

A Study of Mark – Lesson 16

Mark 6:14-29 Herod Kills John the Baptist

6¹⁴ King Herod heard about this, / for Jesus' name / had become well known. / Some were saying, / “John the Baptist / has been raised from the dead, / and that is why miraculous powers / are at work in him.”

¹⁵ Others said, / “He is Elijah.”

And still others claimed, / “He is a prophet, / like one of the prophets / of long ago.”

¹⁶ But when Herod heard this, / he said, / “John, / whom I beheaded, / has been raised from the dead!”

¹⁷ For Herod himself / had given orders to have John arrested, / and he had him bound / and put in prison. / He did this / because of Herodias, / his brother Philip's wife, / whom he had married. / ¹⁸ For John had been saying to Herod, / “It is not lawful for you / to have your brother's wife.” / ¹⁹ So Herodias nursed a grudge against John / and wanted to kill him. / But she was not able to, / ²⁰ because Herod feared John / and protected him, / knowing him to be a righteous / and holy man. / When Herod heard John, / he was greatly puzzled; / yet he liked to listen to him. /

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²¹ Finally / the opportune time came. / On his birthday / Herod gave a banquet / for his high officials / and military commanders / and the leading men of Galilee. / ²² When the daughter of / Herodias came in / and danced, / she pleased Herod and his dinner guests.

The king said to the girl, / “Ask me for anything you want, / and I’ll give it to you.” / ²³ And he promised her with an oath, / “Whatever you ask / I will give you, / up to half my kingdom.”

²⁴ She went out / and said to her mother, / “What shall I ask for?” “The head of John the Baptist,” / she answered.

²⁵ At once / the girl hurried in to the king / with the request: / “I want you to give me / right now / the head of John the Baptist / on a platter.”

²⁶ The king was greatly distressed, / but because of his oaths / and his dinner guests, / he did not want to refuse her. /

²⁷ So he immediately sent an executioner / with orders / to bring John’s head. / The man

went, / beheaded John in the prison, / ²⁸ and brought back his head / on a platter. / He presented it to the girl, / and she gave it



to her mother. / ²⁹ On hearing of this, / John's disciples came / and took his body / and laid it in a tomb.

Vocabulary

1. **To claim:** Maintain something is true.
2. **To bind, bound:** Tied up. Put in chains.
3. **Grudge:** Resentment and anger.
To hold (nurse) a grudge: an idiom meaning to stay angry and resentful far longer than normal.
4. **Opportune:** Appropriate, the right time
5. **Banquet:** An official dinner party.
6. **Platter:** A large serving dish.
To have his head on a platter: Idiom that shows intention to destroy an enemy. This idiom comes directly from this story.

Questions

1. “King Herod heard about this...About what?
2. Who is John the Baptist, or Baptizer? Who is Elijah? (Malachi 4:5)
3. Just who is Herod Antipas? (20BC-39AD)
4. What does the idiom, “to nurse a grudge” mean?
5. Why would Herod like to listen to John the Baptizer?
6. How much do you think Herod had to drink the night Salome danced?

7. What does the idiom mean, “to have someone’s head on a plate?” Where does the idiom come from?
8. Why did King Herod Antipas carry through with his promise?
9. What relationship did John have with Jesus?

Notes

1. In chapter 6, verses 12 and 13, we read that Jesus sent his disciples out and they preached and had miracles of healing. Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, heard about the preaching and healing of the disciples and of Jesus.
2. Elijah: Hebrew prophet who lived in the 9th century before Jesus. Elijah is a major figure in the faiths of Islam, Judaism and Christianity.

