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Herod Locked John Up In Prison
Matthew 4:12; Mark 1:14; Luke 3:19-20, 4:14

Herod locked John up in prison DIG: Why did John rebuke Herod Antipas? What does this illustrate about Yochanan? What did the Baptizer's imprisonment foreshadow for Yeshua? Why did Jesus withdraw to Galilee? What exactly is the Gospel? What was the reaction of the people of Galilee? Why did the Lord go through Samaria to get to Galilee?

REFLECT: When have you confronted evil in your life? Did it cost you anything? If you were arrested for being a believer, would there be enough evidence to convict? What cause would you go to prison for? What cause would you die for?

It is always dangerous to confront evil, and **John's** fearless condemnation of moral wickedness in high places led to **his** being beheaded. Likewise, German pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer made one of the most courageous decisions in the history of Christianity when he decided in 1939 to leave the safety of New York City and return to Germany where he confronted Adolph Hitler and the Nazis. His reward for this incredible act of selflessness was to be hanged in a concentration camp in 1945.

Bonhoeffer, one of the towering figures of the 20th century, may not be a familiar name to the majority of Americans more than sixty years after the end of World War II. But, Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a man, much like **John the Baptist**, determined to do the will of **God**, no matter what the personal cost.

Bonhoeffer once said, "Silence in the face of evil is itself evil. **God** will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act."

As Hitler and the Nazis seized control of Germany and attempted to exterminate the Jews of Europe, a small band of dissidents including Bonhoeffer, worked to bring down the Third Reich. Bonhoeffer, a pastor and author, was famous for his classic books on his faith.

Bonhoeffer's life was changed during his time at the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem before he returned to his native Germany to oppose Hitler. He took the position that Christians are obligated to stand up for the Jews.

Upon his return to Germany he became involved in the effort to smuggle Jews into the safety of neutral Switzerland. But, he also put his beliefs into action by being involved in the well-known Valkyrie plot against Hitler.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's call to action against Hitler included the following famous quote, "If I see a madman driving a car into a group of innocent bystanders, then I can't as a believer, simply wait for the catastrophe and then comfort the wounded and bury the dead. I must try to wrestle the steering wheel out of the hands of the driver."

Disappointed with the complacency of the German Evangelical Church in the face of Hitler's rise to power, Bonhoeffer became a founder of the Confessing Church, which opposed the country's growing hostility toward Jews. Inspired by Gandhi's advocacy of non-violence, the pacifist Bonhoeffer struggled for the right response to Hitler. Nazi opposition to his Confessing Church increased until the pastor was forbidden to speak publicly or to publish his writing.

The attempted assassination of Hitler on July 20, 1944 was connected to Bonhoeffer and others. He was arrested by the Nazis and hanged on April 9, 1945 at the Flossenburg concentration camp only days before the Allies liberated Germany.[348]

But when John rebuked Herod Antipas, **the tetrarch, because of his marriage to Herodias, his brother's wife, and all the other evil things he had done (Luke 3:19). Herod** Antipas was the son of **Herod** the Great, and **he** had married **his brother's wife** while **his brother** was still alive. The Torah regarded **his** marriage as an incestuous relationship. **Herodias** had been furious over this and demanded that **John** be put **in prison**. **Herod** fulfilled **her** desire.



Herod Antipas **added this to all his** other sins**: He locked Yochanan up in prison (Luke 3:20). Josephus (Antiquities 18.5.2 [18.119]) states that John was imprisoned in the fortress of Machaerus on the eastern side of the Dead Sea. Luke** could think of no greater evil than to reject and persecute **God's** messenger. According to **John 3:22-23** and **4:1-2**, the ministries of **Jesus** and **the Baptist** overlapped for a time. **Luke**, however, in presenting his orderly account, told of **John's** imprisonment at this point in order to complete **the herald's** story, so that he now could concentrate on **the Lord's** story.[349]

