

The Acts of the Apostles

Lesson 18: In Caesarea

Acts 23:31 to 26:32

(Includes an explanation of the Herodian Dynasty)

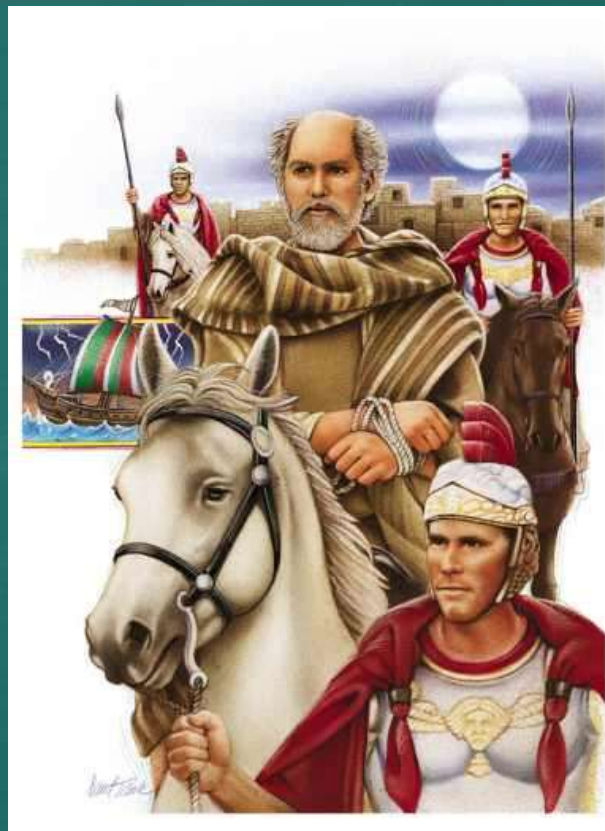
After they saved Paul from violence in Jerusalem, the Roman soldiers escorted him to Caesarea to stand before the governor of Judaea, Marcus Antonius Felix.



Marcus Antonius Felix
Claudius Caesar made him governor
of Judaea in AD 53.

Acts 23:31-33

- ³¹ Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought *him* by night to Antipatris.
- ³² On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle:
- ³³ Who, when they came to Caesarea, and delivered the epistle to the governor, presented Paul also before him.

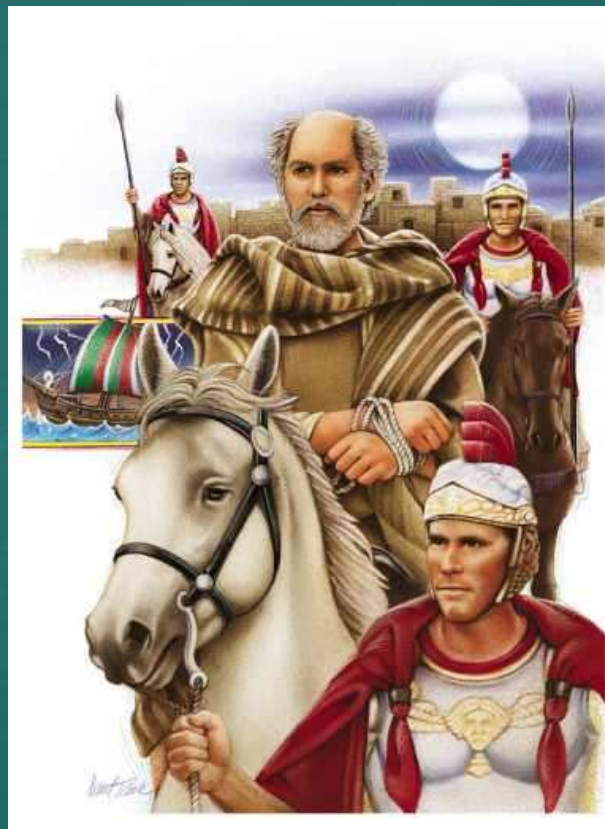


Acts 23:34-35

³⁴ And when the governor had read *the letter*, he asked of what province he was. And when he understood that *he was* of Cilicia;

³⁵ I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come.

