**JOHN, WHOM I BEHEADED**

Mark 6:14-29

Key Verse 6:16

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

**Introduction**

 In this passage, we can see how Jesus and his disciples’ ministry impact people in Israel and king Herod. The passage also shows how John the Baptist preached the message of repentance to the king and how he was killed by him. Through this passage we can learn what kind of attitude we should have as the ones who are entrusted to preach the truth and what would happen if we don’t repent hearing the truth.

**1. Read verses 14-16. What had King Herod heard about Jesus? (14,15) What does this passage show about the impact of Jesus’ ministry so far? What did he say about Jesus? (16)**

**1-1. Read verses 14-16.**

**14** King Herod heard about this, for Jesus’ name had become well known. Some were saying,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+6&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24422b)] “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!”

**1-2. What had King Herod heard about Jesus? (14,15)**

· King Herod- the son of King Herod, the great who killed babies under age two in Bethlehem when Jesus was born.

· King Herod heard about this - In previous passage, Jesus sent out his twelve disciples and they preached the message of repentance and drove out many demons and healed many sick people. **They went out and preached that people should repent. 13 They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them. (Mk 6:12-13)**

- Because of Jesus and his disciples’ powerful ministry, Jesus’ name has become well known among people in Israel. Jesus became famous enough that even the king heard about him. People had different thoughts about Jesus

- Someone said, “John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him” People thought that Jesus had the miraculous power because the John the Baptist working in him after being raised from the dead.

- John the Baptist was killed by the King Herod unjustly. People might think that John the Baptist’s spirit was still working with more power coming back from death.

- Others said, “He is Elijah” Elijah was one of the most powerful Prophets through whom God revealed his mighty power. (1 King 18) Also it was prophesied that Elijah would come before the Messiah comes **5 “See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. (Malachi 4:5)**

- And still others claimed, “He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago.” Some people thought Jesus was just a prophet like one of the prophets in the Old Testament.

- The answers show what kind thoughts people had at that time about Jesus. Their answers were similar with the answers that Jesus’ disciples gave when Jesus asked them “ Who do people say the Son of Man is?” (Mt 16:13)

- They recognized that God’s power was with Jesus but they still thought Jesus was just a man who had God’s power and his word. Even John the Baptist was just a man even though he had the power of God.

**1-3. What does this passage show about the impact of Jesus’ ministry so far?**

· Jesus’ ministry was so powerful that people could see God’s work and his power through Jesus. The news about Jesus spread among people in the entire country.

- Until that time, there had been no prophets in Israel since Malachi. But through John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, they could hear the word of God and see his power.

- It also shows that Jesus’ disciples did ministry with great power and authority. Now Jesus’ ministry shook the entire nation. It was a spiritual earthquake.

- The evil king killed a righteous man John the Baptist but God’s ministry became more powerful.

**1-4. What did he say about Jesus? (16)**

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

- When King Herod heard about Jesus, he was reminded of John the Baptist whom he had beheaded unjustly. He knew about John’s power and authority that came from God and he realized that the same power and authority were with Jesus.

- It also shows that Herod had suffered from the sense of guilt about killing innocent John. He couldn’t be free from the sense of guilt and was reminded of John immediately when he heard about Jesus’ power.

- Even though he was a king, he was suffering from his sin and guilt. He couldn’t overcome his sin and the fear of judgment for his sin with his worldly power.

**2. Read verses 17-20. Why did Herod put John the Baptist in prison? (17-18). Why wasn’t Herodias able to kill John? (19, 20a) How did Herod respond to John? (20b) What can we learn from his failure in repenting and seeking truth?**

**2-1. Read verses 17-20.**

**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[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+6&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24428c)]; yet he liked to listen to him.

**2-2.** **Why did Herod put John the Baptist in prison? (17-18)**.

· Herod took his Brother Philip’s wife and married her. It was terrible adultery. He committed a terrible sin to God and his brother. **“If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. (Leviticus 20:10)** **“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.” (Exodus 20:17)**

· John the Baptist rebuked him for the sin, ““It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.”

- John challenged Herod to repent despite the great risk that he could be killed by him.

- John preached the message of God and told the truth instead of remaining silent before the unrighteousness.

- John was the voice of God who preached the truth to the corrupted world and challenged people to repent their sins with the word of God.

- People are afraid of telling the truth and challenging people to repent of the evil things that they are doing with the fear of counter attack.

- When we are ready to lose anything to preach the truth of God, we can challenge the world to repent their sins.

