$ to glory [כְּבוֹד]." Here again a question exists as to whether the eschatological overtones are explicit or implicit. Ultimately the matter must be decided on hermeneutical rather than philological grounds. Here, for instance, כְּבוֹד can mean glory in an earthly sense, such as honor or wealth. But the psalmist is not just saying that God will make him rich and prosperous like the wicked people around him. Therefore, a strong case could be argued for seeing כְּבוֹד as a reference to heavenly glory. Understood in that way, the whole Psalm can point to the future resurrection and eternal life.

Passing attention should also be given to Hosea 6:2: "After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will

⁶²The Septuagint's translation of ἀναστήσονται for יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ shows that it may have understood the passage in this way.

⁶³Interestingly, this root word πρῆ is used to describe Enoch's bodily assumption in Genesis 5:24.

raise us up, that we may live before him."⁶⁴ Hosea was active in the Northern Kingdom during the eighth century B.C. By actually marrying a prostitute his whole life became a vivid indictment of his people's idolatrous harlotry and adultery in turning away from the one true God.⁶⁵ Beginning in chapter six, the people show a measure of repentance and express their desire to return to the Lord. However, their penitence is not sincere, for it is as quick to disappear as the morning cloud and the dew.⁶⁶

Historically, this section has its background in the Syro-Ephraemite war of 735-734 B.C., in which Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Damascus form an alliance against Assyria. This has led Robert Martin-Achard, for instance, to say that the resurrection mentioned here is not that of the Israelites personally, but that of the people as a whole.⁶⁷ Therefore this resurrection is actually nothing

⁶⁴Perhaps this is the verse Paul had in mind when he talked in 1 Corinthians 15:4 about Christ's resurrection on the third day "according to the Scriptures." F. F. Bruce asserts that the rabbinical tradition quoted this passage "as a prophecy of the final resurrection." See F. F. Bruce, 1 and 2 Corinthians. New Century Bible (London: Oliphants, 1971), p. 140.

⁶⁵Hosea 1:2; 3:1; 4:12.

⁶⁶Hosea 6:4.

⁶⁷Martin-Achard, From Death to Life, p. 81.

more than a national restoration which takes place primarily on a political plane.⁶⁸

While this historical application must not be denied it must not be overemphasized at the expense of the other levels of application. Although the prophets may have addressed themselves to the nation as a whole, inevitably their message was meant to be heard and heeded by each person individually. Correspondingly, each prophecy could have both a national and individual application. Personal resurrection can be seen in passages such as these as long as it is distinguished, but not divorced from the message of national restoration and resurrection.

Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2 are perhaps the two most prominent Old Testament passages which speak of a bodily resurrection.⁶⁹ The passage from Isaiah says, "Thy dead shall live, their bodies shall rise. O dwellers in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For thy dew is a dew of

⁶⁸Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones in chapter thirty-seven of his prophecy is evaluated in a similar way. See Dubarle, "Belief in Immortality," pp. 38-39 and Zimmerli, Man and His Hope, p. 119. Martin-Achard (From Death to Life, p. 99) is more open to seeing a trace of the resurrection of the individual in this passage, probably because of its later, exilic origin. He says, "The question of a general resurrection was doubtless not raised before Ezek. XXXVII, but emerged after this passage was written."

⁶⁹Moore (Judaism, 2:295) says these two passages made "revivification" of the dead a "cardinal doctrine of Judaism."

light, and on the land of the shades thou wilt let it fall." Isaiah uses rich and meaningful words in this verse. The occurrence of נִפְתָּר suggests that life in a very real and physical sense is meant, as opposed to a vague, ethereal sort of existence. The participial form of מוֹת , "to die," coupled with the reference to bodies,⁷⁰ and the dust show that physical death has actually occurred. The second person suffix of אֵתְּךָ is significant in this respect, for "it serves to identify the dead as belonging to Yahweh."⁷¹ The verbs קָם (rise, stand up) and קָם (awaken), together with the initial נִפְתָּר are used in the technical sense of the resurrection.⁷²

The surrounding context of Isaiah twenty-six also favors its interpretation as an actual physical resurrection. Isaiah is speaking primarily of the individual rather than the nation. His contrast is between the wicked and the evil, rather than the Israelite and the non-Israelite.⁷³ He is describing the consummation of

⁷⁰ בְּבֵלֶה , literally a dead body. It is used of the corpse of a man (1 Kings 13:22) as well as the carcass of an animal (Leviticus 5:2).

⁷¹ Gerhard F. Hasel, "Resurrection in the Theology of Old Testament Apocalyptic," Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 92 (2, 1980):272.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Isaiah 26:7, 10. Hasel ("Resurrection," p. 273) says, "It should not be overlooked that the whole pericope lacks a clear allusion to the people of Israel." Sutcliffe

history and the approaching day of the Lord. Therefore any purely metaphorical interpretation of this passage is unlikely.⁷⁴

Both Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2 are often approached with critical presuppositions in terms of their dates. Critical opinion, which rejects Isaianic unity, places the section of the prophecy in which this verse falls either in the exilic or the post-exilic period.⁷⁵ Daniel is widely held to have its provenance in the second century B.C. during the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes.⁷⁶

(Future Life, p. 129), nevertheless maintains that this is a national, not personal resurrection.

⁷⁴Martin-Achard (From Death to Life, p. 131) minimizes the impact of this passage when he says it "voices a prayer rather than a certainty." There is valid reason neither in the surrounding context nor the passage itself why the imperfect verb forms must, by necessity, carry this nuance.

⁷⁵Hasel ("Resurrection," p. 269) gives documentation of the suggestions for dating from recent scholars.

⁷⁶Cavallin, Life After Death, p. 26; Charles, A Critical History, p. 125; Dubarle, "Belief in Immortality," p. 40; Hengel, Judaism and Hellenism, p. 196; Martin-Achard, From Death to Life, p. 138; George W. E. Nickelsburg, Jr., Resurrection, Immortality and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism. Harvard Theological Studies 26 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1972), pp. 11, 19; D. S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic. The Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), p. 49; Sundberg, "Sadducees," 4:160.

Such views militate against the doctrine of the divine inspiration of Holy Scripture, and exhibit an unjustified aversion toward predictive prophecy. In the case of the relationship of this outlook to the Old Testament's emphasis on the bodily resurrection, the assumption is that the hope in an afterlife was slow to evolve in Israel's history. It arose primarily as a result of the persecution of the Maccabean period.⁷⁷ While it is true that religious persecution would intensify talk of and faith in the resurrection and afterlife, there is no logical or theological reason to believe that it must necessarily be absent from other periods of history. Therefore the words in Daniel 12:2 that "many⁷⁸ of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" are best taken as originating from the Daniel who was brought to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in 606/605 B.C. rather than from some unknown person in the second century B.C.⁷⁹

⁷⁷Cadbury, "Intimations of Immortality," p. 118; Cavallin, Life After Death, p. 24; Eichrodt, Theology, 2:509; Moore, Judaism, 2:314; Nickelsburg, Resurrection, p. 19; Russell, Between the Testaments, p. 147.

⁷⁸ אֲנֵלֵךְ need not be a restrictive term. It might simply imply "all" or, in a more technical sense, be a reference to all the Elect. Isaiah 53:12 demonstrates this. The prophet speaks of the Suffering Servant, ". . . he bore the sin of many, . . ."

⁷⁹Daniel 1:7. See also Matthew 24:15.

These Old Testament references show that the doctrine of the resurrection is not absent from Hebrew thought. Although this doctrine is naturally not as prominent as it is in the New Testament after Christ's resurrection, Old Testament writers consistently and clearly assert that death does not end all. What is especially important with respect to this study is that the Old Testament gives no trace of the Greek concept of immortality. Bodily existence in the future life is never decried as either undesirable or impossible. On the contrary, it is awaited with expectation. The anthropological holism of the Hebrew Bible still applies in its statements on resurrection and the afterlife.

The picture is more complex during the intertestamental period. A belief in life after death continued, but it was often colored by the influence of Hellenism. Therefore it is necessary to distinguish Palestinian apocalyptic texts from texts of the Greek-speaking diaspora.⁸⁰ Yet, even this distinction is not always clear-cut. Examples can be adduced which

⁸⁰Cavallin (Life After Death, pp. 7-8) lists Jubilees, Enoch, Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Psalms of Solomon, The Qumran writings, 4 Ezra, and 2 Baruch in the former category, and 2 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees, Wisdom, Testament of Job, and 2 Enoch as among those in the latter category. On pp. 197-199 he gives a helpful table which summarizes the eschatological emphases present in each writing.

illustrate some of the representative eschatological motifs that occur in the literature of this period.

