



**FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH**

# **“The Last Year of the Life of Christ, Part 45”**

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***Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.***



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

**Matt. 22:23-33, Mark 12:18-27, Luke 20:27-40**

That day some of the Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came to [Jesus] with a question. “Teacher,” they said, “Moses told us that if a man dies without leaving children, his brother is to marry the widow and produce children for his brother.

“Now there were seven brothers with us. The first married a woman and died without having children. So the second married her but also died childless. Then the third one married her and so on for all seven brothers, all dying without having children. Finally the woman died as well. So in the resurrection when they all rise, whose wife will she be? All seven had married her!”

**“You’re wrong,” Jesus replied, “because you don’t understand the Scriptures—or the power of God. People in this world get married and are given in marriage, but those who are considered worthy to take part in the next world and the resurrection from the dead neither get married nor are given in marriage. Instead, they are like the angels in heaven. They cannot die anymore, either, because they’re like the angels and are children of God since they participated in the resurrection.**

Thank you very much for coming to hear the message for today. Before we begin our next lesson, let us reiterate our reason for attending Church.

We attend Church to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so that we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

This last week of Jesus’ life was the time in which Jesus gave proof of His deity to those that were questioning Him. Jesus’ predetermined plan was to so frustrate His opponents that they would go the extremity of having Him executed even as the crowds that gathered in Jerusalem for the feast were extolling His power and wisdom. We read a couple of weeks ago about Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem, in the harmony of the gospels, the Greatest Life, which said:

**Matt. 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:29-44, John 12:12-19**

**When [Jesus, as He entered Jerusalem] came to the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, a large crowd of disciples began to shout for joy and to praise God loudly for all the miracles they had seen. “Blessed is the King who is coming in the name of the Lord!” they shouted. “Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!”**

**A huge crowd had come to the feast. When they heard that Jesus was entering Jerusalem, they cut down palm branches, went out to meet Him, and spread the branches on the road. The crowds who followed Him as well as those who went ahead of Him kept shouting, “Hosanna! Hosanna to the Son of David!”**



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

**“Blessed is He who is coming in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel!”  
“Blessed is the kingdom of our father David!” “Hosanna in the highest!”**

**All this happened to fulfill what the prophet said: Tell the daughter of Zion, “Don’t be afraid! Look, your King is coming to you, humble, and riding a donkey, even a colt, the foal of a donkey.”**

**The people who were with Him when He raised Lazarus from the dead and called him from the tomb were telling others all about it. That is why the people went out to meet Him; they heard that He had performed this great miracle.**

So the crowd of pilgrims that were in Jerusalem for the Passover celebration knew of the miraculous power of Jesus Christ, including His miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead.

Although Lazarus’ resurrection was Jesus’ most recent and dramatic miracle, it was by no means His only miracle, and the people who had travelled from every part of the Palestine knew of Jesus’ previous track record. The woman who dropped her waterpot at the well, and went into town telling everyone, as recorded in **John 4:29: 29 “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”**

Jesus cast many demons out of the Gadarene demoniac and restored the man to his right mind, but then told the man, in **Mark 5:19-20:**

**19 “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.”**

**20 And [the healed man] departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled.**

Jesus and His disciples tried to get away from the crowds to rest, but the crowd wanted more of Jesus’ teaching. They followed Jesus’ group into a deserted place, and Jesus taught until it became late. When His disciples told Him that the people would need to be dismissed to go get something to eat, the Bible records that Jesus had another solution. **Mark 6:38-44** records:

**38 But [Jesus] said to them, “How many loaves do you have? Go and see.” And when they found out they said, “Five, and two fish.”**

**39 Then [Jesus] commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass.**

**41 And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, [Jesus] looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among them all.**

**42 So they all ate and were filled.**

**44 Now those who had eaten the loaves were about five thousand men.**

These are just three examples of Jesus’ ministry, and the Bible records many others. Needless to say, after four years of His miracle ministry, Jesus Christ is a well-known religious leader in Israel. Now Jesus is at His final feast of the Passover, being challenged by the religious leaders in Jerusalem.



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Bible records the beginning of Jesus' preaching ministry, in **Matthew 4:17: 17 From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."**

The Sadducees, a religious party in Jerusalem, disagreed with Jesus' assertion. Their thesis was that there is no life after death, but that the end of our life on earth is the end of our existence. Now, resurrections from the dead are very rare; most people will never have the personal experience of seeing someone that has risen from the dead, so I can understand their skepticism about heaven.

