

Luke 20:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

Analysis

And the second took her to wife, and he died childless (ἀτεκνος, ateknos)—The second brother fulfilled his levirate duty but also died without producing offspring. The Sadducees' scenario continues the pattern, building toward their rhetorical climax. Each brother's death childless triggers the next brother's obligation.

The repetition emphasizes the supposed absurdity they're constructing: with each successive brother, the resurrection 'problem' compounds. This verse advances their argument methodically, like a legal brief building its case. The Sadducees were known for their rhetorical skill—this question showcases their sophistication, even as it reveals their theological bankruptcy.

Historical Context

The Sadducees controlled the Sanhedrin's majority and were known for their wealth, political power, and collaboration with Rome. They emphasized temple ritual and priestly prerogatives. Their rejection of resurrection stemmed partly from their realized eschatology—God's blessing was prosperity and political stability in the present, not hope for a future age.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does materialistic theology tend to dismiss spiritual realities it cannot control or comprehend?
2. When does rhetorical sophistication mask spiritual poverty?
3. What assumptions about marriage and family are you tempted to project onto eternal realities?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἔλαβεν ὁ δεύτερος τὴν γυναῖκα, καὶ οὗτος

And **took** G3588 **the second** G1208 **her to wife** G1135 **And** G2532 **he** G3778

απέθανεν ἀτεκνος

died G599 **childless** G815

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