The pseudepigraphal Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs date from the second century B.C.⁸¹ The work, which purports to be the final words of Jacob's twelve sons, contains important statements on the resurrection. In the Testament of Simon 6:7 this patriarch is said to express a hope in his own future resurrection: "Then I shall arise in gladness and I shall bless the most high for his marvels."⁸² The Testament of Benjamin 10:68 portrays a resurrection of many of the great Old Testament heroes. This thought is present also in the Testament of Judah 25:1 and the Testament of Zebulun 10:2.⁸³ It expresses the "heavenly and transcendent character of the resurrection."⁸⁴ In each of these instances resurrection, not immortality, is the

⁸¹Howard C. Kee, in his introductory comments on "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs" in James H. Charlesworth, ed., The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha vol. 1: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1983), pp. 775-778, surveys the possible dating and concludes that its use in Qumran could well suggest the Maccabean period as the date of origin. Charles (A Critical History, p. 224) specifies that the Testaments were written by a Pharisee in the latter years of John Hyrcanus between 109 and 106 B.C.

⁸²Charlesworth, Pseudepigrapha, p. 787.

⁸³Ibid., pp. 828, 801, 807.

⁸⁴Cavallin, Life After Death, p. 53.

prominent thought, and there is no apparent antithesis between the body and soul.

An exception to this occurs in the Testament of Asher. For example, in 6:7 the writer talks of the fate of the soul after death: "For when the evil soul departs, it is harassed by the evil spirit which it served through its desires and evil works. But if anyone is peaceful with joy he comes to know the angel of peace and enters eternal life."⁸⁵ Perhaps one might understand this as a reference to the intermediate state where, immediately upon death, an individual receives either punishment and torture or eternal life and bliss. Nickelsburg classifies this as an instance of "The Theology of Two Ways" which is also prevalent in the Qumran documents. He suggests that the Testament of Asher may have been influenced by the theology of Psalm seventy-three.⁸⁶

The book of Jubilees, a second Palestinian apocalyptic text, is roughly contemporaneous with the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. It may, in fact, slightly predate the Testaments and have its provenance in the events preceding the persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes.⁸⁷ Charles classifies Jubilees as "a

⁸⁵Charlesworth, Pseudepigrapha, p. 818.

⁸⁶Nickelsburg, Resurrection, pp. 161, 156.

⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 46-47.

glorification of legalistic Judaism and of the priesthood."⁸⁸ In this work the entire course of history is arranged into jubilees, periods of forty-nine years.⁸⁹ Jubilees 23:30-31 is especially important in its description of the coming judgment:

And at that time the Lord will heal his servants, and they will rise up and see great peace and drive out their adversaries. And the righteous will see and be thankful and rejoice with joy forever and ever, and will see all their judgments and all their curses on their enemies. And their bones will rest in the earth, and their spirit will have much joy, and they will know that it is the Lord who executes judgment, and shows mercy⁹⁰ to hundreds and thousands and to all that love him.

The antithesis between bones and spirit in the last section of this excerpt seems to exclude the thought of an actual physical resurrection. The ambiguity of the wording also fails to indicate if the spirits of the righteous experience the described joy immediately upon death, or if they will experience this at some future time when they are resurrected. The latter could be the case if the words about the servants who "rise up and see great peace" are an intimation of resurrection. However, the "servants" and the "righteous" may be two different groups of people. Cavallin

⁸⁸Charles, A Critical History, p. 236

⁸⁹Koester, The Hellenistic Age, p. 262.

⁹⁰George W. E. Nickelsburg and Michael E. Stone, Faith and Piety in Early Judaism: Texts and Documents (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), p. 131.

says, "The righteous seem to be spectators in relation to the 'servants' of the Lord, who fight the battle and win it." According to his view, "rising up" is merely a reference to the prolonged life and happiness of the people of God in the context of victory over their enemies.⁹¹

Nickelsburg asserts that the righteous dead nevertheless do receive ultimate vindication here, even if a single resurrection event is not described.⁹²

The Psalms of Solomon are the most significant Palestinian documents from the decades immediately preceding Christ's birth.⁹³ This collection of eighteen psalms by different authors is generally thought to have been composed in the middle of the first century B.C.⁹⁴ Because they are representative of Pharisaic Judaism,⁹⁵ it is not surprising that the psalms express the orthodox eschatological viewpoint concerning rewards and punishments. Psalm 3:10-12 contains the most explicit reference to the resurrection: "[The sinner] stumbles and curses his life, the day of his

⁹¹Cavallin, Life After Death, p. 38.

⁹²Nickelsburg, Resurrection, p. 33.

⁹³Henry R. Moeller, ed., The Legacy of Zion: Intertestamental Texts Related to the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977), p. 130.

⁹⁴Cavallin, Life After Death, p. 57; Charles, A Critical History, p. 267; Moeller, The Legacy of Zion, p. 130; Nickelsburg, Resurrection, p. 131.

⁹⁵Moore, Judaism, 2:308.

birth and his mother's birthpangs . . . he falls . . . and he does not rise again . . . But those who fear the Lord will rise to eternal life; and their life will be in the light of the Lord and will never fail."⁹⁶ Here only the righteous are resurrected. Psalm 13:11 continues the contrast between the righteous and the wicked in terms of the future life when it says: "The life of the righteous is forever, but sinners will be taken away to destruction."⁹⁷

The Psalms of Solomon exemplify Jewish thoughts of the Messianic age. The concept of a resurrection was a vital and necessary part of coming events, according to the Jew. At the beginning of the Messianic age the righteous dead would receive the final and ultimate vindication for their labors.⁹⁸ Martyrs and heroes would be brought back to life to enjoy the pleasures and benefits of that age. This would be a time "independence, peace, good government, justice, uprightness, prosperity, happiness - the consummation of all that is good in the actual world and the abolition of all that is evil in every sphere."⁹⁹

⁹⁶Nickelsburg and Stone, Faith and Piety, p. 141.

⁹⁷Nickelsburg, Resurrection, p. 32.

⁹⁸Moore, Judaism, 2:312-314.

⁹⁹Ibid., 2:314.

Thoughts such as these are not so prominent in the Qumran scrolls.¹⁰⁰ There are, however, a few passages of note. One of the most prominent of these passages is IQH 6:34-35. Here the writer is describing the sons of God's truth who shall "awake" to overthrow wickedness. At the end of the hymn he interjects the command, "Hoist a banner, O you who lie in the dust! O bodies gnawed by worms, raise up an ensign . . ." ¹⁰¹ Some scholars suggest that this does not connote a bodily resurrection, but is best understood in an allegorical sense. According to this way of thinking, the verbs "wake" and "rise" are merely calls for preparedness, as in Isaiah 52:1. The phrases "you who lie in the dust" and "O bodies gnawed by worms" are not, thereby, descriptions of dead people but expressions of humility and lowliness.¹⁰² On the other hand, if one does look at this passage as a reference to resurrection, the phraseology makes it vividly clear that the body is

¹⁰⁰Nickelsburg (Resurrection, p. 144): ". . . they contain not a single passage that can be interpreted with absolute certainty as a reference to resurrection or immortality." Cavallin (Life After Death, p. 65): ". . . only one text, or possibly two, proved to represent a sure supporting testimony [to a belief in the resurrection of the dead or life after death in general]."

¹⁰¹Geza Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls in English (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1962), p. 172.

¹⁰²Cavallin, Life After Death, p. 63; Geza Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls: Qumran in Perspective, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), p. 187.

involved. What is talked of cannot be simply understood in a spiritual sense.

