

Week Three Handout

“God & Caesar – The Ancient Modern Clash”

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Render unto Caesar:

A New Testament Perspective – The Gospels

Jesus’ ministry and the early church were contextualized by the Roman Empire’s political and military power.

We will examine the principles that guided Jesus and the disciples’ words and actions.

The New Testament Context of the Roman Empire



Roman Emperors

- Julius Caesar – 60-44 BC
- Caesar Augustus (Octavian) – 44 BC – 14 AD
- Tiberius – 12-37 AD
- Caligula – 37-41 AD
- Claudius – 41-54 AD
- Nero – 54-68 AD

Jewish Rulers of Judah/Israel

- **Maccabees** (167-140 BC)
 - Judas Maccabeus led Maccabean Revolt against the Seleucid Empire (167-160 BC); defeated Antiochus IV Epiphanes
 - The Jewish feast of Hanukkah commemorates the restoration of the Jewish worship at the Temple in Jerusalem in 165 BC after Judas Maccabeus removed the pagan idols and cleansed the temple; had enough consecrated oil for one day of lights – lasted 8 days.
- **Hasmonean Kingdom of Israel** (140-37 BC)
 - Established an independent religious Jewish state
 - First ruler was Simon Maccabaeus
 - Rome asserts temporary control in 63 BC; but after death of Julius Caesar in 44 BC, the Hasmoneans reassert control
- **Herodian Dynasty** (37 BC – 92 AD)
 - Caesar Augustus and Mark Anthony conquer Israel and make it a Roman client state
 - Installed Herod the Great as King of all Israel (37-4 BC); confirmed by the Roman Senate
 - Herod Archelaus – Ethnarch of Judea and Samaria (4 BC – 6 AD)
 - Herod Antipas – Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea (4 BC - 39 AD)
 - Herod II – Tetrarch of Batanaea (4 BC – 34 AD)
 - Herod Philip II – Tetrarch of Ituraea and Trachonitis (4 BC – 34 AD)
 - Herod Agrippa I (37-44 AD) – Tetrarch and King

Roman Officials

- There were four main Jewish sects – Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and Zealots
- The Zealots participated in the Jewish Tax Revolt (6 AD) under Quirinius of Syria (Acts 5:37)
- The Zealots led the Great Jewish Revolt (66-70 AD); died at Masada
- Simon “the Zealot” was one of the 12 disciples (Matt. 10:4; Mark 3:18)
- Roman Prefects (Governors) were appointed to maintain military control after Tax Revolt:
 - Coponius (6–9 AD)
 - Marcus Ambivulus (9–12 AD)
 - Annius Rufus (12–15 AD)
 - Valerius Gratus (15–26 AD)
 - Pontius Pilate (26–36 AD)
 - Marcellus (36–37 AD)
 - Marullus (37–41 AD)

