

Matthew 14:1-21

The Death of John the Baptist (1-12)

- ◆ At that time Herod, the ruler of Galilee, heard about Jesus. “He is really John the Baptist, who has come back to life,” he told his officials. “That is why he has this power to perform miracles.” For Herod had earlier ordered John's arrest, and he had him tied up and put in prison. He had done this because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. For some time John the Baptist had told Herod, “It isn't right for you to be married to Herodias!” Herod wanted to kill him, but he was afraid of the Jewish people, because they considered John to be a prophet. On Herod's birthday the daughter of Herodias danced in front of the whole group. Herod was so pleased that he promised her, “I swear that I will give you anything you ask for!” At her mother's suggestion she asked him, “Give me here and now the head of John the Baptist on a plate!” The king was sad, but because of the promise he had made in front of all his guests he gave orders that her wish be granted. So he had John beheaded in prison. The head was brought in on a plate and given to the girl, who took it to her mother. John's disciples came, carried away his body, and buried it; then they went and told Jesus.
- ◆ People hear but don't listen. John used to tell people about Jesus who was greater than him but when Jesus came they thought he was a reincarnation of John. We should learn to hear and listen.
- ◆ Herod was resistant to the rebuke he was given by John, this infuriated him to an extent of wanting to kill John but he couldn't because John was considered a prophet by the Jews. Let's not reject rebuke, when we're wrong we should admit and repent. We should ask God for wisdom to know when we're wrong because we might not know when we're wrong.
- ◆ Let's not be overzealous like Herod when making promises. He had to honour a horrendous request to a promise he made. We should be vigilant of our promises, they might haunt us.

Jesus Feeds Five Thousand (13-21)

- ◆ When Jesus heard the news about John, he left there in a boat and went to a lonely place by himself. The people heard about it, and so they left their towns and followed him by land. Jesus got out of the boat, and when he saw the large crowd, his heart was filled with pity for them, and he healed their sick. That evening his disciples came to him and said, “It is already very late, and this is a lonely place. Send the people away and let them go to the villages to buy food for themselves.” “They don't have to leave,” answered Jesus. “You yourselves give them something to eat!” “All we have here are five loaves and two fish,” they replied. “Then bring them here to me,” Jesus said. He ordered the people to sit down on the grass; then he took the five loaves and the two fish, looked up to heaven, and gave thanks to God. He broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. Everyone ate and had enough. Then the disciples took up twelve baskets full of what was left over. The number of men who ate was about five thousand, not counting the women and children.
- ◆ Our God is a God of wonders, he defies logic. When the disciples asked for the people to leave and go home to eat, Christ miraculously provided food from 2 fish and 5 loaves. Our

God is a God of wonders and he can work miracles when we're out of sorts, let's never limit God.

- ◆ We should always give thanks/grace for the food we receive. Christ gave thanks to God for the food and everyone was satiated.