And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment hall.





The Judgment Hall or *Praetorium* was the headquarters of the Roman military governor.

In Caesarea

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 24:1-23 | Paul's public testimony before Felix, governor of Judaea |
| 24:24-27 | Paul's private testimony to Felix and his wife, Drusilla. |
| 25:1-12 | Paul's public testimony before Festus, the new governor. |
| 25:13-22 | The testimony of Festus to King Agrippa. |
| 25:23 to 26:32 | Paul's public testimony before King Agrippa and his wife, Bernice. |

In Caesarea

- 24:1-23 Paul's public testimony before Felix, governor of Judaea
- 24:24-27 Paul's private testimony to Felix and his wife, Drusilla.
- 25:1-12 Paul's public testimony before Festus, the new governor.
- 25:13-22 The testimony of Festus to King Agrippa.
- 25:23 to 26:32 Paul's public testimony before King Agrippa and his wife, Bernice.

Acts 24:1-3

- ¹ And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul.
- ² And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse *him*, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence,
- ³ We accept *it* always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.



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Most rulers expect a certain amount of flattery.

Acts 24:4-6

- 4 Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words.
- 5 For we have found this man *a pestilent fellow*, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes:
- 6 Who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law.



Acts 24:4-6

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The four accusations against Paul:

1. He was “a pestilent fellow” – he was a plague to them.
2. He was “a mover of sedition [civil disobedience] among all of the Jews throughout the world.”
3. He was “a ringleader of the sect [cult] of the Nazarenes.”
4. He had profaned the temple (by bringing a Gentile inside).

Acts 24:4-6

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- 6 Who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law.

“The Jews would not call them *Christians* as that was derived from the word for *Messiah*; so Tertullus was instructed to call them *Nazarenes* [because they followed Jesus of Nazareth].”

The Companion Bible

Acts 24:4-6

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He claimed that the Jews were simply following their normal procedure when the Roman captain violently interrupted them.

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He claimed that the Jews were simply following their normal procedure when the Roman captain violently interrupted them.

Acts 24:7-9

- 7 But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took *him* away out of our hands,
- 8 Commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him.
- 9 And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so.



Acts 24:7-9

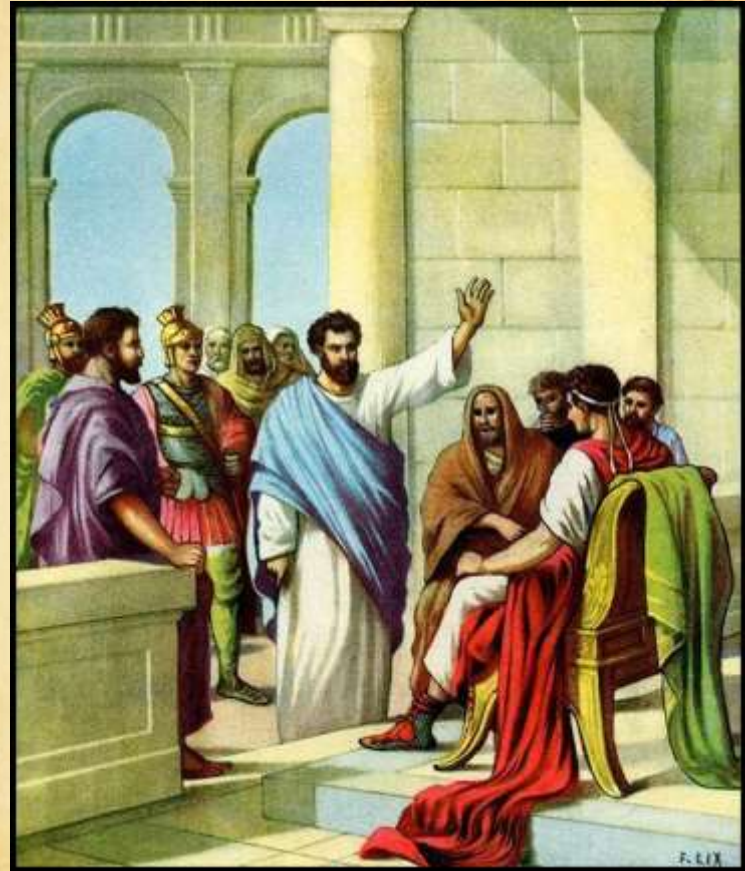
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Verses 10 to 21 are Paul's testimony to Felix:



