

This poem is inspired by the passage in Matthew 22

The Trap

You'd think it wouldn't be possible
To upset both the Herodians and the Pharisees.
The young stump preacher,
With the doorstep thick Galilean accent
Had managed it.
They hated him more than they hated each other.
So together they planned a trap; a snare.
A flattering introduction followed by a simple question
That required a straight 'yes' or 'no' answer.
'Should we pay the imperial tax to Caesar?'
But, as ever, they didn't get a straight answer.
He asked to see a coin,
A denarius, the amount needed to pay the tax,
Not a forgotten piece of small change,
But a day's wage for a working man.
Bearing Caesar's image and inscription,
A pagan god!
In the temple!
'Hypocrites'
He called them,
Though he hardly needed to.
It was clear who they were serving.
It wasn't God.

by Brian Ford