Other examples from the Qumran literature could be cited and analyzed.¹⁰³ The Manual of Discipline (IQS IV:6-8, 11-14) contrasts the ultimate end of the righteous with the wicked. The former have "healing, great peace in a long life, and fruitfulness, together with every everlasting blessing and eternal joy in life without end," while the latter have "a multitude of plagues by the hand of all the destroying angels, everlasting damnation by the avenging wrath of the fury of God, eternal torment and endless disgrace together with shameful extinction in the fire of the dark regions."¹⁰⁴ The debate on the question of the bodily resurrection in the Qumran writings essentially is a matter of explicitness. While it may not be emphasized, it is intrinsically present. Vermes explains this absence of emphasis on the community's hope that, since God's kingdom was coming soon, they would not die but only be transformed.¹⁰⁵

Finally, the Wisdom of Solomon must be mentioned as an example of views on the resurrection in the

¹⁰³See Cavallin, Life After Death, pp. 60-67; Nickelsburg, Resurrection, pp. 144-169.

¹⁰⁴Vermes, The Dead Sea Scrolls, pp. 76-77.

¹⁰⁵Vermes, Perspective, p. 197.

intertestamental period. Differences of opinion exist on the dating of this book. Cavallin maintains that it was composed in the late second century or early first century B.C., while Collins supports a setting in the time of Caligula, emperor over Judea (A.D. 37-41).¹⁰⁶ Because of its Egyptian provenance one can see a combination of the Jewish apocalyptic tradition with distinctively Greek ideas. This is especially true of the first four verses of chapter three, where the blessed life after death of the righteous is described.

But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seem to have died, and their departure was thought to be an affliction, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of men they were punished, their hope is full of immortality.¹⁰⁷

This seems to suggest a body-soul dualism. The soul survives death, but the body is dead. Traces of Platonism also are evidenced in other places in the book. When it is stated that ". . . wisdom will not enter a deceitful soul nor dwell in a body enslaved to sin" the doctrine of the intrinsically evil nature of the body is hinted at.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶Cavallin, Life After Death, p. 126; John J. Collins, Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1983), p. 182.

¹⁰⁷The Oxford Annotated Apocrypha, p. 104.

¹⁰⁸Wisdom 1:4.

Verses nineteen and twenty of chapter eight especially demonstrate the idea of the pre-existence of the soul: "As a child I was by nature well endowed, and a good soul fell to my lot; or rather, being good, I entered an undefiled body." The statement that "a perishable body weighs down the soul, and this earthly tent burdens the thoughtful mind" corresponds exactly to the Platonic view of the body as a prison.¹⁰⁹

All of these preceding references from the intertestamental literature serve to demonstrate that one, uniform outlook on the resurrection did not exist. Examples such as the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and the Psalms of Solomon emphasize resurrection,¹¹⁰ while Wisdom, for instance, tends to concentrate on the concept of immortality.

Despite the fact that a certain amount of teaching similar to the Greek concept of the immortality of the soul was present in these apocalyptic writings, Russell maintains that "the resurrection of the body is the key to the apocalyptic interpretation of the life beyond death."¹¹¹ He

¹⁰⁹Wisdom 9:15.

¹¹⁰Charlesworth (Pseudepigrapha, p. xxxiii) cites the Testament of Job, 4 Maccabees, Psuedo-Phocylides, 2 Enoch, 2 Baruch, and History of the Rechabites as other writings with explicit references to resurrection.

¹¹¹Russell, Method and Message, p. 373.

goes on to stress the importance of Hebrew anthropological holism for the apocalyptic writers:

As writers in the Hebrew tradition which regarded the body as an essential aspect of personality, the apocalyptists believed that survival after death could not be expressed ultimately in terms of soul or spirit apart from body. Discarnate souls might possess a conscious life of their own, but at best they were 'truncated personalities' awaiting the resurrection of the body for their ultimate expression. The soul must be united with the body because only in this way could the departed experience fullness of fellowship with God and participate in the coming kingdom.¹¹²

Collins says that Diaspora Judaism sought to moderate between allegiance to its past values, and acceptance of elements from the new Hellenistic culture: "The use of Hellenistic forms, however, and even the very desire to win gentile adherents, sprang from the self identity of the Jews as respectable civilized members of Hellenistic society."¹¹³ Scholars therefore differ about the general acceptance of the doctrine of the resurrection among Judaism by the time of Christ,¹¹⁴ but those who deny its acceptance may be looking at the situation from too

¹¹²Ibid., p. 375.

¹¹³Collins, Jewish Identity, p. 245.

¹¹⁴Bonsirven says belief in resurrection was "far from being commonly accepted" among first century Jews (Joseph Bonsirven, Palestinian Judaism in the Time of Jesus Christ, trans. William Wolf [New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964], p. 227). Guignebert (The Jewish World, p. 120) says, ". . . the opinion must be rejected that the idea of the resurrection was unknown to the majority of Jews in the time of Jesus."

narrow a perspective. There seems to be no reason to believe that Jesus' teaching on the resurrection was unique and would not have received a favorable hearing.

Of crucial importance here is Jesus' attitude toward resurrection and the future life. There can be no doubt about the importance of the concept of resurrection for Jesus. He especially emphasized His own resurrection.¹¹⁵ But He also foretold of the resurrection of all men.¹¹⁶ The distinctively Greek views of the immortality of the soul and the intrinsic evil of the body were absent from Jesus' teaching. He did not draw a dichotomy between the body and the soul. For Him there was a definite bodily concept to the afterlife. In His Sermon on the Mount He talks of the whole body (ὅλον τὸ σῶμα) being thrown into hell.¹¹⁷ He warns His disciple to "fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."¹¹⁸ He showed a respect for the body by performing many healings. On three occasions He brought dead people back to bodily life.¹¹⁹ His answer to the question of the Sadducees is but one more example of His emphasis on the bodily resurrection.

¹¹⁵Matthew 16:21; 26:32; Mark 9:9; John 2:19.

¹¹⁶John 5:25-29.

¹¹⁷Matthew 5:29.

¹¹⁸Matthew 10:28.

¹¹⁹Matthew 9:25; Luke 7:15; John 11:44.

Conclusion

As Cullmann has said, the immortality of the soul is only a negative assertion, while resurrection is a positive assertion.¹²⁰ While care must be exercised so as not to deny the Scriptural teaching on the intermediate state, the notion of an immortal soul in the classical Greek sense must be rejected. Immortality places the capacity for eternal life within man himself.¹²¹ As such, it is contrary to the essence of the Christian faith. Resurrection, on the other hand, focuses on the power and faithfulness of God. K nneth says it well:

To speak of resurrecting is to know that the conquest of death is no human possibility . . . resurrection, in analogy to the resurrection of Jesus, is a consummating act of new creation by God, which embraces equally the whole of man, and which is a possibility given only by God and known only in faith.¹²²

¹²⁰Cullmann, "Immortality or Resurrection," p. 65.

¹²¹D. H. Van Daalen, "The Resurrection of the Body and Justification by Grace," *Studia Evangelica*, (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964), 3:219.

¹²²Walter K nneth, The Theology of the Resurrection, trans. James W. Leitch (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965), p. 287.

CHAPTER IV

THE CITATION FROM EXODUS THREE

The Introduction of the Quotation

In His response to the question of the Sadducees, Jesus defends the doctrine of the resurrection by citing a verse from Exodus chapter three. Each of the Synoptic writers introduces the quotation differently. Matthew and Mark have Jesus using a rhetorical question in His address to the Sadducees, namely, "...have you not read?" (Οὐκ ἀνεγνωτε). But Matthew finishes the question with, "what was said to you by God" (τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑμῖν ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ λέγοντες), while Mark adds, "in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God said to him" (ἐν τῇ βίβλῳ Μωυσέως ἐπὶ τοῦ βάλτου πῶς εἶπεν ἑαυτῷ. . .).¹ Matthew's absence of reference to Moses minimizes the prophet's intermediary role, a fact overemphasized by the Jews. In Exodus three God speaks on His own initiative. Matthew's ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ is a strong statement that this word comes directly from God, and is divinely inspired.

Luke, like Mark, introduces the citation by referring to "the passage about the bush." This type of

¹Matthew 22:31; Mark 12:26.

nomenclature was necessitated by the fact that at that time there were no chapter and verse divisions in the Old Testament. Scripture citations had to be identified by some significant event in the surrounding context.² In this case Jesus is referring to God's words to Moses in the incident of the burning bush (βάτου/ἰθῆ) in what we now know as chapter three of Exodus.

Despite this similarity, Luke's introduction of Jesus' quotation from Exodus three also contains some differences. As opposed to Matthew and Mark, he does not present Jesus' words as a question. Neither does he directly cite the passage. Instead, Luke has Jesus integrating the quotation into His dialogue with the Sadducees by using the third singular present indicative form of λέγω.³ Matthew and Mark, on the other hand, use the participial forms λέγοντες and λέγων, respectively.