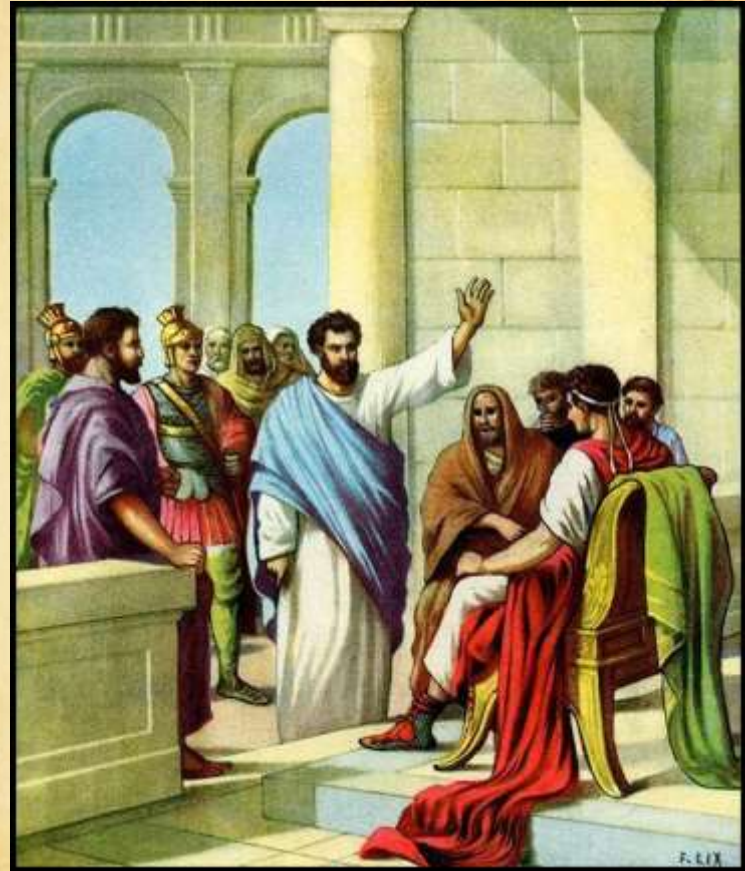
Acts 24:10-13

- ¹⁰ Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself:
- ¹¹ Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship.
- ¹² And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city:
- ¹³ Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me.



