

OUTLINE.

- 1. Herod.
- 2. John.

TIME.—29 A.D., during the period of the later Galilean ministry.

PLACES.—Capernaum, Machabrus.

RULERS.—Tiberius, emperor at Rome; Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judaea. Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea.

CONNECTING LINKS.—In the last lesson of last year we were studying parables that Jesus had spoken at some time earlier than the immediate time to which we had come in his history. We now return to the historical narrative. Jesus had made his second visit to offer the gospel to the people of Nazareth, had sent forth the twelve on their tour of preaching, and was tarrying now for a few days at his home in Capernaum, when the disciples of John came to him with the tidings of their teacher's death. The story which they told is given in our lesson.

EXPLANATIONS.—Tetrarch—A Greek word meaning a ruler over the fourth part of a country. It is not so used here, for properly this Herod ruled over one of three parts into which the country was divided. It means simply ruler. *Fame of Jesus*—This was caused by the wonderful miracles he had been working. *His servants*—Members of his court—courtiers. *Risen from the dead*—Herod is said to have been a Sadducee, but his conscience put his intellectual beliefs to flight. *Mighty works*—Miracles. *In prison*—In the castle of Machabrus. *Counted him as a prophet*—It was four hundred years since a prophet had been seen in Judaea, and the common people welcomed and loved this one. *Herod's birthday*—The anniversary of his accession to the throne. *Danced before them*—Probably one of the lewd dances of the Oriental monarchies; a wicked thing at best, and very shocking to the sense of right of a Jew. *With an oath*—Not simple profanity, but a vow made by the gods, whom he would call to witness that he would keep it.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Herod.

- By what official title is Herod known?
- What report came to him?
- For whom did he mistake Jesus?
- What did he say of John the Baptist?
- What had Herod done to John?
- For whose sake was John put in prison?
- What unlawful act had John denounced?
- Why did not Herod at once put him to death?
- How did the people regard John?
- What event on Herod's birthday pleased him?
- What reward did he promise the dancer?
- What did she ask?
- Why did she make this request?
- How was the king affected by the demand?
- Why did he keep his promise?

2. John.

- What did Herod then do to John?
- What was done with the prophet's head?
- What was done with the body?
- To whom did the disciples tell the story?
- What relation was John to Jesus?
- From whom are we sure of sympathy in all our sorrows?
- What ought we to do with all our troubles? Psa. 55, 22.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- Where in the lesson are we taught—
- 1. That a guilty conscience makes men fearful?
- 2. That sinners hate those who rebuke their sins?
- 3. That Jesus is the true Comforter of those who are in trouble?

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

Learn how many Herods there are in the New Testament history, and how they were related. Find other instances of people being (1) put in prison, or (2) put to death, by a Herod.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

- 1. Who were guilty in the putting to death of John the Baptist. Herod, Herodias and her daughter.
- 2. How did Herod show that he felt guilty? He said, "John is risen."
- 3. What was the power in Herod's life that made him think that John had risen? A guilty conscience.
- 4. Is there any power greater than a condemning conscience to which the sinner must answer? God is greater than our hearts.
- 5. What act of loyal love offsets this story of hate? "And his disciples came and took up," etc.

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