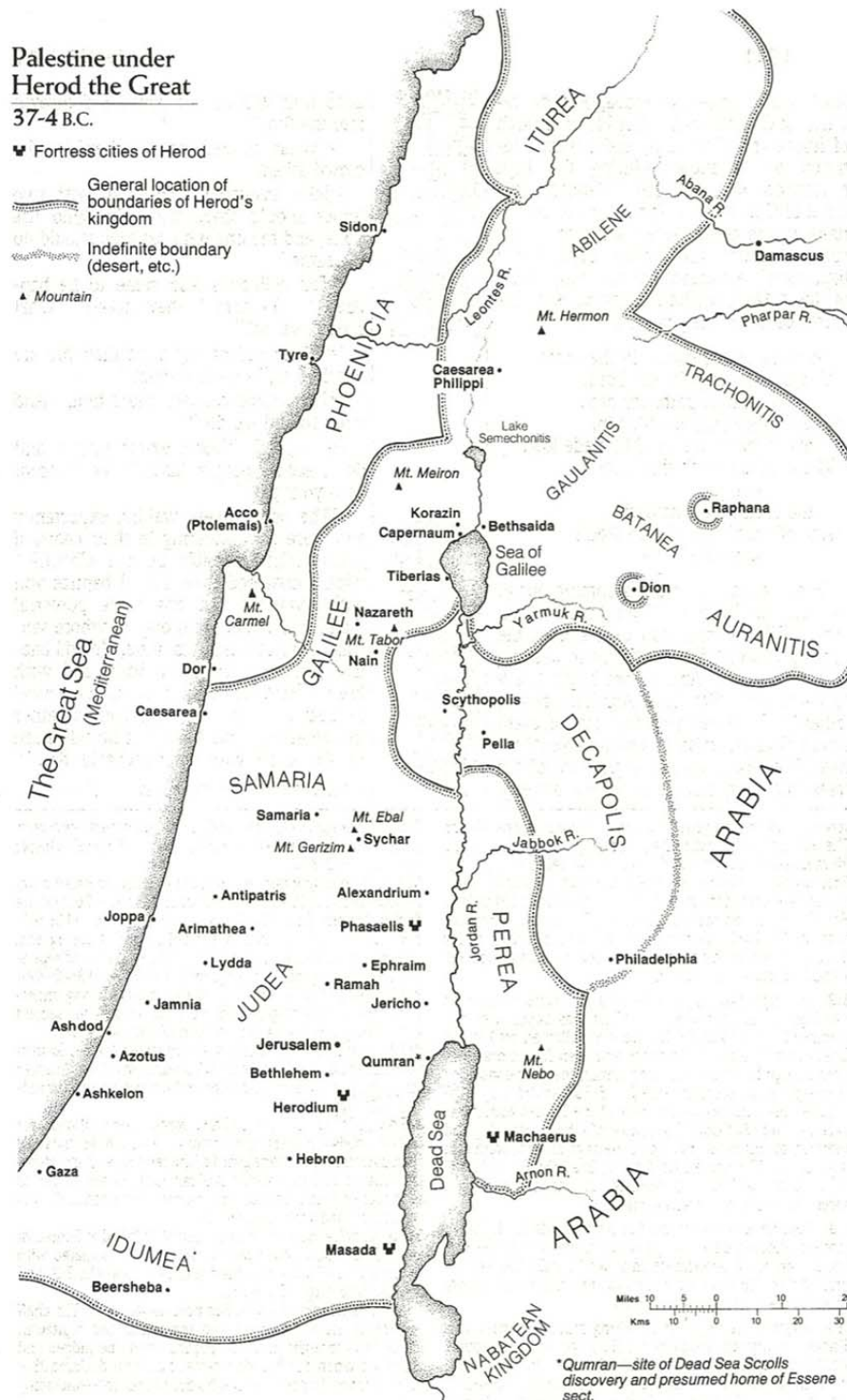
Palestine under Herod the Great 37-4 B.C.

