

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY.

1, 2.—What time is referred to? (ch. 10 : 1-5) Compare verses 12 and 13 with Mark 6 : 29-32. What other opinions were held about Jesus? (Luke 9 : 7, 8 ; ch. 16 : 14.) Did John work miracles? (John 10 : 41.) Who was Herod? Of what countries was he Tetrarch? What had he heard about Jesus?

3, 4.—Why had Herod imprisoned John? Who was Herodias? Why was it unlawful for Herod to have her as his wife? Did John reprove Herod for anything else? (Luke 3 : 19.) Of what Old Testament prophet does John here remind you? (2 Sam. 12 : 7.) Contrast the spirit in which David received the rebuke. John was a true prophet. (Ezek. 2 : 5-7.)

5.—Why did Herod fear to put John to death? (Mark 6 : 20.) Had he any other reasons? From whom did he protect him? Had he any struggles of conscience over the matter? (Mark 6 : 20. R.V.) What other evidence of the peoples' faith in John? (Matt. 21 : 26.)

6.—What other birthday celebration do we read of in the Bible? (Gen. 40 : 20.) What is the difference between the dancing of Salome and that of Miriam? (Gen. 15 : 20, 21.)

7.—A similar royal promise. (Esther 5 : 3-6; 7 : 2.) Was it wise to make such a promise?

(Ecc. 5 : 2.) Was it meant to be taken literally?

8.—Was Salome a willing accomplice of her mother? (Mark 6 : 25.) How does she show this? Who was the most guilty of the three?

9.—Why was the king sorry? Ought Herod to have broken his oath? (Lev. 5 : 4-6, 10.) Why did he keep it? Instances of similar foolish vows—Judges 11 : 31-35 ; 21 : 1 ; 1 Sam. 14 : 24-46 ; Dan. 6 : 14-16. Read Ecc. 5 : 2.

12.—A similar burial (Acts 8 : 2.) Why did they go and tell Jesus? What did Jesus do?

To be answered in writing.

Senior.—How did Herod explain the miracles of Jesus? (5) 2. Why had he cast John into prison? (5) 3. Why did he promise to give Salome whatever she should ask for? (5) Why did Herod keep his promise? (6) 5. What did John's disciples do? (4)

Intermediate.—1. Whom did Herod think Jesus to be? (4) For what had John reproved Herod? (5) 3. Why did not Herod slay John? (5) 4. By what foolish promise was he at last made to do it? (5) 5. Was Herod free to refuse the request in spite of his oath? (6)

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

Our lesson to-day contains the story of the martyrdom of John the Baptist and gives us a glimpse of the low-born tyrants who filled the ancient throne of Israel. "The sceptre had departed from Judah," and her true king ministered to the people on the shores of Galilee.

The fame of this Successor of the Elijah-like prophet of the wilderness reached even to the palace of the Herod. It has been suggested that the bearer of the news to Herod may have been his "foster-brother" Manæn (Acts 13 : 1) or Chuza, his steward, whose wife was healed by our Lord, and because one of the women who ministered to him. (Luke 8 : 3 ; 24 : 10.)

The teachings of the narrative are numerous and touch a great variety of topics. We take them in the order in which they present themselves.

I. The Fearless Preacher.

1. A life such as Herod led would scarcely

come in sight of Jesus. John forced himself upon the royal conscience by his fearless denunciation of sin, but the "meek and lowly" One, who did not "strive nor cry," nor permit "his voice to be heard in the streets" had little about him to command even a passing glance from one so far removed from his sphere of action.

Jesus himself knew how little an interview would accomplish, for when told that Herod would kill him he replied "Go ye, and tell that fox," the only word of pure contempt that ever fell from his gentle and loving lips.

When at last the "prophet" and the "king" of Galilee did meet, through Pilate's intervention, Herod and his men of war "set him at naught."

Those who are absorbed in the world will not seriously consider the claims of Christ. The pleasure-seeker, the worldling, the man of ambition, those in haste to be rich are as little wil-