Rev. Dr. Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church Matthew 22:23-33 | Testing Jesus: The Resurrection Sunday September 14, 2025

WELCOME:

- Bibles in the back—our gift to you.
- My sermon notes are in the foyer—please take them home with you.

REVIEW:

We continue our expositional study of Matthew's Gospel.

As a review, it's Passover week, marking the last few days of Jesus' life.

We have learned that as Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Monday, that was the same day Israel chose their lambs for Passover.

They were then to inspect their lambs for five days, ensuring they were without spot or blemish.

Spiritually speaking, as Israel inspected their individual lambs, the Lamb of God must also be inspected.

In other words, Jesus must be tested.

His inspectors are the religious leaders of the day—the Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees.

Just as Jesus told three parables to answer their question about authority, they in return test Jesus with three questions.

Last Sunday, we examined the first question.

It had to deal with money—Is it lawful to pay taxes?

LW KEYPOINT 2:

Jesus said that paying taxes is an obligation and responsibility.

Why is that?

LW KEYPOINT 3:

The coin bore the image of Caesar, so it belonged to Caesar.

It's the government's coin, so give it back to them.

But that's all the government gets—the things of this world—because...

LW KEYPOINT 4:

Our lives bear the image of God, so we belong to God.

Last week's sermon can be summarized in one sentence...

LW KEYPOINT 5:

Honoring God does not mean dishonoring the government.

And then I closed last Sunday's sermon with how we honor God with our finances, with our tithing and offerings.

INTRODUCTION:

Today, we'll study the second test question for Jesus.

Today's question is about the resurrection—and it's asked by a group of people who scoff at the idea of an afterlife.

Their question is asked through a riddle—a parable of their own.

Jesus' answer not only confirms the reality of our personal resurrections, but also the importance of knowing the Scriptures, understanding God's power, and the purpose of marriage.

Today's passage is a bit unique because it seems to answer questions that we didn't know we had.

And that is one of the many benefits of studying God's Holy Word verse by verse.

Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 22:23— That same day some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came up to him and questioned him:

Matthew 22:24— "Teacher, Moses said, if a man dies, having no children, his brother is to marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother.

Matthew 22:25— Now there were seven brothers among us. The first got married and died. Having no offspring, he left his wife to his brother.

Matthew 22:26— The same thing happened to the second also, and the third, and so on to all seven.

Matthew 22:27— Last of all, the woman died.

Matthew 22:28— In the resurrection, then, whose wife will she be of the seven? For they all had married her."

Matthew 22:29— Jesus answered them, "You are mistaken, because you don't know the Scriptures or the power of God.

Matthew 22:30— For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like angels in heaven.

Matthew 22:31— Now concerning the resurrection of the dead, haven't you read what was spoken to you by God:

Matthew 22:32—I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Matthew 22:33— And when the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.

These are the holy words from the authoritative, inerrant, inspired, infallible, sufficient, and efficacious Word of Almighty God.

PRAY:

But God will redeem me from the power of (the grave), for he will take me. (Ps 49:15)

EXEGESIS:

Matthew 22:23—That same day...

It was still Wednesday of Passover week.

Thursday, Jesus will spend privately with his disciples and eat the Passover meal.

Friday, Jesus will be arrested, falsely tried, and crucified.

Sunday, Jesus will be resurrected.

Matthew 22:23— That same day some Sadducees,

Last week's test involved the Pharisees and Herodians.

The Pharisees were the conservative fundamentalists.

The Herodians were King Herod's "yes-men."

Keep in mind the Pharisees hated the Herodians, and the Herodians hated the Pharisees.

However, both the Pharisees and Herodians hated Jesus more than their hatred for one another.

Ironically, it's that hatred for Jesus that brought them together.

It's been well said—The enemy of my enemy has become my friend.

Today, we see another religious group—the Sadducees.

The Sadducees also hated everyone who wasn't in their holy huddle.

The Sadducees were the smallest religious group.

However, they had all the money.

Having money means having the majority of power.

The Sadducees were the aristocrats of Judaism.

Think nobelman—the elite class of society.

The Sadducees were in control of the Temple and the operation of the priesthood.

The high priest and chief priests were almost always Sadducees, as were most members of the Sanhedrin, the high Jewish council. — Think Same Cont.

But, despite their power and influence, the Sadducees were not respected by most Jews.

They were aloof from the ordinary people who had ordinary problems.

They acted superior to the commoners—they didn't give them the time of day.

Politically, the Sadducees were pro-Roman, which was another source of power, and another reason to be hated by everyone.

What did they think of Jesus?

The fact that Jesus was popular with the people, believed in resurrection, and was opposed by the Pharisees didn't really matter to them.

However, the Sadducees did care about what happened on the previous Monday.

Jesus rode into Jerusalem as Israel's king with the crowds shouting, "Hosanna, Son of David."

Their concern was that Jesus, acting like the King of Israel, would ruin their status with the Romans.

Secondly, the Sadducees also cared about what happened on Tuesday.

Jesus cleansed the Temple and started turning over tables that had their money on them—that got their attention.

Matthew 22:23— That same day some Sadducees, who say there is <u>no</u> resurrection,

Here's a third reason the Sadducees were hated by most Jews—their theology.

The Sadducees don't believe in a resurrection, afterlife, or angels—which was detestable to the Nation (Acts 23:8).

Why didn't they believe?

They gave unique importance to the Pentateuch—the first five books of the Old Testament—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

> Pente ="fix"

The Sadducees considered the other books of their Hebrew Bible more or less as commentaries on the Pentateuch.

And because Moses taught nothing directly about the resurrection, the Sadducees denied its reality.

That's the background, here they come...

Matthew 22:23— came up to (Jesus) and questioned him:

After the Pharisees had failed to trap Jesus with the whole God versus Cearsar bit, the Sadducees stepped up to the plate to take their shot at testing Jesus.

Now these men heard Jesus tell three parables—and now it's as if they want to trap Jesus with a riddle-parable of their own

Matthew 22:24— "Teacher,

Just like the Pharisees, the Sadducees begin with flattery.

Now, keep in mind that the Sadducees are just as hypocritical as the Pharisees.

So they are rolling their eyes as they butter him up—they don't believe Jesus is worthy to be called a "teacher," but they use the title anyway—probably out of respect for the crowd.

Matthew 22:24— "Teacher, Moses said,

Growing up, our mothers would say, "Your father says..."

In school, "the teacher says..."

In the corporate world, "The boss says..."

In the military world, "the commander says..."

In the first century religious world, "Moses says..."

In the first century, no higher authority was that of Moses.

Not only for the Sadducees, but also for the Pharisees, and not only for the Pharisees, but for any Jew.

Moses was the man!

Moses saw a burning bush that didn't burn.

Moses brought down the two tablets of the Law from Mount Sinai, which were penned by the finger of God Himself.

God spoke to Moses, not through visions or dreams, but face to face!

Moses was the great lawgiver, the supreme spokesman for God in the Old Testament.

So when the Sadducees said, "Moses said," it was to add weight to their question.

Matthew 22:24— "Teacher, Moses said, if a man dies, having no children, his brother is to marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother.

What's Moses talking about? This is one difficult command to grasp today.

Ladies, can you imagine marrying your brother-in-law?!

The Sadducees are referring to what we call today a levirate marriage.

It's not termed that way in Scripture, nor does it come from the tribe of Levi or the Levites in the Bible—that's a common misconception.

The law itself is Hebrew, but the name is Latin, *levir* = brother-in-law.

The term is confusing—here's the background...

When Jewish law and biblical customs were studied in the West by the Romans, Medieval theologians, and Christian scholars, they needed a precise term for this law.

Latin was the common scholarly language in Europe.

Since the law concerns the husband's brother, Latin provided a convenient word to describe this Mosaic law.

Over time, the term stuck, even though the ancient Jews wouldn't have used that term at all.

So, in short—the practice is Jewish, but the term is Latin.

The practice is found in Deuteronomy 25:5–9.