When people choose to argue about concepts for which they have no physical proof, they have to argue from their own thinking and experience. I personally have no physical proof of the resurrection of Jesus Christ; I did not see it, nor was I alive to speak to anyone that was there. My argument in favor of Jesus' resurrection is based upon my logical assessment of the historical facts reported by the Bible and other historical writings, and my opinion that this historical evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ meets my standard of proof. The Sadducees argued from their own logic to form their opinions, as do I. Their logic is based upon the Biblical law of Levirate marriage, which I will explain.

Family history was very important in the Judaism of Biblical times. Family ties were instrumental in determining the distribution of the land in the Nation of Israel to each of the twelve tribes. **Numbers 26:1-2** records:

**1 And it came to pass, after the plague, that the LORD spoke to Moses and Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, saying:**

**2 "Take a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel from twenty years old and above, by their fathers' houses, all who are able to go to war in Israel."**

This census of the men was taken by family. **Numbers 26:5-6** records:

**5 Reuben was the firstborn of Israel. The children of Reuben were: of Hanoch, the family of the Hanochites; of Pallu, the family of the Palluites;**

**6 of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites; of Carmi, the family of the Carmites.**

If I were to read through the remainder of the 26<sup>th</sup> chapter of Numbers, I would read the names of the heads of all of the families in all of the tribes, or families, of the Nation of Israel. When the Bible reads, "the children of", it is referring, as **Numbers 26:2** says, to men who can go to war. Men who can go to war can father children, and the family line is determined through the father, rather than the mother. That is the reason that women change their last name when they get married and the reason that legitimate children take the last names of their father rather than taking their mother's maiden name.

After all of the fighting men were counted and their families recorded, in

**Numbers 26:52-54:**

**52 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying:**

**53 "To these the land shall be divided as an inheritance, according to the number of names.**



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

**54 To a large tribe [or family] you shall give a larger inheritance, and to a small tribe [or family] you shall give a smaller inheritance. Each shall be given its inheritance according to those who were numbered of them.**

So the land in Israel was allotted by God to each family, according to the size of the family. This allotment was intended to be a permanent allotment. People could buy and sell land to and from one other, but every fifty years, the ownership of the land that was bought or sold reverted back to the original family. **Leviticus 25:10, 27:24** records: **10 And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family. 24 In the Year of Jubilee the field shall return to him from whom it was bought, to the one who owned the land as a possession.**

Before Israel took possession of the land, the problem of Zelophehad's daughters came up. Zelophehad had daughters but no sons when he died in the wilderness. Originally, there was no provision made for women to receive inheritances in the land, but Zelophehad's daughters protested to Moses that their father should still have an inheritance through them. In **Numbers 27:7-8**, the Lord told Moses: **7 "The daughters of Zelophehad speak what is right; you shall surely give them a possession of inheritance among their father's brothers, and cause the inheritance of their father to pass to them.**

**8 And you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a man dies and has no son, then you shall cause his inheritance to pass to his daughter.**

But, allowing daughters to inherit land brings up another problem, as **Numbers 36:2-4** records:

**2 And [the relatives of Zelophehad's daughters] said: "The LORD commanded my lord Moses to give the land as an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel, and my lord was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of our brother Zelophehad to his daughters.**

**3 Now if they are married to any of the sons of the other tribes of the children of Israel, then their inheritance will be taken from the inheritance of our fathers, and it will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry; so it will be taken from the lot of our inheritance.**

**4 And when the Jubilee of the children of Israel comes, then their inheritance will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry; so their inheritance will be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers."**

Daughters inherit when there is not a son in their family to inherit. Should a daughter marry after she inherits, that which she has inherited now belongs to her husband also. If daughters that inherit marry outside of their tribe, the ownership of land changes from their father's tribe to their husband's tribe, which will cause confusion and argument in the year of Jubilee. In the Jubilee, should the land go to the daughter's father's tribe or to the daughter's husband's tribe? God solved this problem in the law of Zelophehad's daughters, recorded in **Numbers 36:6-7**, which says:



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

**6 This is what the LORD commands concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, 'Let them marry whom they think best, but they may marry only within the family of their father's tribe.'**

**7 So the inheritance of the children of Israel shall not change hands from tribe to tribe, for every one of the children of Israel shall keep the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers.**

But women can also inherit land if their husband dies and they have no male children, and this problem caused God to ordain the point of our discussion, that is, the law of Levirate marriage, which is recorded in **Deuteronomy 25:5-6:**

**5 "If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband's brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her.**

**6 And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel.**

Daughters that inherit land in Israel cannot marry outside of their father's family, and wives that inherit land in Israel cannot marry outside of their husband's family so that the land will remain in the family and so that the Jubilee can be accomplished.