Luke's use of the aorist tense of the verb μῆνω in verse thirty-seven may also be significant. This verb means

²Easton (Luke, p. 301) maintains that there is no parallel to this type of introduction to an Old Testament citation in the New Testament. Arndt (Luke, p. 411) and Taylor (Mark, p. 483), however, point out that Romans 11:2 demonstrates the same principle. There Paul discusses the remnant of Israel, arguing that God does not forsake His people. Paul illustrates this association by quoting Elijah's words to God in 1 Kings 19:10, introducing them with the phrase ἐν Ἡλιδά .

³Luke 20:37: ὅτι δε ἐγγείρονται οἱ νεκροί, καὶ Μωϋσῆς ἐμῆνυσεν ἐπὶ τῆς βατοῦ, ὡς λέγει Κύριον. . .

to disclose or reveal, especially that which is a secret.⁴ It is used only three other times in the entire New Testament. In John 11:57 the aorist subjunctive is used in the context of the demand of the chief priests and Pharisees that if any one knew where Jesus was, he should report it (*μηνύσῃ*) to them. In Acts 23:30 Luke describes how Paul was sent to Caesarea after his divisive speech before the Sanhedrin. Claudius Lysias had written a letter to Felix, procurator of Judaea, in which he says that "it was disclosed to me" (*μηνυθείσης*) that there was a plot against Paul's life. Finally, the verb also occurs in 1 Corinthians 10:28. There, in his discussion of the implications of eating meat offered to idols, Paul says, "But if some one says to you, 'This has been offered in sacrifice,' then out of consideration for the man who informed you [*τὸν μηνύσαντα*] and for conscience' sake . . . do not eat it."

Daube maintains that, *μηνύω*, is used in Luke 20:37 in a specialized sense which calls to mind the technical term, remez, a hint.⁵ Luke thereby has Jesus asserting that Moses already gave a slight covert indication that the dead are raised when he called Yahweh the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Daube's proposal rests on two assumptions.

⁴Plummer, Luke, p. 470.

⁵Daube, Rabbinic Judaism, p. 433.

First, it implies that Jesus chose not to give a directly explicit Old Testament reference to substantiate the fact of the resurrection of the dead. In the second place, it assumes that Exodus 3:6 is not such a direct and explicit passage. A specific answer to these assumptions will be given later in this chapter, especially in the section which explores the possible reasons Jesus may have had for quoting from Exodus. For now, however, Daube's observation has been cited to show the different emphases that each synoptic writer makes in his introduction to the quotation from Exodus three.

An analysis of each of the introductory formulae is significant because of the fact that the passage which Jesus cites is very similar to parts of the Amidah.⁶ The Amidah formed for the Jew "the core and main element of each of the prescribed daily services."⁷ The worshipper stood and faced Jerusalem as the Amidah was recited.⁸ It was said silently and no interruptions of any kind were permitted.⁹

⁶The Amidah is also referred to as the Eighteen Benedictions or the Shemoneh Esreh.

⁷Joseph Heinemann, "Amidah," in Encyclopaedia Judaica, 16 vols. (New York: MacMillan, 1971), 2:838.

⁸The name Amidah comes from the Hebrew verb TAΨ, "to stand."

⁹Heinemann, "Amidah," 2:838.

Finkelstein maintains that the oldest form of the Amidah originated as early as the second century B.C.¹⁰ This early Amidah consisted of only one benediction. The benediction contained an introduction, which addressed God with various terms from the Pentateuch, and a prayer for the granting of the individual petition of members of the congregation. Throughout subsequent years additions were made to the Amidah. For example, during the Maccabean wars a prayer for Jerusalem was inserted. The expansion of the Amidah was especially rapid in the first century of Christianity until A.D. 70. Finkelstein says, "The century preceding the Fall of Jerusalem saw the growth of new movements and the addition of new benedictions with increasing speed."¹¹ Significantly, the Pharisees are credited with the additions of benedictions which confessed faith in the resurrection and faith in the unity of God.

The first two benedictions of the Amidah are of importance to this study because of their affinities with Exodus 3:6 and Jesus' defense of the resurrection of the

¹⁰Louis Finkelstein, "The Development of the Amidah," in Pharisaism in the Making: Selected Essays (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1972), p. 285; Heinemann ("Amidah," 2:840) says, "Attempts to reconstruct the 'original' text of the Amidah or to ascertain the date when each section was 'composed' are pointless, especially in view of the ruling that benedictions were not to be written down."

¹¹Finkelstein, "Development of the Amidah," p. 286.

dead which the Synoptic writers describe. The first benediction refers to God as the God of the Patriarchs (אֱלֹהֵינוּ). It uses the adjectives great, mighty, and tremendous to describe God:

Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God and the God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the great God, the mighty and tremendous, the Most High God, who bestowest gracious favours and createst all things, and rememberest the piety of the patriarchs, and wilt bring a redeemer to their posterity, for the sake of Thy name in love. O King, who bringest help and healing and art a shield. ¹²
Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the shield of Abraham.

The second benediction praised God for His mighty deeds, including His healing of the sick and sending needed rain. Special emphasis is given in the concluding benedictions to God's power to revive the dead.

Thou art mighty for ever, O Lord; Thou restorest life to the dead, Thou art mighty to save; who sustainest the living with beneficence, quickenest the dead with great mercy, supporting the fallen and healing the sick, and setting at liberty those who are bound, and upholding Thy faithfulness unto those who sleep in the dust. Who is like unto Thee, Lord, the Almighty One; or who can be compared unto Thee, O King, who killest and makest alive again, and causest help to spring forth? And faithful art Thou to quicken the dead, ¹³
Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who restorest the dead.

¹²Schürer-Vermes-Millar, The Jewish People, 2:456; Heinemann, "Amidah," 2:840; Grant gives a Palestinian recension of the Amidah (Frederick Clifton Grant, Ancient Judaism and the New Testament [Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1960], p. 46).

¹³Ibid.

Heinemann observes that this benediction gives particular reference to doctrinal controversy between the Pharisees and Sadducees.¹⁴

C. K. Barrett champions the view that Jesus had these two benedictions, as well as Exodus three, in mind when He responded to the Sadducees' question about the resurrection.¹⁵ The key to Barrett's hypothesis is the word *δύναμιν*, which occurs in Matthew 22:29 and Mark 12:24. This word is equivalent to the Hebrew *גִּבּוֹרֹת* (might, strength), the appellative by which the second benediction of the Amidah was commonly known. According to this theory Jesus first answered the Sadducees by saying, "You are wrong (*πλανᾶσθε*), because you know neither the Scriptures nor the powers (*גִּבּוֹרֹת*) of God." Jesus was making a word-play on *δύναμις* in order to refer to the second benediction of the Amidah. Later He further develops this by His reference to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This, says Barrett, would call to mind the first benediction of the Amidah.

Barrett argues that Jesus was defending the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead from both Scripture and the liturgy.¹⁶ By His word play on *גִּבּוֹרֹת*, Jesus was

¹⁴Heinemann, "Amidah," 2:842.

¹⁵Charles Kingsley Barrett, The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition (London: SPCK, 1966), pp. 74-75.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 75.

effectively saying, "You know neither the Bible nor the Prayer Book." Barrett's theory, however, fails to overcome several difficulties.

In the first place, the textual evidence militates against Barrett's hypothesis. Matthew and Mark both use the singular form, $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\mu\iota\nu$. However, the plural $\delta\upsilon\nu\acute{\alpha}\mu\epsilon\omega\varsigma$ would be the more exact equivalent of דִּינִיָּא . As indicated in the preceding paragraph by the underlined "s" in powers, Barrett does believe that the ipsissima verba Jesu contained the plural form. He explains that the change to the singular $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\mu\iota\nu$ in Matthew and Mark was the result of someone who did not recognize the allusion to the Amidah in the argument of Jesus. Yet, the fact that there is no manuscript evidence to support $\delta\upsilon\nu\acute{\alpha}\mu\epsilon\omega\varsigma$ weighs heavily against the likelihood of Barrett's theory. He also fails to give any explanation as to why Luke would omit this phrase from his account. If it was truly crucial to the argument, one would expect all three of the Synoptics to include it (as they do the quotation from Exodus three).

