

The Tragedy of Herod, the Triumph of John

Scripture Reading — Mark 6:14-29

When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled; yet he liked to listen to him.

Mark 6:20 —

This passage tells one of the saddest stories in Mark. It's sad not because of what happened to John the Baptist but because of what became of King Herod.

Herod was curious about John. He knew that John was no ordinary person but was a "righteous and holy man." Herod sought John out even after he put John in prison. John's boldness fascinated Herod. John was probably the only person in Herod's life who was not afraid to tell him the plain truth. But, tragically, Herod fell into his wife's hateful trap and, fearing disgrace before his guests, ordered that John be executed.

About two years later, Jesus—as Pilate's prisoner—was brought before Herod for questioning. This was Herod's moment. Standing before him was the Son of God and the Savior of the world. Herod asked Jesus many questions and expected to see a miracle. But Jesus gave him neither answers nor miracles. Then Herod joined his soldiers in mocking Jesus and sent him back to Pilate. (See Luke 23:6-12.)

The Bible records an interesting detail: when John was killed, his disciples placed his body in a tomb. After Jesus died, his followers did the same. Jesus' body lay in a tomb until, a few days later, he rose triumphantly from the grave (Mark 15:42-16:7). So it will be for all who die in Christ. Through him we triumph over death!

Prayer

Thank you, Lord, for the hope we have in Christ, our Savior, forever. Thank you that we too will be raised to new life with you. In your name we pray. Amen.

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