

Not Eyewitness Content

Why is this story in this place?

Connection to the previous passage: *Warning of rejection for God’s messengers (Mark 6:7-13)*

Connection to the following passage: *Contrast of two feasts, God’s kingdom vs. this evil age (Mark 6:30-44)*

The Story

An unlawful marriage

Exodus 20:14 “You shall not commit adultery.”

Leviticus 20:21 “If a man takes his brother’s wife, it is impurity. He has uncovered his brother’s nakedness; they shall be childless.

A guilty conscience

Luke 23:8-11 “When Herod saw Jesus, he was very glad, for he had long desired to see him, because he had heard about him, and he was hoping to see some sign done by him. ⁹So he questioned him at some length, but he made no answer. ¹⁰The chief priests and the scribes stood by, vehemently accusing him. ¹¹And Herod with his soldiers treated him with contempt and mocked him. Then, arraying him in splendid clothing, he sent him back to Pilate.”

Hebrews 3:15 “Today when you hear his voice, don’t harden your hearts as Israel did when they rebelled.”

A sensual dance

A spineless “king”

A king’s job was to establish justice.

Psalm 72:1-2 “Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the royal son!

² May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice!”

A head on a platter

The Point

Foreshadowing the death of Christ

“The Gospel of Mark contains two ‘passion narratives,’ the first of which reports the imprisonment and death of John the Baptist.” – Professor William Lane

Similarities between the death of Jesus and the death of John the Baptist

1. Both are Roman government sanctioned executions.
2. Both are unlawful.
3. Both are done in response to requests of wicked people.
4. Both are done in order to impress powerful people in authority.
5. In both cases a special, festive day is turned into a bloodbath.
6. Both bodies are laid in a tomb.

An unresolved ending begs for more

Questions for Personal Study

1. Do you have a guilty conscience about something? How can you make it right?
2. What part of the story of John’s death stands out the most? Why? Why do you think Mark put this story here in the Gospel of Mark?
3. How does the ending of this passage (vs. 29) affect you? (To Pastor Brian, there is a sadness and a longing for something more)
4. Why, from Herod’s example, is it bad to postpone the decision to receive Christ?