

## Lesson VIII.

## DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

May 20, 1906

Mark 6 : 14-29. Commit to memory v. 20. Read Matthew 14 : 1-12; Luke 5 : 1-20; 6 : 7-13.

GOLDEN TEXT—Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess.—Ephesians 5 : 18.

14 And king Her'od heard <sup>1</sup> of him; (for his name <sup>2</sup> was spread abroad.) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore <sup>3</sup> mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.

15 Others said, That it is <sup>4</sup> Eli'as. And others said, That it is a prophet, <sup>5</sup> or as one of the prophets.

16 But when Her'od heard *thereof*, he said, <sup>6</sup> It is John, whom I beheaded. he is risen from the dead.

17 For Her'od himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her.

18 For John <sup>7</sup> had said unto Her'od, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

19 <sup>8</sup> Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and <sup>9</sup> would have killed him; but she could not.

20 For Her'od feared John, knowing that he was a <sup>10</sup> just man and an holy, and <sup>11</sup> observed him; and when he heard him, he <sup>12</sup> did many things, and heard him gladly.

21 And when a convenient day was come, that Her'od on his birthday made a supper to his lords, <sup>13</sup> high captains, and <sup>14</sup> chief estates of Gal'ilee;

22 And when the daughter of <sup>15</sup> the said Herodias

Revised Version—<sup>1</sup> thereof; <sup>2</sup> had become known; <sup>3</sup> do these powers work; <sup>4</sup> Elijah; <sup>5</sup> even as; <sup>6</sup> Omit It is, and from the dead; <sup>7</sup> Omit; had; <sup>8</sup> And Herodias set herself; <sup>9</sup> desired to kill him; and; <sup>10</sup> righteous; <sup>11</sup> kept him safe; <sup>12</sup> was much perplexed; <sup>13</sup> and the; <sup>14</sup> the chief men; <sup>15</sup> Herodias herself; <sup>16</sup> she; <sup>17</sup> at meat; <sup>18</sup> and; <sup>19</sup> out; <sup>20</sup> forthwith give me in; <sup>21</sup> but for the sake of his oaths; <sup>22</sup> of them that sat at meat; <sup>23</sup> straightway; <sup>24</sup> forth a soldier of his guard; <sup>25</sup> to bring his head.

## THE LESSON EXPLAINED

**Time and Place**—March or April, A.D. 29; Jesus was in Galilee, with His disciples.

**Connection**—John the Baptist was in the prison of Machærus, a fortress on the borders of Arabia, east of the Dead Sea, for about a year (see Luke 3 : 19, 20). He was there put to death by Herod, as the Lesson recounts.

**I. HEROD'S CONSCIENCE.**—14-16. **King Herod;** Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, Matt., ch. 2. He was ruler, under the Romans, of Galilee and Perea, a district on the east side of Jordan, from A.D. 4 to A. D. 39. He was called "tetrarch" (Matt. 14 : 1), literally, "the ruler of a fourth part," but used in a general way of petty kings. Like his father, this Herod was cunning, ambitious and fond of splendor in building. **Heard of him;** apparently for the first time, though a great part of our Lord's ministry was spent in his dominions. Wicked pleasures and ambitious plans left Herod little time to think about religious teachers, so long as they did not interfere with his doings. **His (Jesus') name was spread abroad;** so that reports of His work penetrated even into the royal palace. **John the Baptist.** Herod's conscience troubled him on account of the murder of John, v. 27. **Risen from the dead;** and so more to be feared than ever (v. 20), because out of Herod's reach. **Mighty works.** John while living had wrought no miracles, but who could tell what one risen from the dead might do? **Others said;** some of Herod's courtiers

came in, and danced, <sup>16</sup> and pleased Her'od and them that sat <sup>17</sup> with him, <sup>18</sup> the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.

23 And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

24 And she went <sup>19</sup> forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

25 And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou <sup>20</sup> give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist.

26 And the king was exceeding sorry; <sup>21</sup> yet for his oath's sake, and <sup>22</sup> for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

27 And <sup>22</sup> immediately the king sent <sup>24</sup> an executioner, and commanded <sup>25</sup> his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison.

28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother.

29 And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

("servants") to whom he had spoken some of his fears. **Elias;** Elijah, whose return was commonly expected among the Jews (see Mal. 4 : 5). **A prophet;** like those of the Old Testament.

17-20. **Herod . . . had . . . laid hold upon John.** etc. See Connection. **For Herodias' sake.** Herodias was the grand-daughter of Herod the Great, and therefore the niece of her own husband Philip and of Herod Antipas. She had forsaken her husband to live with his brother. **John had said . . . It is not lawful;** contrary to the law of Moses and of decency. **Had a quarrel.** The wicked queen was angry at the man who had spoken out plainly against her sin. **Would have killed him;** because, had the king followed John's counsel, she would have been sent away disgraced and homeless. **Herod feared John.**

The best thing we know about Herod is his reverence for John. **Did many things;** but not the one thing he ought to have done: he would not put away Herodias.

**II. HEROD'S PROMISE.**—21-25. **A convenient day;** for the carrying out of Herodias' wicked purpose. **Herod . . . birthday . . . supper;** a great evening banquet prolonged far into the night. **The daughter of . . . Herodias;** Salome by name. Her father was Philip. **Danced;** before the feasters, a most improper thing to do, even according to the ideas of those times. **Pleased Herod, etc.** They were all under the influence of drink. **The half of my kingdom.** Compare Esth. 5 : 3, 6; 7 : 2



A Dancing Girl