Deuteronomy 25:5— "When brothers live on the same property and one of them dies without a son, the wife of the dead man may not marry a stranger outside the family. Her brother-in-law is to take her as his wife, have sexual relations with her, and perform the duty of a brother-in-law for her.

Deuteronomy 25:6—The first son she bears will carry on the name of the dead brother so his name will not be blotted out from Israel.

Deuteronomy 25:7—But if the man doesn't want to marry his sister-in-law, she is to go to the elders at the city gate and say, 'My brother-in-law refuses to preserve his brother's name in Israel. He isn't willing to perform the duty of a brother-in-law for me.'

Deuteronomy 25:8—The elders of his city will summon him and speak with him. If he persists and says, 'I don't want to marry her,'

Deuteronomy 25:9—then his sister-in-law will go up to him in the sight of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, and spit in his face. Then she will declare, 'This is what is done to a man who will not build up his brother's house.'

The levirate law had two primary purposes:

- 1. To provide economic and social protection for the widow.
- 2. To keep tribal names, families, and inheritances intact after the tragedy of sudden death.

It was considered a disgrace for a man to refuse to raise a family for his dead brother.

In fact, this custom was practiced before it became a law.

Genesis 38:8— Then Judah said to Onan, "Sleep with your brother's wife. Perform your duty as her brother-in-law and produce offspring for your brother."

But Onan refused, and God struck him dead!

The best-known marriage that fulfilled the levirate law was that of Boaz and Ruth.

Their story not only depicts the human preservation of Jewish lineage but also the divine preservation of the lineage of Christ (Matt. 1:5).

Matthew 22:25— Now there were seven brothers among us. The first got married and died. Having no offspring, he left his wife to his brother.

Matthew 22:26— The same thing happened to the second also, and the third, and so on to all seven.

They've custom-designed this riddle for this occasion.

My first thought—"Oh, this poor woman!"

My second thought is that brother number seven needs to pack his bags!

This woman is like a Biblical black widow.

Obviously, the Sadducees tried to prove how absurd the doctrine of resurrection is through the Mosaic Law.

The Sadducees are trying to trap Jesus using a type of argument known as *reductio* ad absurdum ("reduction to the absurd).

This style of argument involves taking someone's position to its logical conclusion through absurdity

Two husbands would have been sufficient to prove their point.

But seven makes the story more interesting, making the resurrection seem even more absurd.

Matthew 22:27— Last of all, the woman died.

Matthew 22:28—In the resurrection, then, whose wife will she be of the seven? For they all had married her."

Their question, at first glance, is brilliant.

They probably ask it with a Satanic smirk.

It's on par with the first question by the Pharisees—God versus Caesar.

It's biblically sound, logically tight, but wickedly clever.

It was probably a question that they posed to the Pharisees, but they never got an answer.

The Pharisees tried to answer this question and used passages such as...

Deuteronomy 31:16 says, "This people shall rise up" - and the rest of the verse says - "and go a whoring."

Deuteronomy 32:39—See now that I alone am he; there is no God but me. I bring death and I give life;

That verse means that the Lord is the author of life and death—and doesn't refer to the resurrection.

So, they posed this question to Jesus, thinking He couldn't answer either.

In essence, the Sadducees were asking—How will God sort out all of these marriages in Heaven?

By posing this absurd scenario, they believed they had Jesus cornered.

They want to ridicule and embarrass Jesus with their interpretation of the Scriptures.

They want to prove to everyone that there is no such thing as a resurrection—because Moses never mentioned it.

KEYPOINT 1:

The question assumes that the afterlife is just like this life.

The Sadducees assume that the woman with seven husbands on earth will have seven husbands in heaven.

How clever they thought they were!

That is, until Jesus answers their question.

Matthew 22:29— Jesus answered them, "You are mistaken, because you don't know the Scriptures or the power of God.

In other words—You are dead wrong and have no idea what you are talking about.

Instead of being stumped like the Pharisees, Jesus answered without hesitation.

Notice the tone in which Jesus speaks—with complete factual authority.