In the second place there seems to be no cogent reason for Jesus to argue from both the Amidah and Scripture. The Sadducees adhered strictly to the written word and rejected all sorts of oral tradition and expansion. If Jesus were to convince the Sadducees of the truth of the resurrection He would be able to do it only on the basis of Scriptural evidence. Citations or allusions to any other source would not carry any influence with the Sadducees.

Moreover, if these particular sections of the Amidah had been added by the Pharisees, the Sadducees' natural tendency might be to reject them all the more.

Since it was at the heart of Jewish worship from its inception in intertestamental times, Jesus would have been familiar with the Amidah.¹⁷ But He would have had little to gain by framing His answer to the question of the Sadducees around both the Amidah and Scripture. The likelihood is very small, therefore, that His words were influenced by the first two benedictions of that liturgical form. The similarities between the Amidah and Jesus' defense of the resurrection only serve to prove that the debate over this doctrine already had a history of its own. Pharisaic amendments of statements of belief in the resurrection to Judaism's daily prayer ritual had not succeeded in changing the Sadducaic outlook on the subject. Therefore, the Sadducees try to force Jesus to concede to their point of view.

The Context of Exodus Three and the Significance of
"The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac,
and the God of Jacob"

The citation of Exodus 3:6 is at the heart of Jesus' defense of the resurrection of the dead. Chapter one of

¹⁷D. M. Cohn-Sherbok, "Jesus' Defence of the Resurrection of the Dead," Journal of the Study of the New Testament 11 (1981):65; Grant, Ancient Judaism, p. 46.

Exodus describes Israel's bondage in Egypt. Moses tells how Jacob's family grew from seventy persons until the "land was filled with them."¹⁸ However, the death of Joseph and the accession of a new Pharaoh brought about the enslavement of God's chosen people. Yet, God had not forsaken them in their adversity for "the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And the Egyptians were in dread of the people of Israel."¹⁹ Even the Pharaoh's attempts to exterminate male babies did not succeed.²⁰

In chapter two of Exodus God's plan of redemption for His covenant people begins to take shape. Moses, the eventual leader of the people, is born during the time when the Pharaoh's edict that all male babies be killed is still in effect. Therefore precautions were needed to protect him. When the daughter of the Pharaoh came to the river to bathe she found Moses in a basket among the bulrushes. Moses was raised in the Pharaoh's court and Pharaoh's daughter claimed him as her own.²¹ Yet God's providence was at work. Moses identified himself with his people by

¹⁸Exodus 1:1, 7.

¹⁹Exodus 1:12.

²⁰Exodus 1:15-22.

²¹Exodus 2:10.

killing an Egyptian who had been fighting with an Hebrew.²² This action forced him to flee from the Pharaoh into the land of Midian. While he was in Midian Moses married Zipporah.²³ During this time the Pharaoh died, but the bondage of the children of Israel continued.²⁴ This sets the stage for God's call of Moses in Exodus chapter three.

When Moses was tending his father-in-law's flock the Angel of Yahweh (אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה) appeared to him in a burning bush.²⁵ Miraculously, the bush burned, but was not consumed.²⁶ As Moses turned to see this sight Yahweh called to Him and told him not to come near because he was standing on holy ground.²⁷ It was after this that Yahweh spoke the words which Jesus uses in His defense of the resurrection, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of

²²Exodus 2:11-12.

²³Exodus 2:21.

²⁴Exodus 2:23-24.

²⁵Young says, "[The text] clearly identifies the angel with God. The Angel appeared unto Moses in a flame of fire from the midst of the bush, and God called to Moses from the midst of the bush. Furthermore, the manner in which the LORD is introduced as one who sees that Moses had turned aside suggests that the LORD and the Angel are one." (Edward J. Young, "The Call of Moses," Westminster Theological Journal 30 [1967-1968]:3).

²⁶Exodus 3:1-3.

²⁷Exodus 3:4-5.

Isaac, and the God of Jacob."²⁸ Later on in Exodus three, another significant event occurred when Moses asked what he should tell the people if they inquired as to the name of the God of their fathers. God replied, "I AM WHO I AM." He told Moses to say to the children of Israel, "I AM has sent me to you." In addition God again identified Himself as "Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."²⁹

The phrase, "God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob," assumes significance not only in an analysis of Jesus' defense of the resurrection in the New Testament, but also for a study of the history of the Critical interpretation of the Old Testament. In Exodus 3:6 that phrase is prefaced by the words, "I am the God of your father." The singular form אֱלֹהֵי אֲבִי here is somewhat unexpected especially since the plural אֱלֹהֵי יְכֻם occurs in the immediate context in verses thirteen, fifteen, and sixteen. The editor of the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia notes that the Samaritan Pentateuch, one codex of the Septuagint, and Justin Martyr use the plural of אֱלֹהֵי for Exodus 3:6. Acts 7:32, where Stephen recounts Israel's history before being stoned to death, also reflects this form in Greek (πατέρων).

²⁸Exodus 3:6.

²⁹Exodus 3:13-15.

Nevertheless, אֱלֹהֵי as the lectio difficilior, is to be preferred in Exodus 3:6. The phrase with the singular form is not without precedent in the Old Testament.³⁰ Neither is it incomprehensible. "Father," first of all, could be understood in a collective sense as referring to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob together as one.³¹ Secondly, אֱלֹהֵי could be a narrower, more literal reference to Moses' own father, Amram. Understood in this way Yahweh directs Moses' thoughts to his own past and the time of the ancestors. "To rule out all question of doubt the Lord immediately adds, 'the god of Abraham, the god of Isaac, and the god of Jacob.'"³² The Masoretic punctuation with the Zaqep parvum allows for either explanation. Ultimately the distinction between the two is not great.

An even more pressing problem than this textual question is the discussion of the nature of patriarchal religion. Albrecht Alt, the German Old Testament scholar, initiated the debate on this subject with the publication of his 1929 essay, "The God of the Fathers."³³ Alt's basic

³⁰Other occurrences include Genesis 26:24; 31:5, 29, 42, 52; 43:23; 46:1, 3; 49:25; 50:17; Exodus 15:2; 18:4.

³¹C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament: The Pentateuch, trans. James Martin (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), p. 440; Young, "The Call of Moses," p. 14.

³²Young, "Call of Moses," p. 15.

³³Albrecht Alt, "The God of the Fathers," in Essays

assertion was that the worship of Yahweh was not unique to Israel.³⁴ Moreover, the patriarchs were polytheists. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob each received revelations from a "numen" and, in turn, founded cults of their own.³⁵ Alt believed that appellatives such as "The Shield of Abraham" (Genesis 15:1), the "Fear of Isaac" (Genesis 31:42, 53), and the "Mighty One of Jacob" (Genesis 49:24) were designations of the patron deity of each patriarch.³⁶ As the years progressed these deities were worshipped by the descendants of the patriarchs and became known as "the god of my father."

According to Alt a gradual distinction developed between the national religion and the tribal religions. Yahweh was the God of Israel, but not of each individual tribe.³⁷ The cult of the fathers continued to develop even after the entry and settlement in Canaan.³⁸ Yahwism as the

on Old Testament History and Religion, trans. R. A. Wilson (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1967), 3-100; others who follow Alt's basic line of thought are Frank Moore Cross, Jr., "Yahweh and the God of the Patriarchs," Harvard Theological Review, 55 (4, 1962):225-259; and J. Philip Hyatt, "Yahweh as 'The God of My Father'," Vetus Testamentum 5 (1955):130-136.

³⁴Alt, "The God of the Fathers," p. 8.

³⁵Ibid., p. 60.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 32.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 74-75.

³⁸Ibid., p. 76.

exclusive religion of Israel occurred only after the national cult of Yahweh had sufficiently encroached and assimilated the local sanctuaries of the Israelite tribes.³⁹ Alt says that "the gods of the Fathers were the παιδαγωγοί leading to the greater God, who later replaced them completely."⁴⁰

Edward J. Young exposes the deficiencies of Alt's theory from a true scholarly point of view.⁴¹ He intimates that presuppositions play a large role in determining one's final outcome. Because Alt operates with an evolutionary conception of the development of Israel's religious ideas, it is natural that he would visualize a gradual movement from polytheism to monotheism. The alternative to this viewpoint is to understand monotheism to be a result of Divine revelation.⁴² Admittedly this, too, involves a presupposition--a presupposition that God is actively involved in making Himself known to His people. Young also attacks Alt's allegiance to the Documentary analysis of the Pentateuch and the subjectivity inherent in that

³⁹Ibid., p. 78.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 80.

