

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Lesson in the International Series for June 10, 1900—Death of John the Baptist.

[Prepared by H. C. Lemington.] THE LESSON TEXT. (Mark 4:14-23)

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 show 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. 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. 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. 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 she swore unto her, whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. 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 said, saying: I will that thou give me 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 could not reject her. 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. 29. And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb. GOLDEN TEXT.—Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.—Eph. 5:18.

NOTES AND COMMENTS. Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, was the Roman ruler over Galilee and Perea with the title of king. It was in this very territory that Jesus had been doing His greatest work. His words and works came to the ears of Herod, and to-day's lesson comes in as the result of the reflections of the wicked king. What he had said must have been court gossip, and so filtered down to the people generally. We can then make this lesson a study of the character of Herod and of his relations with the brave prophet, John the Baptist, noting especially: Herod's Troubled Conscience. Herod's Character. Herod's Crime. Herod's Troubled Conscience.—There never yet has been a guilty conscience but that it has manifested in some outward word or act. Herod had committed a great and dreadful crime, and it torments him when one might think his thoughts were furthest from it. The wonderful works that Jesus has been doing during the autumn of A. D. 28 and the following winter are related to him. Nothing had been said about John, yet the guilty mind of the king immediately associated the two great and good men. It might seem, and probably was the fact, that good men were generally discounted at that court. Here were two who rose far above the average. One had rebuked the king, been imprisoned and murdered; another arises, says nothing about the king, simply going about telling the glad tidings of the kingdom and doing good. While the works of Jesus were being told Herod reviews his great crime. Herod's Character.—This incident reveals the kind of man Herod was. Bad associations was one of his failings. Then he had been guilty of breaking one of the laws of the decalogue in taking to himself his brother's wife. John had said this was not lawful, and the king's intelligence had not been blunted so far as to deny it. But he could stand out against his wife far enough to save the life of John from her hands. This, however, was not strength of mind, but the reverse, probably superstition, at least akin to that was his fear of killing "a just man and an holy." But this dread of consequences was not so strong as one other characteristic of Herod's nature. He could not stand the scorn of his companions. It was "for his oath's sake and for their sakes which sat with him" that John was finally beheaded, and we may well suppose that it was not so much for the oath's sake as for fear of the scorn of those with him. If it had been solely for his oath's sake, he would probably have let his first refusal to behead John stand. Herod's Crime.—Herod's crime was the beheading of John the Baptist. John was imprisoned in Macherus, a strong fortress and castle on the borders of Arabia, nine miles east of the northern end of the Dead sea, in March or April, A. D. 28. He was beheaded a year later. The act shows how a crime grows. He had been rebuked by John for what he knew was a sin. Instead of repenting, he imprisoned the Lord's messenger. But he had not meant to take his life, yet just this is what eventually happened.

THE ABUSED WIFE. Married Daughter—Oh, dear, such a time as I do have with that husband of mine! I don't have a minute's peace when he's in the house. He is always calling me to help do something or other. Mother—What does he want now? Daughter—He wants me to traipse way upstairs just to thread a needle for him, so he can mend his clothes.—N. Y. Weekly.

RUBBING IT IN. "Hiram," said his wife, "I wish you would go out to the shed and get a bucket of coals." "Coals!" muttered Hiram to himself, as he went grumbling to comply with the demand. "Coals! That's her way of reminding me that she could afford to spend six months in England every year before she married me!"—Chicago Tribune.

THE TOKEN. "You will forget—so on your hand," she said. "I'll tie this string." She murmured, with a coy, averted head; "Make it a ring."—Detroit Free Press.

DISCUSSING THE RACES. She—Do you know you remind me of a Kentucky thoroughbred. He—How, pray? She—You have such good staying qualities.—Harlem Life.

CORNER GROCERY CARRIAGE. Most war, when all is said and done, comes not from men behind a gun; 'tis waged by heroes in a drove Behind the grocer's cannon stove.—Chicago Record.

A SARCASTIC. "How long will it take your hand-writing expert to prove that this was written by that person?" asked one lawyer. "It may depend," said the other, who is disposed to be cynical. "On what?" "On whether he is testifying by the day or by the job."—Washington Post.

A BROKEN RECORD. "Well, sir, it's a remarkable thing about my wife. When we were married, 25 years ago, she weighed only 97 pounds." "And now she tips the beam at about 180, eh?" "No; she's as thin as ever."—Chicago Times-Herald.

FROM MOUTH TO HAND. "I hear you're making lots of money." "My dear fellow, I lead a regular hand-to-mouth existence." "You don't say! What are you doing?" "Practising dentistry."—Tit-Bits.

AN EASY MARK. Bill—I've been to see a palm reader. Jill—And did you believe what he told you? "Yes, I did. He told me I was too easy, and then charged me two dollars."—Yonkers Statesman.

VICE VERSA. "I hear Kate Green has married Jack Teper. I always considered her a girl of grit, but I never thought she'd marry a man to reform him." "She didn't. She reformed Jack to marry him."—Brooklyn Life.

IN CASE OF ANGER. "Niver say a word whin ye foind yer gittin' angry," said Mr. Dolan. "Remember, silence is golden." "It's the good rule," answered Mr. Rafferty. "Waste no words; smash 'em."—Washington Star.

