

Mark 12:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.

Analysis

And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also (καὶ οἱ ἑπτὰ οὐκ ἀφῆκαν σπέρμα· ἔσχατον πάντων καὶ ἡ γυνὴ ἀπέθανεν). The Sadducees summarize: all seven brothers married the woman, none produced children, and finally she died. The phrase eschaton pantōn (ἔσχατον πάντων, "last of all") emphasizes the woman's death as the scenario's climax, setting up their coming question about resurrection relationships.

The woman's childlessness throughout seven marriages makes her situation especially tragic by ancient standards—barrenness was considered divine disfavor (though Scripture never blames her). Yet this childlessness is essential to the Sadducees' argument: had any brother produced offspring, that would resolve which marriage was 'real' in God's economy. Her complete childlessness makes all seven marriages apparently equal, creating the dilemma they'll exploit in verse 23.

Historical Context

Childlessness in ancient Israel carried severe social stigma. Women's primary value in patriarchal society derived from producing male heirs to continue family lines and inherit property. Barrenness was often viewed as divine judgment (1 Samuel 1:6; Luke 1:25), though biblical narratives frequently challenged this view (Sarah, Rachel, Hannah, Elizabeth all were vindicated). The Sadducees' scenario of seven childless marriages would have struck ancient hearers as extraordinarily tragic—not only was the woman widowed repeatedly, but she failed in what society

deemed her primary purpose. Yet Jesus' coming answer will revolutionize understanding of human identity and value beyond earthly roles and relationships.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does the woman's complete childlessness reveal about the Sadducees using human tragedy to construct theological puzzles?
2. How does Jesus' response to this scenario (vv. 24-25) transform our understanding of human identity beyond earthly relationships and roles?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἔλαβον	αὐτὴν	οἱ	έπτὰ	καὶ	οὐκ	ἀφῆκαν	σπέρμα
And	had	her	G3588	the seven	And	no	left	seed
G2532	G2983	G846		G2033	G2532	G3756	G863	G4690

ἔσχατη	πάντων	ἀπέθανεν	καὶ	ἡ	γυνὴ
last	of all	died	And	G3588	the woman
G2078	G3956	G599	G2532		G1135

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