

# Acts 23:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.

## Analysis

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**For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit**—Luke summarizes the rationalistic theology of the Sadducean party, who accepted only the Pentateuch and rejected oral tradition. Denying resurrection (ἀνάστασις, anastasis), angels (ἄγγελος, aggelos), and spirits (πνεῦμα, pneuma) represented materialistic worldview limiting reality to the physical realm. This made them theological liberals of their day.

**But the Pharisees confess both** (όμολογέω, homologeo, to acknowledge/confess)—The Pharisees affirmed supernatural realities, oral law, and future resurrection. Paul strategically identified with Pharisaic theology (v. 6), splitting the Sanhedrin. While using political wisdom, Paul genuinely believed in resurrection—the risen Christ was his life's foundation. This theological division reflects ongoing tension between naturalistic and supernatural worldviews in interpreting Scripture.

## Historical Context

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The Sadducees, primarily aristocratic priests, controlled the temple and collaborated with Rome. Pharisees, the popular party, emphasized Torah study and synagogue life. Their theological disputes were well-known. By Paul's era, Sadducean power was waning; after AD 70 temple destruction, only Pharisaic Judaism survived, evolving into Rabbinic Judaism.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. How do denials of supernatural reality (resurrection, angels, spiritual realm) undermine biblical faith's foundations?
2. What modern theological divisions parallel the Sadducee-Pharisee split between naturalism and supernaturalism?

## Interlinear Text

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Σαδδουκαῖοι μὲν γὰρ λέγουσιν μὴ εἶναι ἀνάστασιν  
the Sadducees G3303 For say no that there is resurrection  
G4523 G1063 G3004 G3361 G1511 G386

μηδὲ ἄγγελον μήτε πνεῦμα Φαρισαῖοι δὲ ὁμολογοῦσιν  
neither angel nor spirit the Pharisees but confess  
G3366 G32 G3383 G4151 G5330 G1161 G3670

τὰ ἀμφότερα  
both  
G3588 G297

## Additional Cross-References

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**Matthew 22:23** (Resurrection): The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

**Luke 20:27** (Resurrection): Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him,

**Mark 12:18** (Resurrection): Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying,

