

Mark 6:14-29 – Covenant Unfaithfulness Kills

TSK, Henry, Gill, Handfuls, Poole, Reinecker, Calvin, Barnes, Clarke, Trapp, GreekLexicon, JFB, Geneva, Maclaren, Robertson,

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Herod was a Jew who had received God's promise as a child when he was circumcised(行割礼) . But instead of claiming the promise of salvation God made at his circumcision, Herod rejected it and chose to live as a heathen (异教徒) . As a result of the rejection of his covenant (圣约) promise, he robbed himself and his family of covenant blessings, and he murdered a faithful preacher of God – the greatest prophet who ever lived. Yes, covenant unfaithfulness kills. This is what you will hear about today:

Our headings for today are:

Herod did not know the Covenant Keeper

Herod therefore corrupted (败坏) his Covenant Family

Herod therefore killed his Covenant Brother

Goals: **That you will know your Covenant Keeper well and claim his promises so you and your family can serve him well.**

Herod did not know the Covenant Keeper

14 Now King Herod heard of Him, for **His name had become well known.** And he said, "**John the Baptist is risen from the dead,** and therefore these powers are at work in him." 15 Others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "**It is the Prophet, or like one of the prophets.**" 16 But when Herod heard, he said, "This is John, whom I beheaded; he has been raised from the dead!"

1. Herod was a Jew surnamed Antipas. Herod means “heroic,” but he was not.

Herod Antipas' father, Herod the Great, murdered many boys and tried to kill Jesus. Herod Antipas was installed as king (or governor) over Galilee (1/4 of the country) by the Romans. Herod the Great divided the leadership before his death because he had 2 sons who tried to murder him. (Interesting payback for murdering many boys.) Herod Antipas focused on expanding his dominion (领地) from 1/4 to the whole nation and spent his life trying to do so.

2. After hearing reports of Jesus' powerful words and works, Herod thought John the Baptist, whom he had murdered, was reincarnated (复活).

Many others did not recognize who Jesus was either. Some said Jesus was a prophet or was like a prophet. Some of Jesus' own relatives and townsfolk did not know who he was.

3. Herod's thinking that Jesus was John reincarnated made no sense because John and Jesus were relatives who were born only months apart, so Jesus was already alive when John died.

4. Worse than not recognizing Jesus' person, Herod failed to recognize Jesus work, even though the prophets spoke of him.

Jesus would be the Covenant Keeper for the world and his righteousness (义) would be counted as the righteousness of all those who believed in him.

Jesus would be the Covenant Keeper of the world and his atoning sacrifice (赎罪祭) would be counted for all those who believed in him.

Herod was a covenant child but he never knew the covenant keeper. But remember what type of father he had, Herod the Great, who focused on killing children rather than teaching them.

5. Lessons:

a. It is appointed to man to die once and after death comes his judgment. (Hebrews 9) There is no reincarnation. Hindus might believe this, but the true and living God doesn't allow this.

b. Intimately knowing Christ's person and work will give life to your children, church, and

country, and work wonders. Yes, children may sometimes be rebellious against the Gospel, but once the message of salvation sinks in, it will remain in their hearts and come to mind at the right time.

c. On the contrary, see what ignorance (无知) of Christ's person and work can do. Ignorance, caused by parents and preachers, brings eternal death and destruction to children, church and country.

Herod Therefore Corrupted His Covenant Family

17 For **Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison** for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her.

18 For John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

1. Earlier Herod wrongfully imprisoned John the Baptist because John had rightly rebuked him for committing adultery (奸淫), incest (乱伦), improperly divorcing his wife, and remarrying another woman.

These were heinous (邪恶的) sins and John, as a covenant brother and a representative of the church, had to speak. He stood as Elijah stood up to Ahab and his wife Jezebel after they murdered Naboth and took his land. John became Herod's enemy.

1Kings 21:20 So Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?"

And he answered, "I have

found you, because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the

LORD:

2. What are the details of Herod Antipas' corruption of the covenant family?

Herod stole his half-brother Philip's wife, Herodias, and divorced his own wife.

He then married Herodias who was both his and his brother Philip's niece. This was adultery. This was incest.

But what could one expect from one who had abandoned truth?

19 **Therefore Herodias held it against him and wanted to kill him**, but she could not; 20 for Herod **feared John**, knowing that he was a just and holy man, and he **protected him**. And when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

3. Herod ignored God's directions for getting a godly wife and so he ended up in more trouble.

His incestuous adulterous wife, Herodias, tried to get Herod to kill John for speaking out against them, but he refused.

In fact, Herod protected John (not "observed," The OKJV is wrong). Herod listened to many things John said, visiting him in prison. He became afraid of John. But his heart was hardened and he kept John in prison. Why? Maclaren: "By frivolity (轻浮), lust, and neglect (玩忽职守) Herod had killed the germ of a better life..." **Herod knew it was wrong but lusts blinded him.**

But Herodias kept planning to kill John, just as Jezebel. She "had it in for him." **Herodias' lust to be governess** of the whole country instead of ¼ made her fight even more and remove whoever or whatever stood in the way.

21 Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief men of Galilee.

4. Herod suppressed his conscience良知 because the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life were too strong, and partied and promoted himself with no shame. To that end...

5. Herod then callously (无情地) called his step-daughter to dance a provocative (挑逗的) dance in front of all the people and she obliged (满足要求).

Her name was Salome and she is associated with exotic (异域的) and erotic (色情的) dances. (Josephus) The woman was often half-naked. Respectful women would never do this kind of dancing. But she was not well-trained. Her father was an egomaniac (自大狂) not a covenant keeper.

6. Lessons:

a. Don't be afraid to speak the truth even if it hurts. Speaking the truth is a form of love. It is better that sinners persecute ministers now for being faithful than curse ministers eternally for being unfaithful. It is better that your children fight you now for being faithful than curse you eternally for being unfaithful to the truth.

b. Eager listening and partial obedience to the Gospel are not enough; they won't please God. You need to know the Lord personally and trust him. Only then will you care to obey his Word.

c. Selfishness is the root of all sin. If you lust for power; you will crush others. If your ego is bruised by complaints; you will hurt the one who speaks against you. Only a regenerated soul that dies to himself will respond differently.

d. It is a recipe for disaster to marry someone who does not truly trust in Christ. You can expect that that person will lead you away from God as you have two different loyalties. **Don't expect a scorpion (蝎子) to be a pet.** That's like a bird trying to hatch snake's eggs. Marry someone who trusts the Lord and he will encourage you to walk in the way of truth.

e. Make holy demands on your children. Education, sports, and arts are good, but they should never interfere (妨碍) with your children's spiritual development. To put these things above the spiritual welfare of your children is no different from having your daughter dancing half-naked in front of you and your friends. Both will lead her to hell.

Herod Therefore Killed his Covenant Brother

22 And when **Herodias' daughter herself came in and danced**, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, "Ask me whatever you want, and I will give it to you." 23 **He also swore to her**, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom."

1. Being gratified (满足于) with the erotic dance of his step daughter, he asked her to name the gift she wanted, a foolish offer to a child.

Herod's passion (and possibly drunkenness醉酒) of the moment, controlled him. This was an offer for which his conscience would torture him eternally. (**Herod could give away half his kingdom, but he could not get rid of a guilty conscience.**)

And **Herod swore (to God), adding weight to his promise, that he would give up to half his kingdom to** Salome. Herod

did this to show-off in front of his friends. He should not have sworn for insignificant matters.

24 So she went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist!" 25 Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, "**I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.**"

2. Then the wickedness of Herodias came on display when her daughter asked her for advice about what she should ask for.

Herodias told Salome to ask for John the Baptist head on a food serving tray, as **if to say she wanted to have him for dinner!**

What kind a woman would endanger (危害) her daughter's spiritual life for her own personal power and pleasure?

She willfully sentenced her **daughter to eternal shame!**

And she worked against her own husband's self-interest... for the people would have hated him for killing John.

And look at what Salome left for her mother! Some legacy! She could have saved her mother this shame.

But she was well trained in self-advancement, not Christ's kingdom.

And Salome wanted John the Baptist's head "at once" (not "by and by" OKJV). Her mother did not want Herod to change his mind.

26 And the king was exceedingly sorry; yet, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he did not want to refuse her. 27 Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought. And he went and beheaded him in prison, 28 brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. 29 When his disciples heard of it, they came and took away his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

3. Even though he was raised in the covenant and knew God's law, Herod suppressed his conscience and killed John.

Herod chose pomp (威风), power, and reputation, rather than repent of his sin. He was more concerned what people would think of him. Yes, he was afraid of John, but was more afraid of losing his reputation. He was afraid of God, but was more afraid of losing his position. So he sent an executioner (行刑者) to kill John and bring his head on an eating tray to Salome who gave it to her mother.

4. John's disciples came and took the rest of his body and put it into a tomb.

5. Lessons:

a. Only the work of Jesus renewing the heart will remove a guilty conscience. Alcohol (as Herod) and drugs do not have the power to remove guilt.

b. Being baptized and being in a covenant family will not save you. Faith (which is evidenced by obedience) alone saves.

c. It is common to commit a sin (murder) to cover up a sin (make rash oaths). But if you sin, repent, even if the sin is making a sinful oath. Don't cover up a sin. Don't cover up adultery with abortions. Don't cover up stealing with lying. (This is an important one for children.)

Conclusion:

Herod knew the law, he knew of man's guilt, and he knew of man's condemnation, but he never personally knew the one who would come to keep the law for him, bear his guilt, and remove his condemnation. So he lived for himself...to satisfy his lusts. He committed adultery and incest. He improperly divorced. He indulged his wicked daughter. He did not teach his wife or daughter. He falsely imprisoned John and cut off John's head to save personal shame. What a mess of a life from someone who knew better!

Later, he and his wife would appeal to Emperor Caligula, a worse man, to get promotion to be a full king. But they were dumped to the end of the kingdom in a backward place called France-Gaul. Historians record that Salome's head was cut off she fell through the ice one winter. She wanted John's head but gave up hers.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. You know Jesus. He is your Creator. He is your Redeemer (救赎主) who paid all your debts. He is your advocate (代言人) before his Father.

2. Now live for Jesus. Teach your wife. Raise godly children. Support the expansion of Jesus' kingdom. Speak of Jesus to the world. You are in this world to serve your risen Savior.

3. As a result of serving Jesus true joy will come to your heart. Joy is a result...not the goal in your life.

Finally, have you met the one who kept the law in the place of sinners and took their guilt so their condemnation (定罪) is removed? His name is Jesus. Pray today and ask him to give you what he earned and take away your guilt and shame.