KEYPOINT 2:

Jesus can answer questions about Heaven, because He came from Heaven.

Let's take a closer look...

Matthew 22:29— Jesus answered them, "You are mistaken,

Why are the Sadducees mistaken?

The Greek verb for mistaken is *planaō*, which we get our English term, *planet*.

Planaō means to go astray, wander off, or deceive.

It means to stray from the truth or being cut loose from reality.

In other words, You guys are out of this world, man! You are spaced out!

The Sadducees are like the false teachers condemned by Jude,

Jude 12— These people are dangerous reefs at your love feasts as they eat with you without reverence. They are shepherds who only look after themselves. They are waterless clouds carried along by winds; trees in late autumn—fruitless, twice dead and uprooted.

Jude 13— They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shameful deeds; wandering stars for whom the blackness of darkness is reserved forever.

That's a strong rebuke from Jude, and Jesus uses the same tone in Matthew 23.

Why are Jesus and the rest of the Apostles so harsh on false teachers like the Sadducees?

Because they twist Scripture to suit their own needs and to line their own pocketbooks.

So Jesus answers this question by untwisting their theology.

He provides two reasons why the Sadducees were mistaken.

Matthew 22:29— because you don't know the Scriptures or the power of God.

In other words, "you don't know your Bibles (although you think you do).

Just because you read the Bible doesn't mean you understand it.

Just because you "SAY" There is no resultection want Mean there isn't.

The Sadducees misunderstood the beauty of the resurrection because they only accepted the Pentateuch as God's holy Word.

They deny the Davidic Covenant, the prophets, the Psalms, and the Proverbs.

In other words, they deny the whole counsel of God's written Word.

Because of their denial, they don't have a complete picture of who God is or what He's already said.

Matthew 22:29— because you don't know the Scriptures

KEYPOINT 3:

Jesus rebukes the careless reading of His Word.

And because their reading was careless and self-centered, their philosophical worldview was no different than that of the world.

It's one thing for Jesus to tell the Pharisees they don't know the Scriptures, because although the Pharisees were the conservatives, they were always looking for loopholes in Scripture.

Not so with the Sadducees. They considered themselves the purists—they were the ones crying *sola scriptura*.

So for Jesus to tell the Sadducees that they don't know the Scriptures—that's like telling Tom Brady he doesn't know football.

But Jesus isn't done...

Matthew 22:29— or the power of God.

Power is the Greek verb dýnamis.

We get our English word, dynamite, from it.

The picture is that God has the power to perform the miraculous.

God is the one who has the might, the strength the force, and the capability to do the impossible.

The Sadducees act as if God is incapable of doing something new.

KEYPOINT 4:

When people don't know the Scriptures, they can't know the <u>power of God</u> and when they don't know the power of God, they don't know God Himself.

God's power is revealed from the very beginning.

Genesis 1:1—In the beginning, God...

This is where our understanding of systematic theology is so crucial!

God is infinite! God is omnipresent! God is omniscient!

God is so unlike us!

Genesis 1:3—Then God said...

Either God spoke the cosmos into existence, as Scripture states, or God is a liar.

It's not as difficult as we make it to be

Psalm 65:6—You establish the mountains by your power; you are robed with strength.

Psalm 147:5—Our Lord is great, vast in power; his understanding is infinite.

earth by your great power and with your <u>outstretched</u> arm. Nothing is too difficult for you!

Next, Jesus relates this power to the resurrection.

Matthew 22:30— For in the <u>resurrection</u> they neither marry nor are given in marriage

First things first, Jesus obviously affirms that there is undoubtedly a resurrection.

The OT confirms that resurrection...

Psalm 16:10— For you will not abandon me to (the grave); you will not allow your faithful one to see decay.

Psalm 49:15—But God will redeem me from the power of (the grave), for he will take me.

Isaiah 26:19—Your dead will live) their bodies will rise. Awake and sing, you who awell in the dust!

Job 19:25—But I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the end he will stand on the dust.

Job 19:26—Even after my skin has been destroyed, yet I will see God in my flesh.