Jesus heard that John had been put in prison (Matthew 4:12a; Mark 1:14a). Herod had evidently become tired of **the Baptizer's** prophetic denunciations of **his** family and administration, so **he** had **John** imprisoned in hopes of stopping **his** light from shining **(Matthew 14:1-11)**. **The forerunner's** imprisonment foreshadowed **Yeshua's** own suffering because **what happens to the herald will happen to the King.**

After that **Jesus withdrew to Galilee, proclaiming the Good News of God (Matthew 4:12b; Mark 1:14b). The Master** was no more afraid of the Pharisees than was **Yochanan**, but, **He** wanted to avoid a premature confrontation. When the time came, the **Suffering Servant** would not flinch as **He** faced the Great Sanhedrin (**to see link click Lg – The Great Sanhedrin**). **Messiah** also had no fear of **Herod**. If **He** wanted to escape possible trouble from **Herod**, **He** wouldn't have gone **to Galilee** because that too was under **Herod's** control. **The Son of God** always works on **His** Father's divine timetable. **He** had, as it were, a divine clock ticking in **His** mind and heart that regulated everything **He** said and did. Rabbi Sha'ul confirms that **when the set time had fully come, God sent His Son (Galatians 4:4a)**. **Messiah** spoke of **His hour not** having **yet come (John 7:30** and **8:20)**, and then of its having arrived **(Mattityahu 26:45; John 12:23, 17:1)**.[350]

The gospel or **the Good News** is the best **news** ever to come to mankind, because it contains the message of forgiveness, restoration, and new life in **Jesus Christ**. The word **gospel** comes from the Saxon word *gode-spell*, the word *gode* meaning *good*, and *spell* meaning *a story or a tale.* In every case the word **gospel** is a translation of the Greek word *euaggelion.* The verb is *euaggelizomai.* The word *euaggelion* was just as commonly used in the first century as our words **Good News**. "Have you any **Good News** (*euaggelion*) for me today?" must have been a common question. Our word **gospel** today has a definite religious inference. In the ordinary **conversation** of the first century, it did not have such a meaning.

However, it was taken over into the cult of Caesar where it acquired a religious significance. The cult of Caesar was the state religion of the Roman Empire, in which the emperor was worshiped as a god. When the announcement of the emperor's birthday was made, or the accession of a new Caesar proclaimed, the account of either event was designated by the word *euaggelion.*

Consequently, when the Bible writers were announcing **the Good News** of salvation, they used the word *euaggelion*, which meant to the first century readers **Good News**. There is the **Good News** of the Kingdom **(Matthew 4:23)** announced at **His** First Coming and rejected by Isra'el, to be announced at **His** Second Coming and accepted by Isra'el (see my commentary on **Revelation Ev – The Basis for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ**). There is the **Good News** of **Jesus Christ (Romans 5: 1-8)**, that **He** died on the Cross and thus becomes **the Savior** of sinners who put their faith/trust/belief in **Him**. There is also **the Good News** of the grace **of God (Acts 20:24)**, which is from **Yeshua Messiah.**

The verb *euaggelizomai* is uniformly translated *to preach* ***the Gospel***, except where it may be rendered *bring* or *has declared*. Many times it is translated by the word *preach*, but, since there is a Greek word *kerusso* that means *to preach* in the sense of *to announce*, the translation should be expanded to include the idea of **Good News (Luke 3:18; Acts 5:42; 1 Corinthians 15:1-2; Galatians 1: 15-16; Ephesians 2:17; Hebrews 2:17** and **Rev 14:6).** The word *evangelist* comes from the Greek word *euaggelistes*, a bringer of **Good News**.[351]

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through the whole countryside (Luke 4:14). Galilee would be the primary focus of **the Lord's** public ministry. This is a summary statement of **Christ's** actions. **His** reputation spread through **the whole countryside** because His ministry had **not** been **done in a corner (Acts 26:26)** (i.e. in secret)**.** It is truly remarkable how the proud and arrogant think they have free rein to accomplish their wicked ends, when the truth of the matter is that **ADONAI** knew what was going to happen before the foundation of the world.

But, **Jesus** left for **Galilee**, passing through Samaria, because **He** had a divine appointment . . .
with a woman at a well.