⁴¹Edward J. Young, "The God of the Fathers," Westminster Theological Journal 3 (1, 1940):25-40.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 25-26.

hypothetical approach.⁴³ Young concludes that the gods of the fathers are not individual deities, but different names for Yahweh, the one God of Israel.⁴⁴

The phrase, "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" is important not only in terms of the history of religions. It also has a great theological significance.

Abraham was the father of God's covenant people. God called him from his homeland and promised to bless him and make him great, so that in him all the families of the earth would be blessed.⁴⁵ When Abraham was ninety-nine years old God spoke to him again, reminding him of the covenant relationship in which he stood. God graciously promised that He would make Abraham the father of a multitude of nations.⁴⁶ Furthermore, God spoke these significant words:

And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generation for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. And I will give to you, and to your descendants after you, the land of your

⁴³Ibid., pp. 31-32.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 38.

⁴⁵Genesis 12:2-3. The translation "shall be blessed" of verse three is preferable to the Revised Standard Version's "bless themselves," for it emphasizes the Divine, not human, action.

⁴⁶Genesis 17:1-5.

sojourning, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.⁴⁷

According to God's promise, Abraham did bear a son.⁴⁸ God tested Abraham and commanded him to offer his beloved son, Isaac, as a sacrifice.⁴⁹ When God saw that Abraham was willingly complying to His command He intervened so that the sacrifice would not take place.⁵⁰ God then reiterated His covenant promise to Abraham.⁵¹

Isaac was an heir to this same covenant promise. God reminded him of the oath He swore to Abraham, his father.⁵² Likewise, God appeared to Isaac's son, Jacob at Bethel, saying, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants."⁵³

These references help give a clear impression of the true import of the phrase, "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." These three patriarchs were, in a sense, the charter members of the covenant and the

⁴⁷Genesis 17:7-8.

⁴⁸Genesis 21:2.

⁴⁹Genesis 22:1-2.

⁵⁰Genesis 22:3-12.

⁵¹Genesis 22:17-18.

⁵²Genesis 26:3-5, 24.

⁵³Genesis 28:13.

bearers of the covenant promise. God's dealings with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob "are a prototype and guarantee of His relationship to the covenant people."⁵⁴ When God ordered Moses, in Exodus three, to tell the people that "the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob has sent me to you," He was revealing Himself as a God who was not unknown to the children of Israel.⁵⁵ He was the God who had concrete, historical relations with particular persons in Israel's past. He was the God who continued to keep His covenant promises by dealing graciously with His people.

This same emphasis surrounds the use of the phrase elsewhere in Scripture. In Deuteronomy 1:8, after the children of Israel have been in the wilderness forty years, Moses reminds them that the land they are about to enter was promised by God to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They can look to the future with certainty because of God's promises of the past. In Deuteronomy 6:10 Moses expands on this thought and exhorts the children of Israel not to forget the debt of gratitude they owe their God because of

⁵⁴Hugo Odeberg, " Ἰακωβ," TDNT, 3:191.

⁵⁵Brevard S. Childs, The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary. The Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), p. 88; R. Alan Cole, Exodus: An Introduction and Commentary. Tyndale Old Testament Commentary (Downer's Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1979), p. 66.

His faithfulness. In Deuteronomy 9:27 Moses recalls the golden calf incident of Exodus thirty-two, when he prayed God to remember his servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, so that He would not destroy His people because of their sinfulness.

Occasionally, the phrase "Abraham, Isaac, and Israel" occurs later in the Old Testament. In 1 Kings 18:36 Elijah evokes this phrase in his contest with the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. God hears his cry and fire comes from the sky to destroy the altar which has been erected.⁵⁶ David utters this phrase in 1 Chronicles 29:18 at the investiture of Solomon, and in 2 Chronicles 30:6 Hezekiah includes the phrase in a letter which urged the restoration of the Passover. The prophets often refer to these three patriarchs individually, but in Jeremiah 33:26 they are mentioned together.

⁵⁶Rist highlights incidents such as this to substantiate his theory that reference to the patriarchs was often understood as a quasi-magical formula. He refers to the views of Justin Martyr and Origen who believed that demons would be exorcised if this formula was mentioned. Reference to the patriarchs was also used in early baptismal ceremonies to expel Satan from baptismal candidates. Rist maintains that Peter's healing power in Acts 3:13-16 was due to his use of this formula. While Rist's article does make some interesting historical observations, his theory is totally inadequate as an exegetical tool because of its failure to interpret the phrase within its total Scriptural and covenantal context. His exegesis of the pertinent passages from Scripture seems to be colored by his presuppositions, and the subsequent historical misuse of the phrase (Martin Rist, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: A Liturgical and Magical Formula," Journal of Biblical Literature 57 [1938]:289-303).

In the New Testament allusions to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob continue to carry Old Testament overtones. In addition to its use in the pericope examined in this thesis, the phrase occurs in five other locations.⁵⁷ After He had healed the centurion's servant in Matthew eight, Jesus asserts that even the believing Gentile can be brought into the people of God when He says, "I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." Luke's Gospel refers to the patriarchs in the genealogy of Jesus in chapter three. The reference in chapter thirteen is an eschatological context similar to Matthew eight. In Acts the phrase is uttered by Peter in chapter three after he had healed a lame man, and Stephen in chapter seven as he preached prior to being stoned to death.

Thus Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob personify the covenant people as a whole. They represent the faithfulness with which God has dealt with His people in the past, and the confident expectation of His people that this will continue to hold true in the future, even into the eschaton. Therefore, Jesus' reference to them in His defense of the resurrection of the dead is extremely appropriate and meaningful.

⁵⁷Matthew 8:11; Luke 3:34; 13:28; Acts 3:13; 7:32.

Exodus 3:6 as Proof of the Resurrection

After Jesus finished His citation of Exodus 3:6, each of the Synoptics reports that He explained its significance. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all agree that Jesus said, "He is not God of the dead, but of the living."⁵⁸ In addition, Luke alone reports that Jesus said, "For all live to Him."⁵⁹

Therefore, Jesus' proof of the resurrection is based on very logical grounds. God said, "I am the God of the Patriarchs." This indicated that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were still alive at the time of Moses, hundreds of years after their own deaths, because they were still experiencing a covenant relationship with God, albeit, apart from their bodies.⁶⁰ Furthermore, this also meant that their

⁵⁸Matthew 22:32; Mark 12:27; Luke 20:38.

⁵⁹This $\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\omega$ could be translated in many different ways, depending on whether it is understood as dative of means, reference, or mode. Ultimately all three alternatives play a part in the word's correct understanding, although the latter two alternatives are the best at pointing out the radically different nature of this kind of life. It is life totally with God, not human life as we know it.

⁶⁰Two important intertestamental passages substantiate this statement. In 4 Maccabees 7:19 and 16:25 Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are said to be "living to God" ($\xi\omega\sigma\iota\nu\ \tau\omega\ \theta\epsilon\omega$).

resurrections were certain, since no real life, in the fullest sense, could be lived apart from the body.⁶¹

The two most important linguistic elements in this logical progression are the present tense of the copula and the use of the genitive case (Hebrew construct). However, this process of logical inference has been challenged. As intimated in the introduction to this thesis, objections have been raised to this traditional explanation of Jesus' use of Exodus 3:6. Alfred Edersheim's statement that "more grand and noble evidence of the Resurrection has never been offered" is not characteristic of recent comments on this passage.⁶² Representative samples of these objections will be delineated and analyzed in the following paragraphs.

A general criticism of Jesus' use of Exodus 3:6 as a proof-text for the doctrine of the resurrection is that He shows no regard for the context of the passage. Van Daalen argues that from a strictly exegetical point of view the traditional explanation of Jesus' defense is "nonsense . . . The passage in Exodus three says nothing whatsoever about the resurrection."⁶³ This criticism relates to the observation that the emphasis in this chapter is on the

⁶¹Cranfield, Mark, p. 376; Geldenhuys, Luke, p. 511; Swete, Mark, p. 282.

⁶²Edersheim, Life and Times, 2:402.

⁶³Van Daalen, "Observations," p. 242.

