

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **Matthew: Jesus As Israel's Messiah And His Kingdom**

#### **Part XV: Christ As Israel's Messiah Seen By The Opposition To His Ministry, Matthew 11:2-16:12**

##### **J. Christ As Israel's Messiah By His Unique Response To Wicked Herod's Interest**

**(Matthew 14:1-13)**

### **I. Introduction**

A. Jesus withdrew from His **hostile** nation's religious leaders (Matt. 12:14-15), from His **hostile** townsfolk (Matt. 13:53-58), but also from king Herod Antipas though he was *not* actually **hostile** to Jesus, Matt. 14:1-2, 13.

B. This unique response by Jesus to this king's interest in Him reveals Jesus was the Biblical Messiah as follows:

### **II. Christ As Israel's Messiah By His Unique Response To Wicked Herod's Interest, Matthew 14:1-13.**

A. At the time that Jesus returned to minister to His hometown of Nazareth (Matthew 14:1 with 13:53-58), Herod Antipas who ruled over Nazareth as tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, the places John the Baptizer and Jesus mostly ministered (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Matt. 14:1; Z. P. E. B., v. Three, p. 140) heard of Jesus' miracles, and attributed them to John the Baptizer's having risen from the dead, Matthew 14:2.

B. When Jesus heard of Herod's words about His ministry, He "withdrew" from his realm into a wilderness area (*anachoreo*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 62-63), the same word "withdraw" that is used in Matthew 12:15 of Christ's "withdrawing" from the hostile religious leaders who planned to kill Him.

C. To understand Jesus' withdrawal from him, we note Herod Antipas was a very sinful king, Matthew 14:3-12:

1. Herod had imprisoned John for critiquing his marriage to his brother Philip's wife, Herodias Matt. 14:3-4.
2. Actually, secular history shows this marriage was dreadfully unbiblical for a variety of reasons:
  - a. When Herod Antipas around A. D. 29 visited his brother Philip, he met and fell in love with his brother's wife, Herodias, who *also* happened to be Herod Antipas' own niece, Z. P. E. B., v. Three, p. 140.
  - b. Herodias, full of ambition, jumped at the opportunity to marry a powerful tetrarch in Antipas, so she agreed to marry him providing he divorced his wife, Aretas' daughter, *Ibid.*
  - c. John the Baptist denounced this marriage for Herod's marrying his brother's wife when his brother still lived, not to mention that she was also his niece and he had divorced his first wife to wed her! (*Ibid.*)
3. Antipas would have slain John, but he was afraid of the people who viewed him as a prophet, Matt. 14:5.
4. However, on Herod Antipas' birthday, Herodias' daughter danced before him and he so pleased her, he promised with an oath in front of his many great guests to give her whatever she asked, Matthew 14:6-7.
5. Having been instructed by her mother, Herodias, she asked for the head of John the Baptist on a charger, something Herod did not want. Yet, to honor his public promise, he honored her request, Matthew 14:8-9.
6. John was thus beheaded in prison, and his head was brought on a charger into the dining hall and given to the young woman who in turn gave it to her mother, Herodias, Matthew 14:10-11.
7. John's disciples came, took up his body, buried it and went and told Jesus of these events, Matthew 14:12.

D. Jesus knew that His great righteousness contrasted greatly with Herod Antipas' great sins, that His interacting with this king would eventually lead to His having open, crisis conflict with him in violation of His Isaiah 42:1-4 calling in His first advent, so he "withdrew" from Herod Antipas, Matthew 14:13 with 12:14-15:

1. Jesus withdrew from Herod Antipas like He withdrew from Israel's hostile religious leaders in Matthew 12:14-15 to avoid needless future conflict with this sinful king.
2. This fulfilled Isaiah 42:1-4 that (a) in His first advent, Messiah in the Spirit's power would not cry out "either against oppressors . . . or for revenge," Isaiah 42:1-2a; E. J. Young, The Book of Isaiah, 1974, v. III, p. 112, (b) He would not raise His voice "in strife," but speak "with calmness and quiet," *Ibid.*; Isaiah 42:2b, (c) He would bring "blessing" and "not . . . destroy", merely telling God's truths, *Ibid.*, p. 113-114; Isaiah 42:3 and (d) He would not falter or be discouraged until He had gradually, tirelessly placed judgment in the earth, and the isles awaited for His law, *Ibid.*, p. 114-116; Isaiah 42:4. This pictures the faithful, persistent, gradual discipling work of Christ in His life and through the Church in our era, *Ibid.*

***Lesson:*** *Jesus withdrew from Herod Antipas though Herod had not expressed hostility toward Him, for Jesus knew the vast contrast between His righteousness and Herod's great sins would eventually force a crisis conflict between them in violation of God's call that Jesus have a faithful, gradual discipling work then and later in the Church era.*

***Application:*** *May we (1) trust in Jesus as the Messiah due to His response to Herod Antipas. May we (2) withdraw from sinful folk with whom we note we will conflict in violation of God's call to a faithful, gradual discipling work.*