

"Wherever any king's money is current, there that king is lord." The coin of a realm shows the authority. "To God:" man himself, ruined although he may be by the fall, bears the image of his Divine Coiner, and to Him, man with all his powers should be given; and so the reply is complete—to the Pharisees. "Render unto Cæsar:" to the Herodians. "Render unto God:" a lesson for each and all. "Marvelled:" no wonder. Never was a wiser answer to an entangling question—an answer, too, that lays the foundation principles of Church and State.

Ver. 18. Another attack from a fresh quarter. "Sadducees:" the sceptics of that day. "No resurrection:" "neither angel nor spirit"—Acts 23: 8, thus denying the future life altogether.

Ver. 19. "Moses wrote:" Deut. 25: 5-10. Like the law of divorce in Lesson for July 2, this was not instituted by Moses, but permitted, as a custom of other nations too deeply rooted in the mind of the people to be easily abolished; but it will be seen that, like divorce, it was so carefully guarded as to make it as little as possible objectionable.

Vers. 20-23. The case stated may have been a real one, but it was, more probably, one of their stock illustrations and arguments with which they had aforesaid troubled their opponents, the Pharisees. Here is the point—if God through Moses ordained this, then there could not be a resurrection, as one wife to seven husbands would be an absurdity. The Pharisees themselves had furnished this weapon by their teachings respecting a future life, which they said was to be a copy of this, and expressly asserting that a woman who had two husbands in this life would be restored to the first one in heaven. "In the resurrection:" lit. in the life after the resurrection.

Vers. 24, 25. "Ye do—err:" REV. "is it not for this cause that ye err?" answered in ver. 27, "ye do greatly err." "Know not the Scriptures:" two sources of error—ignorance of the word of God, and *doubt*, unbelief, as to the power of God. The Scriptures which they had, and professed to receive, plainly taught a resurrection, while their national belief as Jews was in an omnipotent Jehovah. "Neither marry:" as the man, "nor are given in marriage:" as the woman, by her father, "but are as angels in heaven:" so REV. In heaven, no death, no birth, no marriage, no physical relations such as exist here, but a spiritual body even as the angels.

Vers. 26, 27. A grand setting forth of the truth of the resurrection from the relation of God to their fathers, that relationship on which they so much prided themselves. He was "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:" and because He was such these must be living, for "He is not the God of the dead, but—of the living. This living God can only be the God of the living. The Sadducees acknowledged the authority of the Pentateuch, even if they denied that of the prophetic books, which they are said to have done. The effect of these replies is seen in ver. 34.

#### HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Cautions.—It is right to get all the light we can on the facts of the lessons, and to give to our scholars as much as will enable them properly to understand the occasion of the truths to be taught, but no more; some Lesson note writers give, we think, far too much attention to the wrappings of the lesson, as here—full details about Foman coins, values, customs of tax and tribute collection, etc., and ancient ideas of marriage such as are here mentioned. Well to know, teacher; but if you are going to fill your hour of teaching with that matter, you will certainly fail of the true end of your labour; give your thought, study and instruction the rather to the great truths and teachings you will find here, as in every lesson.

#### WHAT AND HOW TO TEACH.

Topical Analysis.—(1.) The temptation and discomfiture of the Pharisees (vers. 13-17.) (2.) The temptation and discomfiture of the Sadducees (vers. 18-27).

Prefatory.—If we can find a thought common to both lessons by which we can preserve the unity of our teaching, it will be something like this—the relations which God's servants bear to Him in this life and the life to come: He is their God.

On the *first* topic, let us get a clear understanding of the spirit and nature of this conspiracy. Here were two sets of men hating each other with a bitter hatred; the one, Roman in their desires and aims, the other intensely Jewish, and looking with abhorrence on Romans and all other Gentiles. These two parties strike hands for the occasion. They each hate Jesus, and they conspire to put a question, the reply to which they feel sure will be His destruction on the one side or the other—such was their *hatred*. Further, there was base *hypocrisy*: they came with fawning, honied words to disarm suspicion, that He might the more easily fall into the pit which they had digged. Show further the omniscient *wisdom* of Jesus. He saw their hypocrisy, Matthew tells us that He charged them with it (22: 18), made them by their own showing answer themselves, and at the same time demonstrate the marvellous wisdom of Him whom they would have destroyed; they came to ensnare, but were themselves ensnared. The words of the Saviour are weighty, and we must press upon our scholars that, as Christian citizens, we have duties owing alike to our rulers and to God. We must no more cheat our rulers than we must disobey God. To the one, as the representatives of law and order, we must give what is required—support; and to God, the service of life and heart.

On the *second* topic, show how clearly the truth of the resurrection is taught from an Old Testament passage. Who but He who spoke those words to Moses could have known their deep meaning? "This God is our God for ever and ever." The relations of God to His people are not exhausted in our short lifetime, but are for ever; He is the living God, and those whose God He is must, of necessity, live also. So the words of Jesus, "Because I live, ye shall live also"—John 14: 19. We may rejoice that the wickedness of these men brought from the Master such a blessed discovery of the meaning of Scripture, and such a firm foundation on which to build our faith of a future life.

Incidental Lessons.—On the *first* topic—That we must expect what our Saviour experienced, the bitter opposition of wicked men.

That God can make the wrath and hatred of man to praise Him.

That we have duties as citizens which must not be disregarded.

That Christians should recommend their religion by faithfully performing their duties as citizens and subjects.

On the *second* topic—That ignorance of the Scriptures is the real cause of unbelief.

That humble faith is the divinest wisdom.

That earthly relations are only for this life.

The eternity of God an assurance of the eternal life of His children.

Main Lessons.—Our supreme duty to God the basis of all our actions, civil and religious—Dan. 2: 21; Rom. 13: 1, 2, 4, 6; Titus 3: 1; 1 Peter 2: 13. The resurrection, taught in the Old Testament—Job 14: 12-15; Psa. 17: 15; Isa. 26: 19; Dan. 12: 2.