**2-3. Why wasn’t Herodias able to kill John? (19, 20a**)

· So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him.

- Herodias was adulterous woman. She betrayed her husband to marry Herod to become a queen.

- When she heard John’s rebuking, she was convicted for her sin but instead of repenting her sin she nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him to cover up her sin and shame.

- When people don’t want to repent they hate those who challenge them to repent.

· But she was not able to kill John because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man.

- Herod feared John because he realized that God’s power was with him.

- And he protected John knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. He recognized him as a man of God. He feared God.

- His conscience gave him the sense that it was not right to kill the man of God.

- But he put him in prison not to talk about his sin anymore. He wanted to cover up his sin by blocking John not to be able to speak. But hiding and covering sin cannot be solution. Only repentance can be true solution.

**2-4. How did Herod respond to John? (20b)**

· When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+6&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24428c)]; yet he liked to listen to him.

- When Herod heard John’s repentance message he was greatly puzzled between desire to repent his sin and the desire to enjoy the sin.

- He knew that it was right to return his brother’s wife cutting the adulterous relationship. But at the same time he wanted to keep the woman.

- Many people know what their sin is and know they need to repent but at the same time they didn't want to give up the sin because of the pleasure of sin. So they are confused between the two sides.

· Yet he liked to listen to him.

- Even though John’s message of repentance was uncomfortable and even painful to him he still liked to listen to him because John’s message was word of God.

- He was in the sin but at the same time he had a desire to seek the truth.

- Even thought he liked to listen to John he didn’t have the strength to do righteous things because he was bound with his sinful desire.

**2-5. What can we learn from his failure in repenting and seeking truth?**

· We should not remain in just knowing the truth. Just knowing and enjoying truth doesn’t help. Only when we repent our sins based on the truth, we can enjoy the benefit of the truth.

**3. Read verses 21-29. How did Herodias find the opportunity to kill John? (21-25) How did Herod respond to a girl’s request? (26-28) What did John’s disciples do? (29) What does this incident reveal about the man Herod, his family, and that generation?**

**3-1. Read verses 21-29.**

**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[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+6&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24430d)] 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.

**3-2. How did Herodias find the opportunity to kill John? (21-25)**

**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[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+6&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24430d)] 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.”

· Herodias looked for a chance to kill John all the time. Finally the chance came.

· The daughter of Herodias danced for the king and the guests and it pleased them a lot. Probably her mother Herodias coached her to dance for them with the plot to kill John.

· Herod told her, “Ask me for anything you want, and I’ll give it to you” “whatever you ask I will give you, up to half my kingdom”

- He gave her a promise carelessly out of satisfaction of sensual pleasure. He was very impulsive and did things based on his emotion and pride.

· Herodias’ daughter consulted her mother about the gift from the king.

· Herodias demanded the head of John the Baptist. And the daughter asked Herod for it.

- Herodias was so evil and shrewd woman. She involved even her daughter for her evil work.

- The daughter followed her mother’s direction- she grew up under her mother’s evil influence.

**3-3. How did Herod respond to a girl’s request? (26-28)**

· 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.

· Herod was greatly distressed because he didn’t want to kill John. He got in trap because of the evil woman and his careless promise and behavior.

· Because of his oaths and his dinner guests he did not want to refuse her- He didn’t want to lose his honor and pride by breaking his oath.

- He wanted to save his pride and face more than John’s life and justice. His honor and pride were more important than righteousness.

- Also he was not courageous enough to do righteous things even though he knew what was right.

· He immediately executed John and gave John’s head to the girl and she gave it to her mother.

- Herod killed a righteous man with so foolish and evil reason.

- Herodias and her daughter did evil things without any sense of quilt. Whole family did evil things together.

**3-4. What did John’s disciples do? (29)**

· On hearing of this, John’s disciples came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

- It seems like evil won over the righteousness. But the real winner was John the Baptist because his faith and righteousness were revealed through his death.

**3-5. What does this incident reveal about the man Herod, his family, and that generation?**

· The king Herod, his family and the generation were corrupted with sin.

· Even though he had the title of king he was just a miserable sinner who lived according to his cursed sinful nature.

· There was no righteousness in his family.

· The generation was dark because people were living in their sin from the top to bottom including a young girl.

**Conclusion**

 John the Baptist preached the truth and the message of repentance even to the king risking his life. We need to challenge the sins of this world and preach the message of repentance boldly with truth even though the world could hate us and even hurt us. Also we should not remain between truth and sin, but should repent and live according to the truth.

**One word, John, whom I beheaded.**