

**THE DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER**

New Testament Lesson #47

**H**erod (HAIR-ud) had married Herodias (he-ROD-di-as), his brother's wife. When John the Baptist told Herod that it was not right that he have his brother's wife, Herodias wanted to kill him, but Herod feared John and liked to listen to him. At Herodias' insistence, Herod did have John arrested, but he also protected him.

On his birthday, Herod had a great banquet to which he invited nobles and high officials. The wine flowed freely, and at some point in the party, he called for Herodias' daughter (named Salome [sa-LO-me]) to dance for him and his guests. Her dancing pleased Herod so much that he swore an oath, offering her whatever she would like, up to half of the kingdom. The girl asked her mother what she should ask for. Her mother replied, "The head of John the Baptizer."

Herodias' daughter stood once more before the king and requested John's head on a platter. He sobered as he heard her request, thinking with remorse of the strange, silent man in the prison. But the oath...and the guests...it must be done. So Herod ordered a soldier to bring John's head. It was brought just as she requested, and she gave it to her mother. Then John's disciples heard and came and took the headless body away and placed it in a tomb.

**POINTS TO CONSIDER:**

- This story is also recorded in Luke 3:19-20 and Matthew 14:1-12.
- "Herod" is not a personal name, but a family name which belonged to all the Herodians (he-ROE-di-ons). Herod the Great was reigning at the time of Christ's birth (and issued the cruel decree to kill all the male children at Bethlehem - Matthew 2:13,16). Herod Archelaus (ar-ke-LAY-us) (Matthew 2:22) was reigning when Joseph and Mary returned with Jesus from Egypt.

- Herod Antipas (AN-ti-pas) was Archelaus' younger brother and was in power over Galilee and Perea (pe-RE-a). He is the one who, though already married, took the wife of his half-brother Philip, while a guest in Philip's house, and was reproved by John the Baptist for this.
- Although Herodias' daughter is not named in Scripture, Josephus, a first-century Jewish historian, says that her name was Salome, and that she was the child of Philip and Herodias.

**The Death of John the Baptizer**

- I. Herod arrested John the Baptizer.
  - A. Herod had married his brother's wife (her name was Herodias), and John said the marriage was not lawful.
  - B. Herodias wanted to kill John, but Herod had John imprisoned instead.
  
- II. At his birthday banquet, the daughter of Herodias danced for Herod.
  - A. He liked the girl so much that he offered her whatever she wanted.
  - B. The girl consulted her mother, who said to ask for the head of John the Baptizer.
  - C. Herod ordered John executed and had John's head brought to the banquet.
  - D. John's disciples then buried the body.

**ANSWER KEY:**

not, right, kill John, kill,	Herodias
holy, confuses, listen,	Salome
birthday, officers, nobles,	Herod
daughter, dance, Ask, wish,	John
give, swear, give, head,	
platter, go, prison, head,	
body, tomb.	



Use the code to finish the script. A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26

—In the King's Palace

**NARRATOR:** King Herod married Herodias, his brother's wife!

**JOHN THE BAPTIZER:**

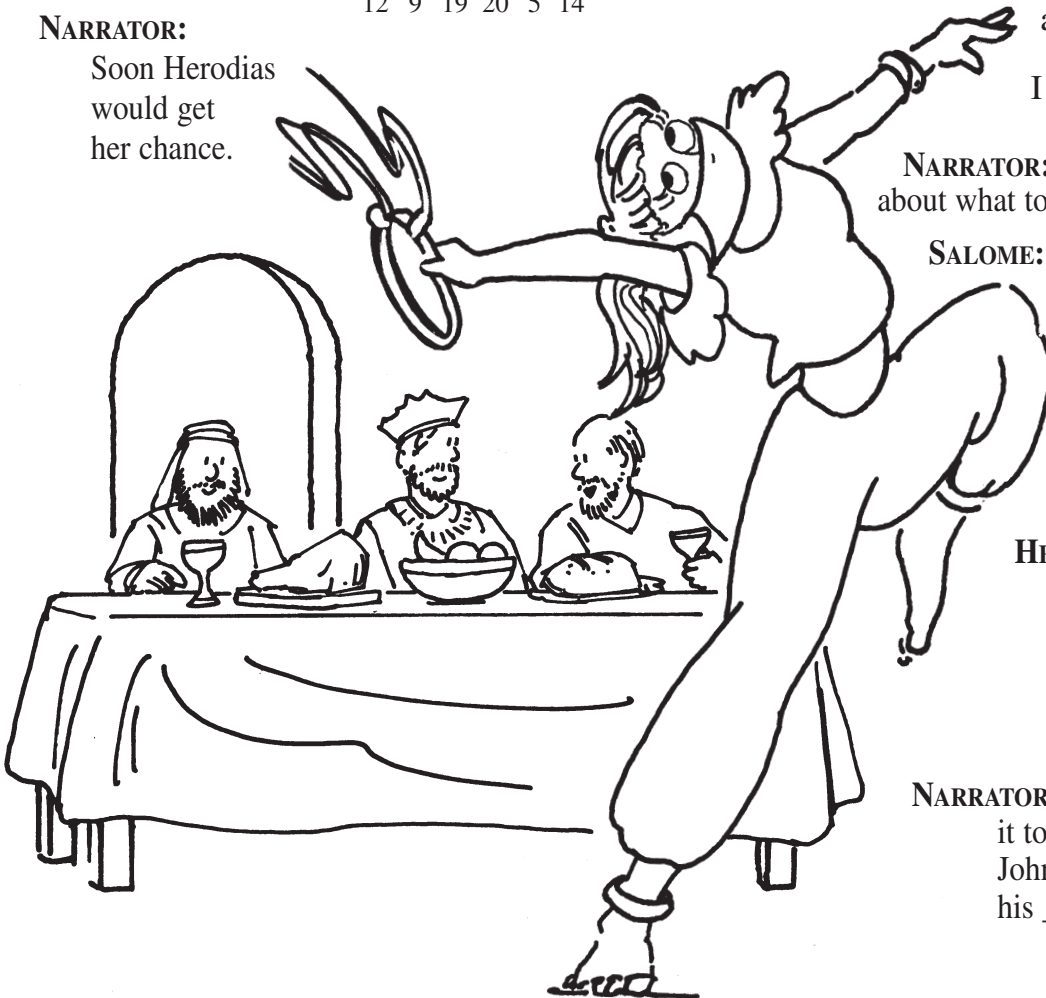
Herod, this is the thing to do.

