

Luke 20:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

Analysis

Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? (ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει τίνος αὐτῶν γίνεται γυνή, en tē anastasei tinos autōn ginetai gynē)—The Sadducees' rhetorical trap springs. They assume resurrection means resuming earthly relationships exactly as they were. **For seven had her to wife** (οἱ γὰρ ἐπτὰ ἔσχον αὐτὴν γυναῖκα, hoi gar hepta eschon autēn gynaika)—all seven were legitimately married to her according to Moses.

Their unstated conclusion: resurrection creates legal and moral impossibilities, contradicting Torah, therefore resurrection is false. But they've committed a category error—assuming resurrection merely extends mortality rather than transforming it. Jesus will answer not by resolving their legal puzzle within their framework but by exploding the framework itself.

Historical Context

This type of *reductio ad absurdum* argument was common in Greco-Roman philosophical debate and rabbinic disputation. The Sadducees were demonstrating their intellectual prowess while attacking Pharisaic belief in resurrection. They assumed material existence was ultimate reality; transformation into a fundamentally different mode of being was inconceivable to their worldview.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How do we project earthly categories (marriage, ownership, identity) onto eternal realities inappropriately?
2. When have your questions about doctrine revealed not genuine inquiry but attempts to discredit?
3. What does the Sadducees' question reveal about their understanding of God's power and purposes?

Interlinear Text

Ἐν τῷ οὖν ἀναστάσει τίνος αὐτὴν γίνεται γυναῖκα
in G3588 **Therefore** the resurrection whose her is she to wife
G1722 G3767 G386 G5101 G846 G1096 G1135

οἱ γὰρ ἐπτὰ ἔσχον αὐτὴν γυναῖκα
G3588 for seven had her to wife
G1063 G2033 G2192 G846 G1135

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org