

Lesson VIII.

THE DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

May 22, 1910

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—Lesson II. of the present Quarter (ch. 10 : 1-15) tells of the sending forth of the Twelve on a mission of healing and teaching. During their absence news came to Jesus of John the Baptist's death, the subject of to-day's Lesson.

GOLDEN TEXT—He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty ; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.—Proverbs 16 : 32.

Memorize vs. 10-12. THE LESSON PASSAGE—Matthew 14 : 1-12.

1 At that ¹ time Herod the tetrarch heard ² of the fame of Je'sus,

2 And said unto his servants, This is John the Bap'tist ; he is risen from the dead ; and therefore ³ mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.

3 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for ⁴ Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.

4 For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.

5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

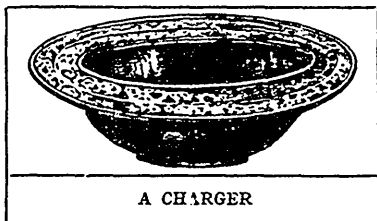
6 But when Herod's birthday ⁵ was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced ⁶ before them, and

Revised Version—¹ season ; ² the report concerning ; ³ do these powers work in him ; ⁴ the sake of Herodias ; ⁵ came ; ⁶ in the midst, and ; ⁷ should ; ⁸ put forward by ; ⁹ saith ; ¹⁰ in a charger the head of John the Baptist ; ¹¹ grieved ; but for the sake of his oaths, and of them which sat at meat with him ; ¹² Omitt her ; ¹³ corpse ; ¹⁴ him ; ¹⁵ they.

Daily Readings—(Courtesy, I.B.R.A.)—M.—Death of John the Baptist, Matt. 14 : 1-12. T.—A rash oath, Mark 6 : 20-29. W.—A troubled conscience, Luke 9 : 1-9. Th.—Feasting and folly, Dan. 5 : 1-9. F.—A foolish decree, Dan. 6 : 10-17. S.—Christ's testimony, Luke 7 : 24-30. S.—Faithful, Rev. 2 : 1-10.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. JOHN IMPRISONED.—1, 2. At that time ; during the missionary journey of the Twelve (see Between the Lessons). Herod ; Antipas, son of Herod the Great, and ruler over Galilee and Perea. Tetrarch ; literally "ruler of a fourth part" or district into which a Roman province was divided, but used generally of the king over a small territory.



A CHARGER

Heard.. of Jesus. The report of our Lord's teaching and healing penetrated at last into the king's court, like a ray of light in that place dark with wickedness. **Servants ; courtiers.** John the Baptist ; the great forerunner of Jesus. **Risen from the dead.** Herod did not belong to the Sadducees, who did not believe that the dead would rise, Acts 23 : 8. **Therefore mighty works.** John, while living, had wrought no miracles ; but he might be expected to do so now, if, as Herod believed, he had risen again.

3-5. **Laid hold .. bound .. in prison ;** at Machærus, in Perea, on the eastern side of the Dead Sea, near the southern boundary of Herod's dominions. **For Herodias' sake.** Herod, while his first wife, a daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia, was still living, had married Herodias, his (half) brother Philip's wife. This Philip was a different person

pleased Herod.

7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she ⁷ would ask.

8 And she, being ⁸ before instructed of her mother, ⁹ said, Give me here ¹⁰ John Bap'tist's head in a charger.

9 And the king was ¹¹ sorry : nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given ¹² her.

10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison. 11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel : and she brought it to her mother.

12 And his disciples came, and took up the ¹³ body, and buried ¹⁴ it, and ¹⁵ went and told Je'sus.

from Philip, tetrarch of Iturea (Luke 3 : 1), also a half brother of Herod Antipas. **John said.. It is not lawful.** The bold preacher was not afraid to rebuke wrong even in a king. **To have her ; to marry her. Would have put him to death.** Mark says that it was Herodias who wished to have John killed (Mark 6 : 19), and it seems that, at last, she brought Herod over to her purpose. **Feared the multitude ;** lest they might rise in rebellion against him. **Counted him (John) as a prophet ;** one who spoke for God. Herod feared John also, as a wicked man always fears one honest and brave enough to rebuke his sins, and besides he was interested in what John had to say (see Mark 6 : 20), but not willing to obey the teaching of the stern prophet and forsake his evil life.

II. HEROD FEASTING.—6, 7. Herod's birthday was kept ; by a great feast to the nobility of Galilee, Mark 6 : 21. **The daughter of Herodias ;** and her former husband Philip. The girl's name was Salome. **Danced before them ;** that crowd of drunken revellers. In the East, even more than with us, it was a disgrace for a woman to enter such a scene. **Pleased Herod ;** when he ought to have been ashamed by such conduct in his adopted daughter. **Promised with an oath ;** confessed by oath, confirming a promise made before (see Mark 6 : 22, 23). **Whatsoever she would ask ;** Mark, "unto the half of my kingdom".

8, 9. **Before instructed ;** "brought up to this point", urged on. **Of her mother.** How those who have good mothers should pity this poor girl whose mother was such a monster ! **Give me here.** Herod's banquet hall and John's dungeon were under the same roof. **John Baptist's head ;** and so, by having John's head off his shoulders, rid Herodias of the fear that the crown would be taken from her