**HERODIAS:** Herod, let's

**HEROD:** We can't him. He is a man. He me, but I like to to him.

**NARRATOR:**

Soon Herodias would get her chance.



—In the Banquet Hall

**HEROD:** This is a great banquet. I am glad to see my and here. I would like Herodias' to for us.

**NARRATOR:** So she did. Herod was very pleased.

**HEROD:** me for whatever you and I will it to you! I it.

**NARRATOR:** So the girl talked to her mother about what to ask for. Then she returned to Herod.

**SALOME:** I want you to me the of John the Baptizer on a at once.

**NARRATOR:** Herod was very sad. But he had promised.

**HEROD:** Soldier, at once to the and return with John's.

**NARRATOR:** The soldier came back and gave it to the girl. She gave it to her mother. John's friends heard and came to take his to a.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

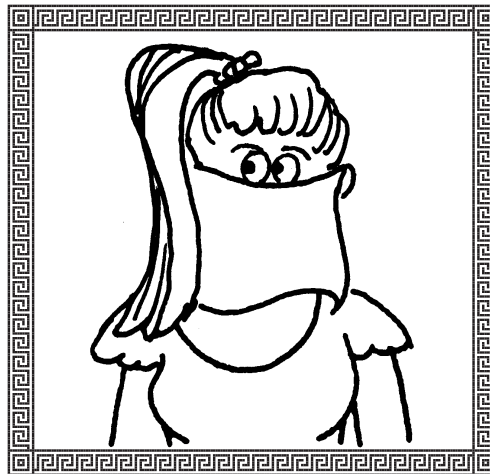


**T**he Bible is filled with stories of history and prophecy, love and hate, poetry and songs. This story is a drama.

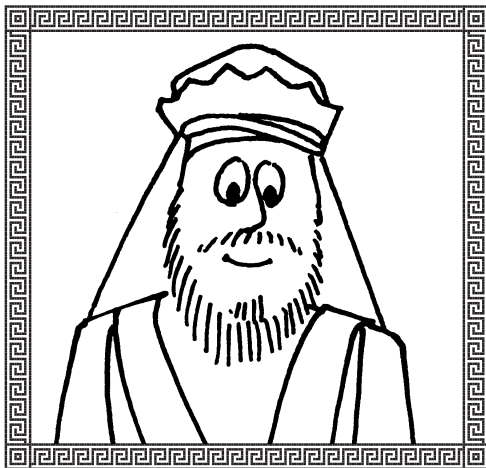
Trace the names of the people below. Color the pictures.



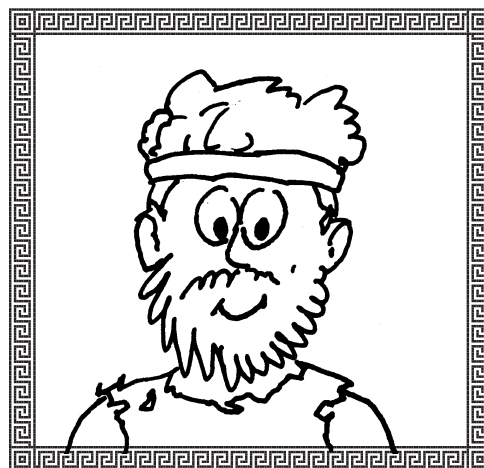
HERODIAS



SALOME



HEROD



JOHN

Name \_\_\_\_\_