Hosea 13:14—I will ransom them from the power of (the grave).

I will redeem them from death.

Death, where are your barbs?

Sheot, where is your sting?

Daniel 12:2—Many who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to eternal life, and some to disgraph and eternal contempt

and some to disgrace and eternal contempt.

that's OT frot ...

In the Gospels...

Jesus has revealed His own power over death by resurrecting Tabitha and Lazarus from the dead Himself!

Joses Costinues

Matthew 22:30— For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage

The first thing the Lord God did after creating Eve from Adam was to institute the covenant of marriage.

Before any city was ever built, before any nation was ever formed, God created marriage.

Mariage is fre-foltionally.

God instituted earthly marriage because it's not good for man to be alone socially and emotionally.

Within the family unit, a primary function of marriage is procreation.

However, reproduction and childbirth have no place in heaven because there is no death.

Immortality makes procreation unnecessary.

There will still be gender differences—men and women will be men and women forever because gender is God's design, not a social construct.

KEYPOINT #5:

Marriage is a beautiful and divinely ordained institution but it is an earthly and temporal one as well.

In Heaven, EVERYTHING is different!

The resurrection will not only be a *restoration* but rather a *transformation* of the physical body where corruption puts on incorruption and mortality puts on immortality (1 Cor. 15:53).

We as human beings need intimate relationships in this world, because it's not good for man to be alone, but in heaven, God Himself fulfills that role with perfect intimacy.

Therefore, human marriage as we know it will be unnecessary in Heaven.

People have mixed reactions when they hear this.

Some people get just a little too excited.

Others are distraught because there's a sense of loss.

But it's not loss—it's divine gain.

Everyone will be perfectly and intimately known by everyone else—without sin

So the irony is that our marriages will be forever dissolved, but our love for each other and for God will forever increase.

The only bride in heaven will be the church, the bride of Christ.

The only groom is the Lord Jesus Christ, who has nail-pierced hands and feet.

So, it will not be a question of loss when we get to heaven; it will be a matter of gain.

Matthew 22:30— but are like angels in heaven.

In exposing the Sadducees' bad theology on the doctrine of the resurrection, Jesus does the same with their bad theology regarding angelology.

First, note what Jesus did not say here.

He did not say that we will become angels in Heaven.

We are not angels now, and we will not be angels at any time in the future.

Angels are a different order of creation.

Angels are completely different beings serving God with a completely different role.

However, Jesus said we will be like angels regarding tangels.

What are angels like?—deathless, glorified, and eternal.

Jesus is using angels as an illustration—we will not be married in Heaven, just as angels are not married.

Angels have a set number and don't reproduce—they can't reproduce because they are always male in Scripture.

Matthew 22:31— Now concerning the resurrection of the dead, haven't you read what was spoken to you by God:

They intended to embarrass Jesus with their knowledge of Scripture.

But now, just as Jesus turned their precious money tables upside down the day before, Jesus turns their bad theology upside down.

Matthew 22:32—I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Jesus refers to the burning bush episode with Moses.

Exodus 3:4—When the Lord saw that (Moses) had gone over to look, God called out to him from the bush, "Moses, Moses!" "Here I am," he answered.

Exodus 3:5—"Do not come closer," he said. "Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground."

The Lord introduces Himself...

Exodus 3:6—Then he continued, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Moses hid his face because he was afraid to look at God.

This passage is not some obscure passage found in the Pentateuch—this passage to the Sadducees is as familiar as John 3:16 is to us.

Here's the divine brilliance of Jesus' answer--

Jesus corrects the Sadducees by the tense of a single Hebrew verb

Matthew 22:32— Lam the God of Abraham...

I am is egő eimí in Greek.

Jesus quotes Moses because that's what they demanded, and this statement is emphatic—Jesus is speaking in the present tense.

Jesus didn't say, "I was the God of Abraham..."

Jesus used the present tense—"I am the God..."

Next, notice the genitive, of—

Matthew 22:32— I am the God <u>of Abraham</u> and the God <u>of Isaac</u> and the God <u>of Jacob</u>?