This is the basis of the conundrum that the Sadducees bring to Jesus, in our text, **Matthew 22:23-28**, which says:

**That day some of the Sadducees (who say there is no resurrection) came to [Jesus] with a question. "Teacher," they said, "Moses told us that if a man dies without leaving children, his brother is to marry the widow and produce children for his brother.**

**"Now there were seven brothers with us. The first married a woman and died without having children. So the second married her but also died childless. Then the third one married her and so on for all seven brothers, all dying without having children. Finally the woman died as well. So in the resurrection when they all rise, whose wife will she be? All seven had married her!"**

The Sadducees argument is based upon the assumption that marital status is retained in heaven as it is on earth, and a woman cannot be the husband of more than one man at a time in heaven.

This is generally the problem with arguments in opposition to Christianity. Anti-Christian arguments are always based upon assumptions not in evidence from the Scripture. Jesus does say that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, but He does not say that the rules in Heaven will be the same as the rules on earth, and there is no logical reason to assume that heaven is simply an extension of earth.

Remember, the Sadducees are making this argument to Jesus Christ, who raises people from the dead. With Jesus as an example of a man from heaven, there is no reason to assume that marriage will be necessary there, as Jesus was never married, or that life in heaven is going to be anything like life on earth. And that's exactly what



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

Jesus tells the Sadducees to rebut their argument, in our text, **Matthew 22:29-30**, which says:

**“You’re wrong,” Jesus replied, “because you don’t understand the Scriptures—or the power of God. People in this world get married and are given in marriage, but those who are considered worthy to take part in the next world and the resurrection from the dead neither get married nor are given in marriage.**

In **Genesis 2:18**:

**18 And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”**

Marriage exists because of a deficiency in men; not men as in mankind, but men as opposed to women. We men need women to help us overcome our emotional deficiency and to make us feel better. That is what marriage is all about. That’s a good thing to remember. Let me repeat it. As far as the Bible is concerned, the purpose of women and marriage is to help men overcome their emotional deficiency and to make men feel better. Women were created for comfort and companionship and not for competition. Other than that, there is no reason for the physical differentiation of women from men or for marriage. Think about it. When men are alone, we have an emotional deficiency. We don’t need anyone to make us feel worse. Suppose you have a cavity in your tooth that hurts terribly, and you go to the dentist. He says to you, “Here is a very expensive prescription. The pills that you receive when you fill this prescription will not help your condition or relieve your pain, but I own the pharmacy downstairs and give everyone this expensive prescription so that I can make money.” How likely would you be to either get the prescription filled or to go back to that dentist ever again?

A prescription is only of value if the medicine dispensed helps solve the physical problem and relieve the pain. God prescribed women to men as a remedy for the pain of emotional isolation. Remember, in **Genesis 2:18**:

**18 And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”**

Man’s problem is emotional isolation. Before God created the woman, He brought all the animals to the man, but none of them was determined to be suitable for a companion. Thus, the medicine is not just any type of companionship, but the type of companionship that will make a man feel better.

Man’s emotional deficiency stems from the fact that although the man is in charge of the garden, he is not in control of the garden. Before God created woman, he gave the man an instruction in **Genesis 2:16-17**:

**16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;**

**17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”**

God was in control of the garden, not man, for if man had been in control of the garden, he would have been able to avoid death after eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. So man has responsibility, but not control. Having



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

responsibility but not control causes emotional stress. Think of how you would feel if you were in danger of losing your job because your employer is going out of business. You have no control over whether or not you can keep your job, but you still have the responsibility of acquiring money to care for your family. To alleviate your stress of having responsibility but not control, you need relief. God's prescription was to give men wives. **Genesis 2:23-24** says:

**23 And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."**

**24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.**

So, marriage, the primary human relationship, is designed by God to alleviate the emotional deficiency of man. But, listen to that which the Bible teaches about heaven, in **Revelation 21:1-4**:

**1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.**

**2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.**

**3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.**

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

In Heaven, God will wipe away all tears. Man will not have an emotional deficiency because in Heaven, there is no more death, sorrow, crying or pain, for the former things have passed away. Heaven is a different environment. We will not only be responsible; we will also be in control, as was Jesus.

When Jesus came to earth, He did not have an emotional deficiency, outside of one night in the Garden of Gethsemane, because Jesus was in control. Even in His crucifixion, He was in control. Jesus said, in **John 10:11, 17-18**:

**11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.**

**17 "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.**

**18 No one takes [My life] from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."**

Jesus has the power and the control. The experience of isolation, while painful, was not a problem for Jesus Christ. As they were nailing Him to the Cross, Jesus was not receiving solace from any person. **Luke 23:33-37** says:

**33 And when they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left.**

**34 Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."**





## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

And they divided His garments and cast lots.

**35** And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, “He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God.”