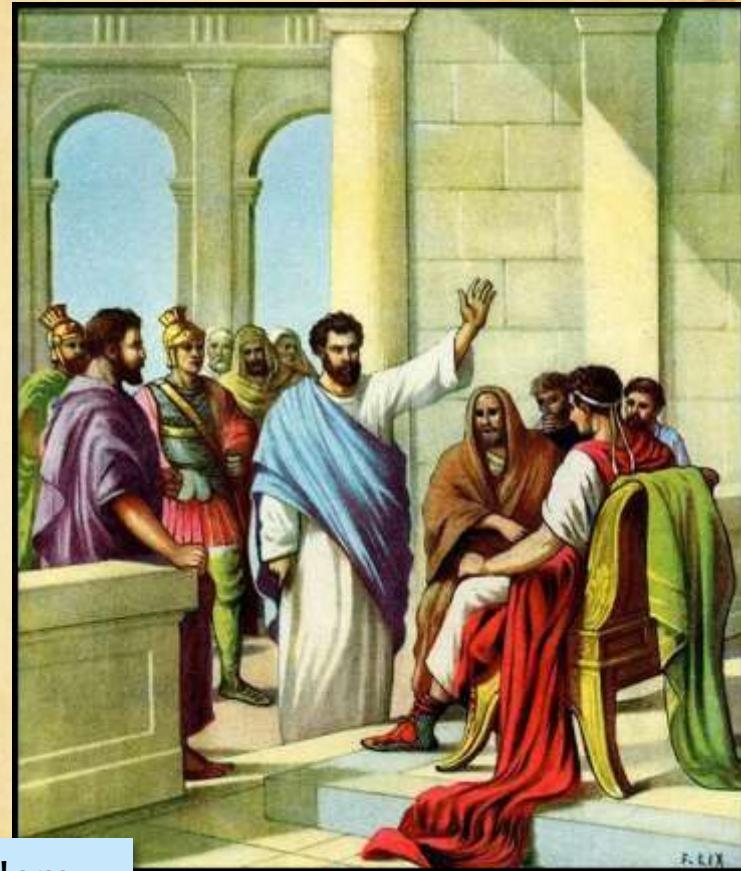
Acts 24:14-16

- 14 But this I confess unto thee,
that after the way which they call
heresy, so worship I the God of my
fathers, believing all things which are
written in the law and in the prophets:
- 15 And have hope toward God,
which they themselves also allow,
that there shall be a resurrection of the
dead, both of the just and unjust.
- 16 And herein do I exercise myself,
to have always a conscience void of
offence toward God, and *toward men.*



Acts 24:14-16

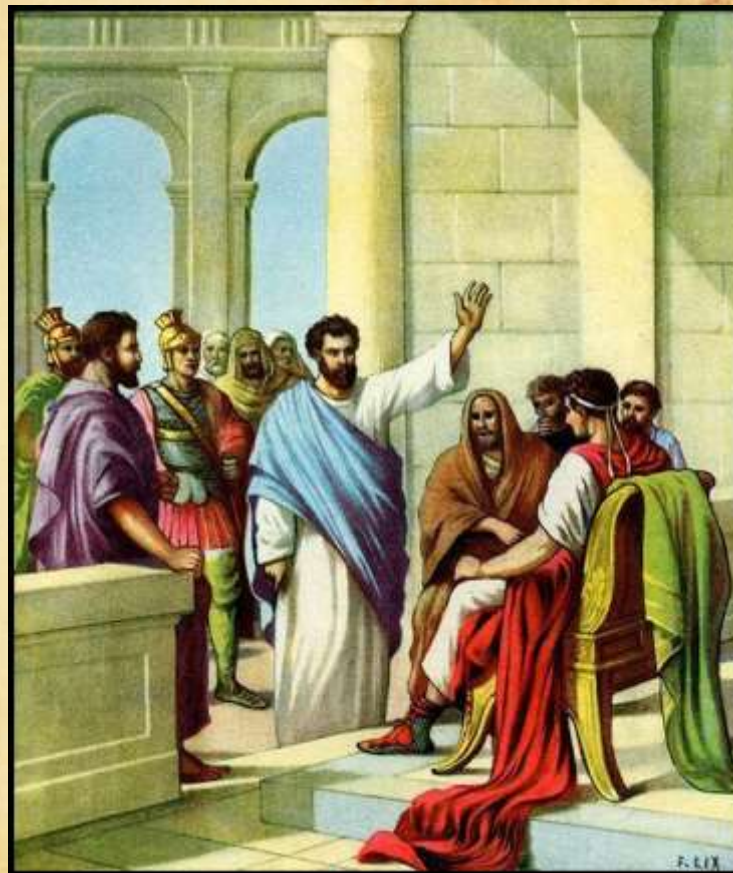
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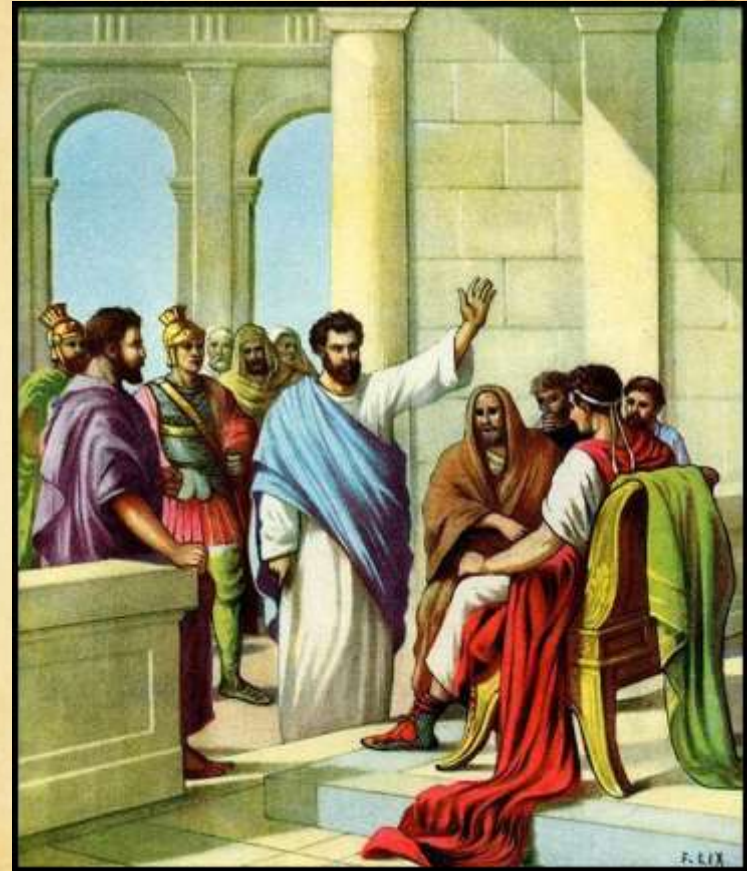
He now explains what *really* happened in Jerusalem:

Acts 24:17-21

- 17 Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.
- 18 Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.
- 19 Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me.
- 20 Or else let these same *here* say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council,
- 21 Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.

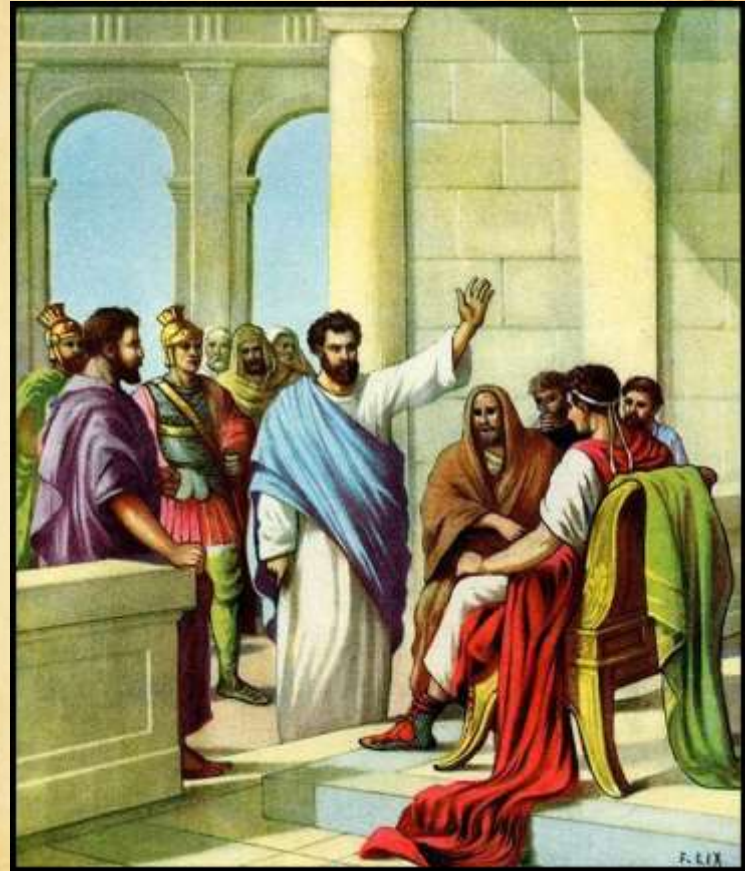


The governor Felix decided to hear the Roman captain's testimony before he made his judgment.



