

Sunday, July 24, 2011—Mark Dispensationally Considered—Mark 6:14-29: The Death of John the Baptist

Mark 6:14-29

- ***14) And king Herod heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad:) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him. 15) Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets. 16) But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.***
- Mark 6:14—when king Herod heard of Christ, he thought Christ was John the Baptist risen from the dead. This is how Herod explained the mighty works Christ was performing.
- Matthew 14:1—this Herod was one of the sons of Herod the Great who had ordered the slaughter of all the baby boys in Israel two years and younger after learning of the birth Christ (Matthew 2:16-17). The Herod in this account is titled, the Tetrarch, or “ruler of a fourth part.” On the death of Herod the Great his lands were divided into four parts: Archelaus obtained two parts, Philip on part, and Antipas (the Herod of this story) one part.
- Mark 6:15-16—when others heard of Christ some thought he was Elijah (Elias), while others viewed him as a prophet or perhaps one of the Old Testament prophets raised from the dead. Herod, however, is convinced that Jesus is a resurrected John the Baptist.
 - John 1:15-21—why did the leaders of Israel ask John if he was Elijah?
 - Malachi 4:5—because Elijah will come again before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.
 - Matthew 11:2-14—according to Jesus if Israel had received the kingdom that John would have been the fulfillment of Malachi 4:5.
- ***17) For Herod 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 had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.***
- Mark 6:17-18—Herod had John arrested for the sake of his wife Herodias. Herod’s original wife was a daughter Aretas, King of Arabia, whom he dishonored by taking Herodias, the wife of Philip his brother. John had condemned Herod for his immorality which resulted in John incarceration at the hands of Herod.
 - Matthew 14:3-4

- **19) Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not: 20) For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.**
- Mark 6:19-20—Herodias wanted to have John killed immediately but lacked the power and authority to do so. Meanwhile, Herod feared John because he was a just and holy man consequently would not kill him.
- The fact that Herod observed him and heard him gladly in verse 20 speaks to the fact that John was in prison for quite some time before being executed.
- Matthew 14:5—the combined testimony of Matthew and Mark reveal that Herod feared John for two reasons: 1) a superstitious fear that as prophet John might be able to put some type of curse upon him, 2) a fear of the people because they considered John a prophet.
- **21) And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee; 22) And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, 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.**
- Mark 6:21—the expression “and when a convenient day was come,” implies that the following chain of events were planned in advance by Herod wife and her daughter. In other words, Herod’s birthday was the day they had targeted to hatch their plan.
- Mark 6:22-23—after being pleased by her dancing Herod tells her that he will give her whatever she desires up to half of his kingdom. The expression in verse 23, “And he sware unto her,” is Herod swearing in an oath as to the legitimacy of his offer.
 - Matthew 14:7
- **24) And she went 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 give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist. 26) And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.**
- Mark 6:24-25—tells that she sought the council of her mother he instructed her to ask for the head of John the Baptist.
 - Matthew 14:8—tells us that her mother had previously instructed her about what to ask for if their little plan worked.

- Mark 6:26—while Herod was upset by the request for the sake of his oath and the need to save face in front of his friends Herod would not refuse her request.
 - Matthew 14:9
- **27) And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded 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.**
- Mark 6:27-28—Herod immediately has John executed. The executioner delivers John’s head in a charger to the daughter of Herodias who then gives 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.**
- Mark 6:29—when the disciples of John heard about his death they came and buried his corpse in a tomb.
 - Matthew 14:12-13—states that followers of John also went and told Jesus about what had happened. The indication from verse 13 is that upon learning of John’s death, Jesus went into the desert alone for a time to mourn John’s passing.
- Luke 9:7-9—offers a brief summary of the details presented in Matthew and Mark regarding the details of John’s death.

Mark 6:30-31

- **30) And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught. 31) And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.**
- Mark 6:30—we saw in Mark 6:7-13 that Jesus sent the 12 forth two by two to preach. Based on this chronology it would appear that the Lord is alone when he learned about the death of John and was removed to the desert to grieve John’s passing.
- Upon their return they give Christ a report of all the things they had done and taught.