GOT WHAT HE ASKED FOR. The Prisoner—Your honor, I trust you will allow me a little more time.—The Judge (interrupting him)—All right—six months. Officer, call the next case.—Chicago Daily News.

THE UNCERTAIN GLORY. "Well, Percy Dibbs has leaped into fame, hasn't he?" "I don't know. I think it would be safer to say that notoriety has fallen on him."—Brooklyn Life.

A GENTLE HINT. He—It's reported that we're engaged. She—Well, I'm not to blame for the fact that it is only a report.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

LYING IN WEIGHT. Askit (waxing political)—Do you know what is lying in wait for this country? Tellit—The coal man.—Baltimore American.

THE ONE EXCEPTION. She—That boy of Tubbs' will never stick at anything. He—Oh, I don't know about that. I've known him to stick to a lie pretty well.—Yonkers Statesman.

GLUTTONY. Museum Manager—You're looking bad, old boy; what's the matter? The Glass Eater—I feel slightly cut up; I'm afraid I took a glass too much this afternoon.—Town Topics.

THE WAY TO HEAVEN. The way to Heaven is by Weeping.—Cross.—English Proverb.

PATIENCE—There's something about Tom's mustache that makes me laugh. Patient—Is that so? It tickles me.

Two Phases. "What is badder?" "It is doing things in a way other people have quit doing them or doing them in a way they have not heard of."—Indianapolis Journal.

She Ought to Be. Mrs. Dix—Is your daughter happily married? Mrs. Dix—Indeed she is. Her husband shakes in his boots every time she speaks.—Chicago Daily News.

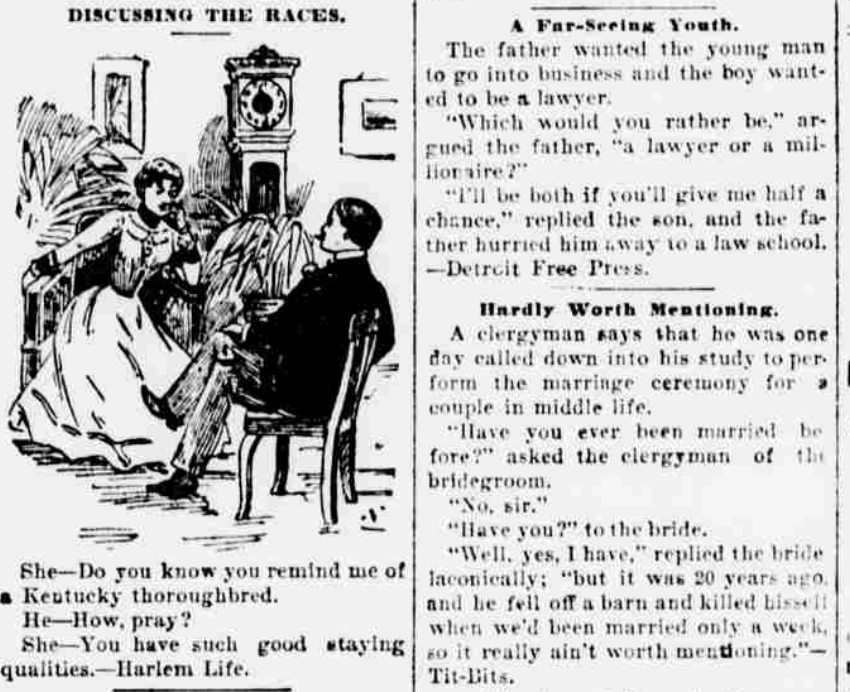
Postponement. "Chicago threatened to hang some aldermen some weeks ago. Was the threat put into execution?" "No; it was postponed until after the next census had been taken.—Judge.

Couldn't Live with Him. "What are your grounds for seeking a divorce?" asked the lawyer. "Incompatibility of temper," replied the woman. "Do you quarrel?" persisted the lawyer. "Oh, dear, no," replied the woman. "That's just the trouble. He always agrees with me on every subject, and the monotony of life with him has become absolutely unbearable."—Chicago Post.

A Far-Seeing Youth. The father wanted the young man to go into business and the boy wanted to be a lawyer. "Which would you rather be, argued the father, "a lawyer or a millionaire?" "I'll be both if you'll give me half a chance," replied the son, and the father hurried him away to a law school.—Detroit Free Press.

Hardly Worth Mentioning. A clergyman says that he was one day called down into his study to perform the marriage ceremony for a couple in middle life. "Have you ever been married before?" asked the clergyman of the bridegroom. "No, sir." "Have you?" to the bride. "Well, yes, I have," replied the bride laconically; "but it was 20 years ago, and he fell off a barn and killed himself when we'd been married only a week, so it really ain't worth mentioning."—Tit-Bits.

The Age of Organization. New Boarder—Well! Well! This is the first place I've struck where they have preserved strawberries and peach jam instead of stewed prunes. Old Boarder—All owing to organization, my boy. Us boarders have a mutual protective association, with iron-clad rules and heavy penalties. "Oh, ho! You kicked against prunes, did you?" "Not much we didn't. We passed a law that whenever prunes came on the table every member should eat a quart or pay ten dollars fine. That settled it. The landlady found prunes too expensive."—N. Y. Weekly.



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