**36** The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine,  
**37** and saying, “If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself.”

Notice that in this great agony to which He had given Himself, Jesus continued to communicate with God the Father in Heaven through prayer. The help that Jesus needed did not come from a woman, but from His Father. However, in the height of His agony, even His Father turned His face away from Jesus. Jesus cried out, as **Matthew 27:46**:

**46** And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “**Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?**” that is, “**My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?**”

Jesus was forsaken by God briefly to bear the full weight of our sins, but soon the connection was restored. Jesus last two utterances were words of restoral as he says, in **John 19:30**:

**30** So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “**It is finished!**”

And in **Luke 23:46**:

**46** And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “**Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’**” Having said this, He breathed His last.

As Jesus finished the work that His Father sent Him to do, Jesus left our world and went back to God. The greatest agony in the history of the world was the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Jesus did not have the human emotional comfort of a woman, but bore the weight of sin on His own shoulders in communion with God the Father. Jesus gave Himself, as the full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. When His sacrifice was completed, Jesus died, but then He rose from the dead on that first Easter Sunday morning, and the world has never been the same since. Jesus gave many infallible proofs to the disciples of His resurrection power, and gave miracle power to His disciples to change the world after His resurrection. As He left the earth, Jesus met with His men, as **Matthew 28:18-20** records:

**18** And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “**All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.**

**19** Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

**20** teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

So Jesus informs the Sadducees that their reference to marriage in their arguments about heaven is based upon an error in thinking. He goes on to describe people that go to heaven in the text, in **Luke 20:36**:

**Instead, they are like the angels in heaven. They cannot die anymore, either, because they’re like the angels and are children of God since they participated in the resurrection.**



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

Then, Jesus gives an Old Testament reference to prove His point to the Sadducees, who are Old Testament scholars, as Jesus says, in **Matthew 22:31, Mark 12:27, Luke 20:37:**

**Now concerning the resurrection of the dead—even Moses indicated that the dead will be raised. Haven't you read what God said in the book of Moses, in the story of the bush, when he called the Lord 'the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob'? He isn't the God of the dead but of the living. Everyone is alive to Him! That is why you have made an enormous mistake."**

So the Sadducees have had their riddle answered. Jesus has given them the explanation to answer their objections to the concept of the afterlife. Since we will be like angels, procreation will not be an issue, the physical gender differences of our bodies will not be an issue, and left brain/right brain differences in our minds will not be an issue. We will not rely on one another for comfort, because, in Heaven, the stress caused by our lack of control over our environment will not be an issue. Like the angels, we will have both the power and the authority to do that which God commands us to do, and the stress reaction that we experience because of our lack of control on earth will be gone.

Unfortunately, Jesus' treatment of the Sadducees' riddle did not change their minds. Jesus taught the truth of God effectively and convincingly, but the goal of the Sadducees was to turn the multitudes against Jesus by showing them that Jesus' teaching was defective. Jesus taught about a Kingdom of Heaven in which they did not believe, and all the logic in the world will not convince a mind that does not want to be convinced, but would rather hold on to an opinion.

When the brother came to my house to challenge me to consider Christianity many years ago, I was blessed to be in the state of mind in which I could be convinced. I was not hostile to Christianity, and I recognized that the church was a positive institution. Although I was an unbeliever, I was a member of the church, and I was also a person that had been trained to examine evidence. All I needed to become a Christian was to have someone present convincing evidence to me. The evidence was able to change my perception of Christianity because I was blessed that my heart had not been hardened by the Lord, as was the heart of the Pharaoh as we discussed a couple of weeks ago, and I had the intellectual capacity to examine the evidence and understand the conclusions to which it logically led me.

Christianity has the facts. Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose from the dead physically, and provided enough physical proof to convince 1.8 million people to be executed by an unbelieving Rome over a period of three hundred years for their testimony to the reality of Jesus' resurrection. With this kind of historical evidence, opinions do not matter. I acknowledging the truth that the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead, as did the people who were there to examine the evidence at the time. His resurrection and the genius of His Biblical teaching convinces me that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.



## FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

Our purpose in this life is to do that which God gives us to do and to comfort one another, because there is a heaven to which we will go after this life so that God can comfort us all. God sent us proof of His existence, of His power, and of His benevolence, and we only have to look at the evidence that He has given us to understand His plan for us. As **John 3:16-17** tells us:

**16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

**17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.**

As we go down from this place, let us resolve to follow God's instructions to prepare our minds for heaven, for the life after this life, the life in which we will be with the Lord Jesus Christ, the life in which God will wipe away every tear from our eyes, and take away our experiences of death, sorrow, crying and pain, for the former things have passed away.

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