



Daily Reflections

February 3, 2017

Scripture

Mark 6:14-29

King Herod heard about Jesus, for his fame had become widespread, and people were saying,

"John the Baptist has been raised from the dead;

That is why mighty powers are at work in him."

Others were saying, "He is Elijah";

still others, "He is a prophet like any of the prophets."

But when Herod learned of it, he said,

"It is John whom I beheaded. He has been raised up."

Herod was the one who had John arrested and bound in prison on account of Herodias,

the wife of his brother Philip, whom he had married.

John had said to Herod,

"It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife."

Herodias harbored a grudge against him and wanted to kill him but was unable to do so.

Herod feared John, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man,
and kept him in custody.
When he heard him speak he was very much perplexed,
yet he liked to listen to him.
Herodias had an opportunity one day when Herod, on his birthday,
gave a banquet for his courtiers, his military officers,
and the leading men of Galilee.
His own daughter came in and performed a dance
that delighted Herod and his guests.
The king said to the girl,
"Ask of me whatever you wish and I will grant it to you."
He even swore many things to her,
"I will grant you whatever you ask of me,
even to half of my kingdom."
She went out and said to her mother,
"What shall I ask for?"
Her mother replied, "The head of John the Baptist."
The girl hurried back to the king's presence and made her request,
"I want you to give me at once on a platter
the head of John the Baptist."
The king was deeply distressed,
but because of his oaths and the guests
he did not wish to break his word to her.
So he promptly dispatched an executioner
with orders to bring back his head.
He went off and beheaded him in the prison.
He brought in the head on a platter
and gave it to the girl.
The girl in turn gave it to her mother.
When his disciples heard about it,
they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

Our Scripture Reflection

The Bible is replete with stories about how certain powerful people tried to destroy God's plan for us. Herod out of arrogance and false pride put the holy

prophet John to death. But Herod and all the others would learn, no one can stop God and His plan. God is greater than any power on earth. May those who persecute The Lord and His holy people in our own day learn that lesson before it is too late.

Food for your Journey

There is a story that comes from an American visitor who went to Uganda. She found herself listening to a group of Ugandan Christians as they traded stories about the dark and bloody days under Idi Amin. They told story after story of fellow believers who were killed, often in horrible ways, by the ruthless tyrant who was trying to stamp out religious opposition to his regime. But they told these stories with a merriment that was quite puzzling to their American visitor. Finally the American took her host aside and asked him, "Why are these stories of martyrdom being told in such a lighthearted manner?" And the man replied, "You see, it is because Idi Amin didn't know the story."

"The story? What story?" she said. And he answered her, "The story of Christ. Whenever you kill him, he rises again. You can't kill off the body of Christ. Idi Amin thought he could put an end to us. We are laughing because he didn't know the story."

--James Friedrich, *The Christian Ministry*, September-October 1999, 24.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, Strengthen the faith of all who love You and who are called to witness to You. May they remain steadfast under all circumstances. Amen.