1. Pharisees vs. Sadducees A Theological Overview

The Pharisees and Sadducees were two prominent Jewish sects during the Second Temple period (516 BC – 70 AD). Though both adhered to the Torah (the first five books of Moses), they held divergent theological beliefs, especially regarding the resurrection, the afterlife, and spiritual beings.

Pharisees

Beliefs:

Affirmed the resurrection of the dead, judgment, and life after death (Daniel 12:2).

Believed in angels, spirits, and the existence of a spiritual realm.

Accepted not only the Torah but also the Oral Law (later codified in the Talmud) as authoritative.

Anticipated the coming of a Messiah who would establish God’s

kingdom.

- Scripture Support:

> “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”
> *Daniel 12:2, ESV*

> “...the Pharisees acknowledge them all.”
> *Acts 23:8, ESV*

Sadducees

Beliefs:Denied the resurrection, angels, and spirits.

Rejected the Oral Law and only adhered strictly to the written Torah.

Did not believe in an afterlife or divine judgment beyond this life.

Jesus’ Rebuke (Matthew 22:23–33):
Jesus directly addressed the Sadducees’ denial of resurrection. He reminded them that God is “the God of the living,” referring to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob indicating they are still alive in God’s presence.

> “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not God of the dead, but of the living.”
> *Matthew 22:32, ESV*

Paul’s Use of Their Division (Acts 23:6–10):
The Apostle Paul, a former Pharisee, used the doctrinal divide between the two groups to protect himself from unjust trial:

> “…‘Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial.’”

> *Acts 23:6, ESV*

This statement caused conflict between the Pharisees and Sadducees, essentially diverting attention away from Paul.

---

2. Who Were the Greeks in the New Testament?

The term “Greek” in the New Testament refers to different groups depending on context. It’s crucial to understand these distinctions to interpret Scripture accurately.

A. Greek-speaking Jews (Hellenistic Jews)

These were ethnically Jewish people who lived in Greek-speaking regions of the Roman Empire. They often adopted Greek customs and language while still practicing Judaism.

- Example: John 12:20–21

> “Now among those who went up to worship at the feast

> were some Greeks. So these came to Philip... and asked him, ‘Sir, we wish to see Jesus.’”
> *John 12:20–21, ESV*

These “Greeks” were likely Hellenistic Jews or proselytes (Gentile converts to Judaism) who had come to Jerusalem for the Passover.

Example: Pentecost (Acts 2:5–11)
On Pentecost, Jews from all over the Roman world, including Greek-speaking areas, were present:

> “Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.”
> *Acts 2:5, ESV*

B. Ethnic Greeks (Gentiles)

These were non-Jewish people from Greek or Hellenistic backgrounds. In the New Testament, many of them were

considered “God-fearers” Gentiles who were attracted to Jewish monotheism but not fully converted.

- Example: The Syrophoenician Woman (Mark 7:26)

> “Now the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophoenician by birth. And she begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter.”
> *Mark 7:26, ESV*

Though she was a Gentile, Jesus honored her faith, showing that salvation would also be extended to the nations.

Titus and Timothy

Titus was a Greek (Galatians 2:3) and a trusted companion of Paul.Timothy had a Jewish mother and a Greek father (Acts 16:1), reflecting the diverse makeup of early Christian communities.

Conclusion

- Pharisees were strict interpreters of the Law who also believed in resurrection, angels, and the spiritual world.

- Sadducees were more aristocratic and skeptical, denying the resurrection and spiritual beings, accepting only the Torah.

- Greeks in the New Testament may refer to either Hellenistic Jews or Gentiles from the Greek world.

Be blessed!

JIUNGE NA GROUP LETU LA WHATSAPP HAPA >> WHATSAPP GROUP....

Share on:
WhatsApp