

# Mark 6:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee;

## Analysis

**And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee.** Herodias's opportunity for revenge arrives through royal celebration. 'A convenient day' (ἡμέρας εὐκαιροῦ γενομένης, *hēmeras eukairou genomenēs*) ironically describes what was convenient for Herodias's murderous plot—the Greek εὐκαιρος (*eukairos*) means opportune or suitable. She waited strategically for the right moment when Herod would be vulnerable. 'Herod on his birthday' (τοῖς γενεσίοις αὐτοῦ, *tois genesiois autou*) refers to birthday banquet, Roman custom foreign to Jewish tradition but adopted by Herodian dynasty.

'Made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee' (δεῖπνον ἐποίησεν τοῖς μεγιστᾶσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῖς χιλιάρχοις καὶ τοῖς πρώτοις τῆς Γαλιλαίας, *deipnon epoiēsen tois megistāsīn autou kai tois chiliarchois kai tois prōtois tēs Galilaias*) describes elaborate state dinner for political elite: nobles, military commanders (literally 'commanders of thousands'), and Galilean aristocracy. The setting—alcohol flowing, male pride, public commitments—created circumstances where Herod's weak character would be exploited. This teaches that sinful patterns create vulnerabilities; sexual compromise (Herodias), political ambition, and pride combined to produce tragic injustice.

## Historical Context

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Roman birthday celebrations were lavish affairs featuring feasting, entertainment, and gift-giving. Jewish tradition didn't celebrate birthdays (considered pagan practice), but Herodian rulers adopted Greco-Roman customs. Archaeological evidence from Herodian palaces shows elaborate banquet halls designed for such entertainments. The guest list—military commanders and regional aristocracy—reflects political nature of the event: demonstrating power, cementing alliances, displaying wealth. Wine flowed freely at such banquets; ancient moralists warned that drunkenness loosened inhibitions and led to poor decisions. The separation of sexes at formal dinners was customary—men dined separately from women, making Herodias's daughter's entrance (v. 22) deliberately provocative. Herod Antipas ruled from his capital Sepphoris or later Tiberias, both displaying Roman sophistication. Early church fathers noted providential irony: Herod celebrated his physical birth while orchestrating death of God's prophet. The 'convenient day' for Herodias's scheme became the tragic day of John's martyrdom.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How does this 'convenient day' for evil demonstrate that Satan watches for strategic moments of vulnerability to tempt God's people?
2. What warning does this banquet scene offer about how pride, alcohol, and public commitments can combine to produce devastating moral compromises?

## Interlinear Text

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καὶ	γενομένης	ἡμέρας	εὐκαίρου	ὅτε	Ἡρώδης	τοῖς
<b>And</b>	<b>was come</b>	<b>day</b>	<b>when a convenient</b>	<b>that</b>	<b>Herod</b>	G3588
G2532	G1096	G2250	G2121	G3753	G2264	
γενεσίῳ	αὐτοῦ	δεῖπνον	ἐποίει	τοῖς	μεγιστάσιν	αὐτοῦ
<b>birthday</b>	G846	<b>a supper</b>	<b>made</b>	G3588	<b>lords</b>	G846
G1077		G1173	G4160		G3175	
καὶ	τοῖς	χιλιάρχοις	καὶ	τοῖς	πρώτοις	τῆς Γαλιλαίας
<b>And</b>	G3588	<b>high captains</b>	<b>And</b>	G3588	<b>chief</b>	G3588 <b>estates of Galilee</b>
G2532		G5506	G2532		G4413	G1056

## Additional Cross-References

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**Esther 2:18** (Creation): Then the king made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, even Esther's feast; and he made a release to the provinces, and gave gifts, according to the state of the king.

**Genesis 40:20** (Creation): And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants.