

LENT DEVOTIONAL MARCH 26, 2014

SCRIPTURE

Mark 6:13-29

13 They cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

14 King Herod heard of it, for Jesus' name had become known. Some were saying, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead; and for this reason these powers are at work in him." 15 But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." 16 But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised."

17 For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. 18 For John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." 19 And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him. But she could not, 20 for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. 21 But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. 22 When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests; and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it." 23 And he solemnly swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom." 24 She went out and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?" She replied, "The head of John the baptizer." 25 Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." 26 The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her. 27 Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John's head. He went and beheaded him in the prison, 28 brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother. 29 When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body, and laid it in a tomb.

DEVOTIONAL

Here we return to John the Baptist, and find the haunting tale of Herodias and John the Baptist. We've been speeding through the life of Jesus, and here take a rare detour to learn another story altogether.

This story has fascinated artists, authors, poets, and playwrights for centuries. Often, it is assumed that the daughter of Herodias was named Salome. Her dance has been interpreted as everything from a display of acrobatics to seduction. The details of the dance, however, don't change the tragedy of the story. The characters manipulate each other, deceive each other, and mistreat each other. The result is the death of an innocent victim. Yet despite the tragedy of the story, we end with a body laid in a tomb—a scene we will revisit later, with a much different outcome.

*Message provided by the **Miller Summer Youth Institute**.*

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Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
616 North Highland Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Phone: 412-362-5610



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