Jesus is talking about a personal, intimate, and current relationship with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Themeans this—the God who belongs to Abraham, the God who belongs to Isaac, the God who belongs to Jacob.

ts even better—it also means...

An belons to Gol, ISHAE belons to Gol. It gets even betterom Abraham belongs, the God to whom Isaac belongs, the God to whom Jacob belongs: 5ACOB belongs to God

Jesus told the Sadducees that those men are still alive—and since they are still alive—there is a resurrection.

Matthew 22:32— He is not the God of the dead) but of the living."

It would be wicked for Almighty God to protect his people in this life, but fail to protect them from the ultimate enemy of death...

What kind of protection is that? That's why the NT epistles declare God's power over death.

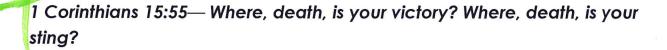
Romans 6:23—For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:51— Listen, I am telling you a mystery: We will not all fall asleep, but we will all be changed,

1 Corinthians 15:52—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed. & Jyin idecayit

1 Corinthians 1|5:53—For this corruptible body must be clothed with incorruptibility, and this mortal body must be clothed with immortality.

Corinthians 15:54—When this corruptible body is clothed with incorruptibility, and this mortal body is clothed with immortality, then the saying that is written will take place: Death has been swallowed up in victory.



1 Corinthians 15:56— The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. And no one perfectly keeps The law

1 Corinthians 15:57—But)thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

Paul points us to the very beginning—after The Fall of Adam and Eve.

Genesis 3:15— He (Jesus) will strike (Satan/death/sin's) head, and you (death) will strike/nip (Jesus') heel.

Ental blow

Starting from the very beginning, God had it all planned out.

KEYPOINT 6:

The Lord does not resuscitate; He resurrects.

Heaven is a perfect home for the perfected people of God.

Matthew 22:33— And when the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.

The people just shook their heads.

Jesus had silenced the Pharisees, and now He had done the same to the Sadducees, using their own Scriptures.

APPLICATION:	<u>:</u>					
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APPLICATION:

Today's passage provides several things to think about and take home.

1. Resurrection/death.

Many of us don't like to think about death—that's understandable.

None of us are excited about experiencing the pain of dying—but please know it is temporary.

If you're a Christian, the last breath here on earth becomes your first breath in Heaven with your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 13:11).

I thirst for God, the living God. When can I come and appear before God? (Psalm 42:2)

As Christians, there is an excitement and a longing to be with our Lord face-to-face.

If you're a Christian, there is no need to fear God's judgment, for the Lord has taken your sin, shame, and guilt upon Himself and cast it as far as the east is from the west.

What awaits you—What no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no human heart has conceived—God has prepared these things for those who love him. (1 Cor. 2:9)

We touched on Genesis 1:1 earlier—the Lord created everything we know in six days—He's been working on your new home for the past 2,000 years (John 14:3).

This isn't home. We are exiles in a foreign land—but someday very soon we'll all be home.

2. The purpose of marriage.

I hope and pray that God's Word answered some questions you didn't know you had about marriage.

3. The importance of knowing God's Word and God's power.

KEYPOINT 4:

When people don't know the Scriptures, they can't know the power of God, and when they don't know the power of God, they don't know God Himself.

I want you to know the Scriptures and the power of God.

Often, we place God in a box, making Him small.

That's why we offer so many Bible studies—with so many options, dates and times.

Experiencing God verse by verse is the reason we exist as a church.

Sharing Jesus day by day is the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

We don't dare keep all this to ourselves.

Sharing Jesus is how we serve our neighbors, friends and the rest of the Verde Valley.

Lastly, if you're not a Christian, please don't speculate about death/afterlife.

Let me encourage you to ponder everything we've talked about today—because there is no greater topic to discuss than the resurrection—a resurrection to life and a resurrection to death.



DOXOLOGY

BENEDICTION

"May the Lord bless you and protect you;

May the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;

May the Lord look with favor on you and give you peace." '(Num. 6:24)

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

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