Fortress cities of Herod

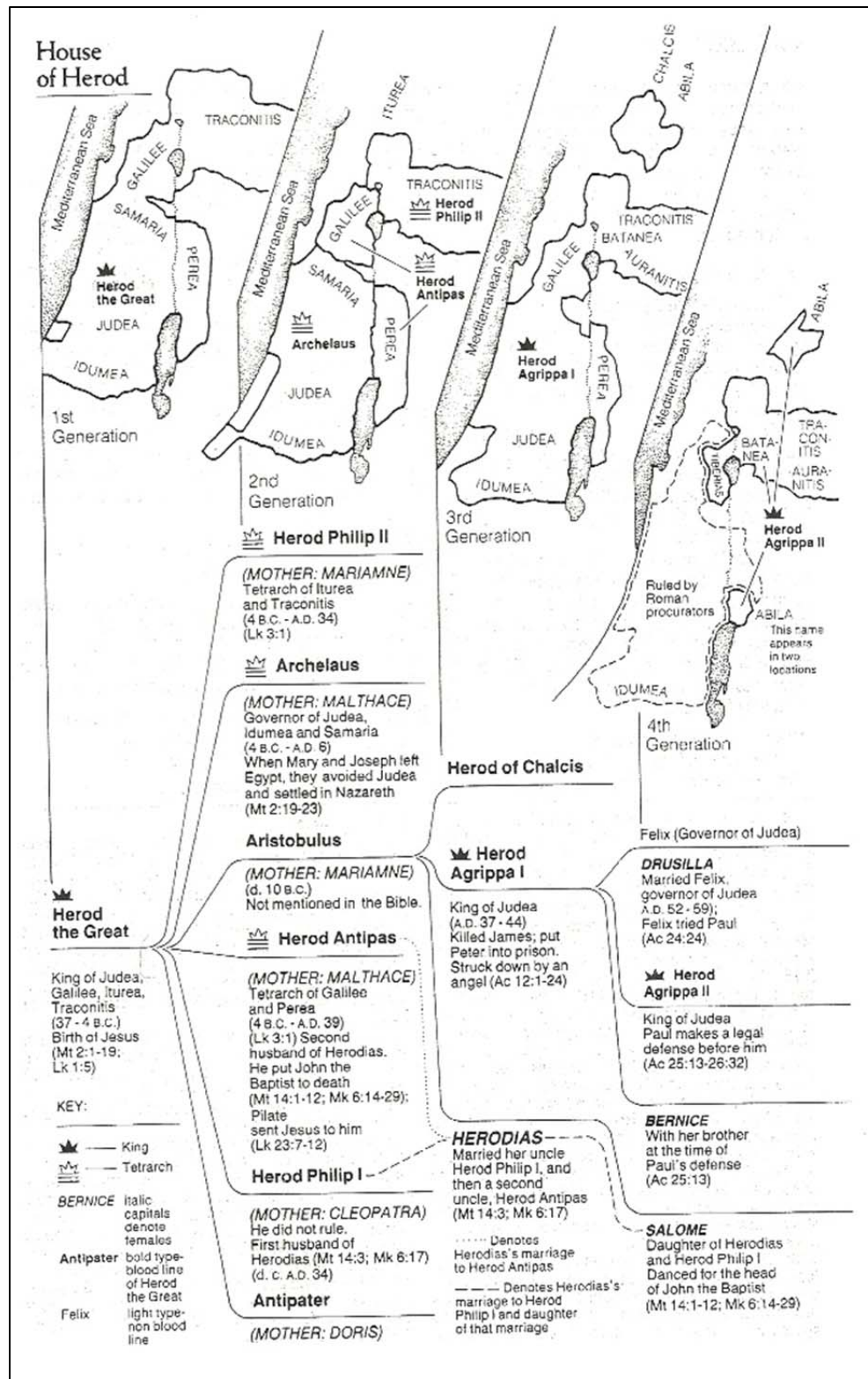
General location of
boundaries of Herod's
kingdom

Indefinite boundary
(desert, etc.)

Mountain



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The Ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus

1. John the Baptist

- The beginning of the ministry of John (Luke 3:1-3)
In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene — during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the desert. He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
- John imprisoned and beheaded by Herod Antipas (Matt. 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29; Luke 9:7-9)

2. Jesus Christ

- The birth of Jesus in the days of Caesar Augustus (Luke 2:1-7)
In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.
- King Herod and the Magi (Matt. 2:1-18)

3. The Temptation of Jesus

- Matt. 4:8-10
- Luke 4:5-8

4. Paying Taxes to Caesar

- Matt. 22:15-22
- Mark 12:13-17
- Luke 20:20-26

5. Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

- Matt. 21:1-11
- Mark 11:1-10
- Luke 19:29-44
- John 12:12-19

6. Jesus' Arrest and Trial
- Matt. 26:47 – 27:26
 - Mark 14:43 – 15:15
 - Luke 22:47 – 23:25
 - John 18:2 – 19:16

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