

Ask Me for Anything

Mark 6:17-29

by Don Falkos

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Herod Antipas married his niece Herodias, even though she was already married to his half-brother Philip. John spoke out against the relationship, "It isn't right for you to take your brother's wife." Herod had John arrested, bound, and imprisoned. Herodias hated John and wanted to kill him. But Herod had great respect for John and protected him. He knew John was a just and holy man. Herod was profoundly disturbed by what John had to say; yet he enjoyed listening to him.

On his birthday, Herod threw a party for himself, inviting a large number of government officials, military commanders, and leaders of Galilee – important people one and all. The daughter of Herodias danced for them. Herod and his guests were very pleased.

Herod said to the girl, "Ask me for anything you want, up to half my kingdom and I swear I'll give it to you."

She went to her mother, "What should I ask for?"

"Ask for the head of John the Baptist."

The girl ran back to Herod and said, "I want the head of John the Baptist on a platter. And I want it right now."

Herod was very upset at this request, but he had promised in front of all his guests – what else could he do? He immediately sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. The man went to the prison, beheaded John, and brought his head back on a platter. He presented it to the girl, who gave it to her mother.

When John's disciples heard what had happened, they came, took John's body, and placed it in a tomb.