Patriarchs' past worship of Yahweh, not their present status.⁶⁴ According to this view, when God declares, "I am . . . the God of Abraham . . . Isaac . . . and Jacob," He is saying, in effect, "I am the God . . . whom Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob worshipped."

It cannot be gainsaid that this emphasis on the Patriarchs' worship is an intrinsic part of the context of Exodus three. As was mentioned in the previous section, God wanted Moses and the children of Israel to know that He was not some new deity, totally removed from their past. Instead, He desired that they realize their place in the continuity of the covenant first established with Abraham. However, this is not to say that thoughts of the Patriarchs' continued existence, and their ultimate resurrection, necessarily need to be excluded. The real issue in Jesus' use of Exodus 3:6 is not whether He ignores the context, but whether He goes beyond the context.

Part of the difficulty for those who say that Jesus' use of Exodus 3:6 militates against the context in which the passage is originally found may be that they too narrowly restrict the context, limiting it to just the episode of Moses' call. Already here, however, the Exodus motif is beginning to surface. The burning bush incident is one of

⁶⁴McNeile, Matthew, p. 322; Nineham, Mark, p. 322; Strawson, The Future Life, p. 208; Van Daalen, "Observations," p. 242.

the initial, but integral, steps that God took to liberate His enslaved people. Moses was God's appointed leader who would be instrumental in guiding His chosen people to the promised land.

Typologically, this Exodus motif continues in the New Testament. Christ, the antitype of Moses,⁶⁵ led God's covenant people on a far greater Exodus. Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so Christ was lifted up on the cross "that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life."⁶⁶ Christ's vicarious atonement is the means whereby His people enter the promised land of eternal life. The resurrection of all people, and especially of the righteous, is an intrinsic part of that process. Understood in this way, Christ's citation of Exodus 3:6 in response to the question of the Sadducees is perfectly appropriate and applicable. Rather than going beyond the context of the passage, He gives a succinctly replete exegesis of its significant theological motifs.

Another objection to Jesus' use of Exodus 3:6 as proof of the resurrection is the fact that the copula, which

⁶⁵Many parallels could be adduced between the lives of Moses and Christ: e.g. both were preserved in childhood (Exodus 2:2-10; Matthew 2:14, 15), both fasted forty days (Exodus 34:28; Matthew 4:2), both controlled the sea (Exodus 14:21; Matthew 8:26), both fed a multitude (Exodus 16:11-18; Matthew 14:20-21), etc.

⁶⁶Numbers 21:9; John 3:14-15.

in its present tense is a vital element in the traditional explanation of the verse, is absent in the Masoretic text. The Hebrew reads, אָנֹכִי אֵלֹהֵי אֲבֹתַי אֵלֹהֵי אֲבֹתַי אֵלֹהֵי אֲבֹתַי. . . . Therefore, the tense of the copula needs to be argued from the context.

Robert Gundry asserts that the present tense is implied with no Hebrew verb, but Rabbi Cohn-Sherbok points out three passages which are among a "host of counter-examples where the copula is missing and the Scriptural verse is intended to be understood in tenses other than the present."⁶⁷ A past tense of the copula would correspond with the theory mentioned above which points to the Patriarchs' past worship life rather than their continued existence. Yet that emphasis conceivably could be equally maintained even if the copula were admitted to be present tense.

One could argue for the present tense of the copula on the basis of the Septuagint's inclusion of εἰμι. But this is not totally conclusive, for it proves only that the Septuagint's translators understood the verse in this way. It is also significant that of the three Synoptics, only

⁶⁷Robert Horton Gundry, The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel: With Special Reference to the Messianic Hope (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967), p. 21; Cohn-Sherbok, "Jesus' Defence," pp. 67, 73, footnote 7. The passages cited are Exodus 11:3; 1 Kings 2:45; and 2 Kings 4:8.

Matthew has the εἰμί .⁶⁸ Although the εἰμί is surely to be understood, this seems to indicate that "there is more involved in Matthew's use of the Old Testament than a mechanical reading of the present tense of the verb."⁶⁹ Jesus, too, may have had other reasons for using this citation (see below).

Evans argues that Jesus' use of Exodus 3:6 is not a proof of the resurrection. At best it only shows that special persons are alive without resurrection.⁷⁰ The weakness of this observation is its failure to take into account the significance of the Patriarchs. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob epitomized the covenant people as a whole. What happened to them could be expected to happen to all of God's faithful covenant people.

E. Earle Ellis objects not to Jesus' defense of the resurrection, but to the traditional explanation of that defense. He argues that if the Patriarchs are now personally living, no resurrection would be necessary for God to be their God.⁷¹ Thus, the precise point of Jesus'

⁶⁸The Blass-DeBrunner grammar cites Acts 7:32; John, 14:10, 11; Revelation 21:6 and 22:13 as examples where εἰμί is omitted, but implied.

⁶⁹Childs, Exodus, p. 81.

⁷⁰Evans, Resurrection, p. 32.

⁷¹E. Earle Ellis, "Jesus, the Sadducees and Qumran," New Testament Studies 10 (2, 1964):275.

argument would be defeated. Ellis theorizes that the Old Testament view of Sheol is the premise upon which Jesus defends the resurrection. "For God's relationship to the dead presupposes that the relationship will be actualized by their deliverance from Sheol."⁷²

The traditional explanation of Jesus' defense of the resurrection causes Ellis unnecessary difficulty. His intimation that the survival of the soul renders the resurrection useless forces a Greek body/soul dualism upon the text that need not be there (see chapter three). If the soul does not survive death, but rests in Sheol until the resurrection, no adequate explanation can be given why Matthew explicitly uses the present tense, εἰμί. Moreover, this view seems to run the risk of contradicting such direct words of Jesus as Luke 23:43 which speak of an intermediate state. Finally, the manner in which Ellis side-steps Luke 20:38, πάντες γὰρ αὐτῷ ζῶσιν, by labelling it a peshet, is almost too expedient to be convincing.⁷³ The conclusion one can draw from all of this is that the traditional explanation of Jesus' defense of the resurrection is in keeping with the Biblical usage.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid., pp. 275, 276; see also Marshall, Luke, pp. 738, 743.

Reasons for Jesus' Use of Exodus 3:6

It is difficult to adduce the motives which Jesus may have had for citing Exodus 3:6 as a proof-text of the doctrine of the resurrection. Several factors may have influenced His use of the passage. Because of the relative abundance of other passages outside the Pentateuch which witness to the resurrection with fewer apparent difficulties, and Josephus' statement about the Sadducees' position on oral tradition (see chapter one), some commentators have concluded that Jesus used Exodus 3:6 because the Sadducees accepted the Pentateuch.⁷⁴ This may be probable. But it needs to be remembered that the Sadducees also accepted the rest of the Old Testament within their canon, albeit on a lower level than the Pentateuch.⁷⁵

If the Sadducees sought to refute the resurrection in passages like Isaiah 26:19, Daniel 12:3, or Job 19:25, they undoubtedly would seek to refute any proof-text from the Pentateuch. The point is that they were intent on ruling out the possibility of the resurrection in any passage. Therefore, Jesus' use of the Pentateuch in His defense of the resurrection may not have been simply to conform to Sadducaic canonical preferences.

⁷⁴Caird, Luke, p. 224; Lane, Mark, p. 428; Sutcliffe, Future Life, p. 150; Schweizer, Mark, p. 246.

⁷⁵See chapter I of this thesis.

A second possibility may be related to this first explanation for Jesus' use of a Pentateuchal passage in defense of the resurrection. According to this view Exodus 3:6 is representative not only of the entire Old Testament, but also of the covenant, the relationship between God and His people which underlies the divine revelation itself.⁷⁶ Understood in this way, Jesus effectively says that the whole of Old Testament theology is one of resurrection under Yahweh. Cranfield posits that the plural τὰς γραφὰς in Mark 12:24, when Jesus begins His defense, denote "scriptures as a whole."⁷⁷

This explanation is indeed attractive, for it brings out the true dimensions of the importance and pervasiveness of the resurrection in Biblical theology.⁷⁸ It also accentuates Jesus' knowledge of the message of Scripture, and His skill as an exegete and defender of the faith. His answer to the Sadducees was not based simply on a pedantic observance of Hebrew grammar in a particular Old Testament verse. It was based on a rich and thorough intimacy with the purposes of God which stood behind those words. Lane comments:

⁷⁶Edersheim, Life and Times, 2:402.

⁷⁷Cranfield, Mark, p. 374. Matthew 22:29 also uses τὰς γραφὰς .

⁷⁸Bowman (Mark, p. 230) points out that this pericope is especially significant for Mark if one

It is fidelity to his covenant that God will resurrect the dead. In citing Ex. 3:6 Jesus showed how resurrection faith is attached in a profound way to the central concept of biblical revelation, the covenant, and how the salvation promised by God to the patriarchs and their descendants in virtue of the covenant contains implicitly the assurance of the resurrection.

Perhaps one could also suggest that Jesus used Exodus 3:6 as a defense of the resurrection in order to draw a typological connection between Himself and Moses.

Gundry's observation that the εἶπεν in Matthew 22:24 (as opposed to the ἔγνωσεν ἡμῖν in Mark 12:19 and Luke 20:28) is meant to draw a parallel between the words of Moses and the words of Jesus, could give a modicum of textual support to this alternative.⁸⁰ Contextually, this explanation is not impossible either. At the time of this Synoptic account Jesus' crucifixion was only days away. Theologically, His passion and resurrection is an antitype to the Exodus. Moses liberated his people from bondage in Egypt. In a far greater way, Christ liberated His people from bondage to sin and death.⁸¹

understands his Gospel to end at 16:8 before the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus.

⁷⁹Lane, Mark, p. 430.

⁸⁰Robert Horton Gundry, Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), p. 444.

⁸¹Interestingly, Luke records that Moses and Elijah talked to Jesus about His Exodus at His Transfiguration (Luke 9:31).

A final explanation for Jesus' use of Exodus 3:6 says that He quoted this Pentateuchal passage because the Sadducaic allusion to levirate marriage came from the Pentateuch.⁸² "The Sadducees had made a false deduction. . . . Jesus shows them how to make a correct deduction."⁸³ Lenski thereby envisions Jesus as giving the Sadducees a lesson in exegetical methodology. This theory is not impossible but in view of the other aforementioned alternatives, it is a more difficult suggestion to believe that it is the preferred explanation.

Jesus' Defense and Rabbinic Methods of Argumentation

An issue related to Jesus' reasons for quoting Exodus 3:6 is the question of the affinities between His defense of the resurrection and rabbinic methods of argumentation.⁸⁴ This connection has been suggested by many scholars⁸⁵ Taylor says, "The method of discussion, by the

⁸²Lenski, Matthew, p. 874; Plummer, Luke, p. 470. Deuteronomy 25:5 and Genesis 38:8 are the Pentateuchal references to levirate marriage.

⁸³Lenski, Matthew, p. 874.

⁸⁴Strack-Billerbeck (Matthäus, pp. 893-895) lists examples of later rabbinic proofs of the resurrection.

⁸⁵Caird, Luke, p. 224; Jan Willen Doeve, Jewish Hermeneutics in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts. Van Gorcum's Theologische Bibliotheek. no. 24 (Assen, Netherlands: Koninklijke Drukkerij Van Gorcum & Company, 1954), p. 105; Ernst Lohmeyer, Das Evangelium des Markus. Meyers Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), p. 257; Marshall, Luke, p.

use of Scripture and an illustrative story, and by counter-questions culminating in a positive statement, as well as the kind of exegesis illustrated, are typically Rabbinic . . ." ⁸⁶ Rabbi Cohn-Sherbok's view is in the definite minority. After analyzing Jesus' defense in light of Tannaitic hermeneutical rules, he concludes that it is "defective from a rabbinic point of view" and "suggests that he [Jesus] was not skilled in the argumentative style of the Pharisees and Sadducees." ⁸⁷

Cohn-Sherbok overstates his case, and errs by failing to take into account the response of Jesus' listeners. Matthew 22:33 reports that when the crowd heard Jesus' defense "they were astonished (ἐξέπλησσοντο) at his teaching." Luke 20:39 reports that some of the scribes answered, "Teacher, you have spoken well (καλῶς)." ⁸⁸ On the other hand, this does not automatically imply that Jesus was

738; Nineham, Mark, p. 320; Strawson, Future Life, p. 208; Taylor, Mark, p. 480; Van Daalen, "Observations," p. 242. Downing asserts that Philo's De Abrahamo has affinities with Jesus' argument here (F. Gerald Downing, "The Resurrection of the Dead: Jesus and Philo," Journal of the Study of the New Testament 15 [1982]:42-50).

⁸⁶Taylor, Mark, p. 480.

⁸⁷Cohn-Sherbok, "Jesus' Defence," p. 72.

⁸⁸Arndt (Luke, p. 412) maintains that this καλῶς refers to the content, not just the form, of the words.

using rabbinic methods in His defense. Moore tells of rabbis who worked with eschatological passages:

. . . by hermeneutic methods which treated single verses, clauses, and even words, as independent oracles, without regard to the general or particular context, and combined them with other similarly isolated enunciations according to rules which were supposed to embody the logic of revelation, and not infrequently derived unsuspected meanings from the text by forcing a clause to submit to an unnatural⁸⁹ division or a word to an arbitrary mispronunciation.

If this is what is meant by a rabbinic methodology, then any connection between it and Jesus' defense of the resurrection must be denied. A previous section of this chapter has shown that Jesus' use of Exodus 3:6 is able to withstand objections raised against it. Therefore, the labelling of Jesus' defense as rabbinic must not be used as a hidden agenda which euphemistically seeks to lessen its credibility.

Ultimately, Jesus' use of rabbinic methods is a moot point, for as the Son of God He was Rabbi par excellence. When this thought is added as a concluding consideration, the veracity of His defense of the resurrection, as established in this thesis, can only be more steadfastly maintained.

⁸⁹ Moore, Judaism, 2:389.

CONCLUSION

An analysis of the Sadducees' question to Jesus about the resurrection as presented by the three Synoptic writers leads to the conclusion that in His response Jesus presented very firm and undeniable proof of the fact of the resurrection.

This incident is one of the few places in Scripture where the Sadducees assume prominence. Although seemingly working together with their rivals, the Pharisees, in order to bring Jesus into disfavor with the public as well as those with governing authority, the question which the Sadducees posed centered on one of their chief doctrinal disagreements with the Pharisees. The Sadducees thereby hoped to score a double victory, over both Jesus and the Pharisees.

Each of the Synoptic writers presents a vivid picture of this incident. The language in each of the three Gospels closely parallels the others, but one can still observe the emphases and individuality of each writer. Matthew and Mark are most similar, while Luke, in general, is more dissimilar. The textual condition of this account in Matthew, Mark, and Luke is good. Those variants that are

present can be judged to be minor, and do not significantly impinge upon the meaning of the text.

The historical context of this occurrence is an important consideration as well. The Sadducees pose this question on Tuesday of Holy Week. On the day before Jesus had cleansed the temple; this event precipitated a series of attempts by the Council to entrap Jesus on the following day. This particular incident is a significant link in the series of events which on Friday led to Jesus' crucifixion and to His resurrection on the following Sunday.

Jesus' use of Exodus 3:6 is a multi-faceted consideration. Objections raised to His method of argumentation cannot be sustained when the full implications of Jesus' citation are observed. Jesus shows Himself to be consistent with the entirety of sacred Scripture on the subject of resurrection. The anthropological and eschatological thoughts of the Old Testament, as well as certain intertestamental documents are also important in this respect, for Jesus is not supporting some form of body-soul dualism. His emphasis is on the resurrection of the body.

In His substantiation of the doctrine of the resurrection, Jesus also intimates that life in the resurrection age will be different from what it is now. It is not merely a splendid continuation of this life. Present earthly conditions will not persist in heaven. Jesus says

that those of that age will be as angels. They will neither marry nor be given in marriage. This must not be misunderstood to mean that the resurrected faithful will not recognize each other, or that life in heaven will take away the joys and blessings of earthly relationships. Rather, what is taken away is the limitations which life in this world inevitably attaches to those relationships.

Thus, while proving the fact of the resurrection Jesus gives an intriguing glimpse into the nature and characteristics of the resurrection life. But it is only a glimpse. Believers will have to wait for that day to comprehend and experience its full wonders and joy.

For now, however, believers can look to that day with the full confidence of knowing that there is, indeed, a resurrection. That is the message and assurance which this pericope gives.

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