Acts 24:22-23

- ²² And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of *that way*, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter.
- ²³ And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let *him* have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him.



Acts 24:22-23

- ²² And when Felix heard these things, **having more perfect knowledge of *that way***, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter.
- ²³ And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let *him* have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him.

Felix knew more about Christianity than they realized.

The Roman centurion Cornelius who came to Christ through the ministry of Peter also lived in Caesarea.

It is possible that from him and others, Felix concluded that Christianity was not such an evil thing as was being told him.

In Caesarea

24:1-23

Paul's public testimony before Felix, governor of Judaea

24:24-27

Paul's private testimony to Felix and his wife, Drusilla.

25:1-12

Paul's public testimony before Festus, the new governor.

25:13-22

The testimony of Festus to King Agrippa.

25:23 to 26:32

Paul's public testimony before King Agrippa and his wife, Bernice.

Acts 24:24

²⁴ And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.



Acts 24:24

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Drusilla was the daughter of Herod Agrippa. She died in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius that destroyed Pompeii in AD 79.

Acts 24:25-26

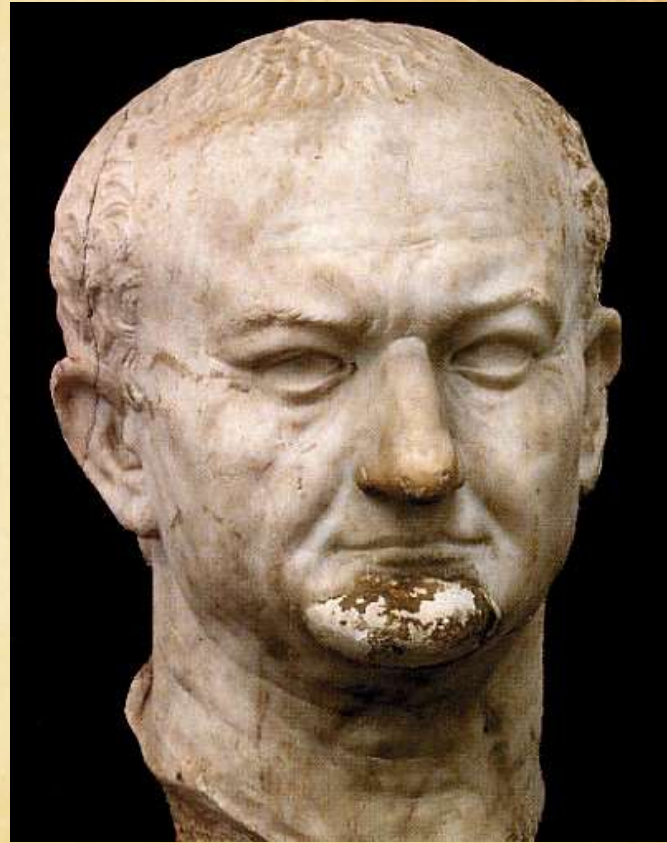
- ²⁵ And as he reasoned of **righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,** Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.
- ²⁶ He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.



Acts 24:27

²⁷ But after two years
Porcius Festus came into Felix' room:
and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a
pleasure, left Paul bound.

Two years later, Porcius Festus was appointed by Rome to replace Felix as the governor of Judaea.



In Caesarea

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The testimony of Festus to King Agrippa.

25:23 to 26:32

Paul's public testimony before King Agrippa and his wife, Bernice.

In Jerusalem, Festus was approached by temple leaders who asked him to return Paul to Jerusalem so they could kill him.

Acts 25:1-3

- ¹ Now when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Caesarea to Jerusalem.
- ² Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul, and besought him,
- ³ And desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him.

Festus told them to make their accusations against Paul in Caesarea.

Acts 25:4-5

- ⁴ But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Caesarea, and that he himself would depart shortly *thither*.
- ⁵ Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able, go down with *me*, and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him.

Ten days later, Governor Festus returned to Caesarea, and the trial continued.

Acts 25:6

⁶ And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went down unto Caesarea; and the next day sitting on the judgment seat commanded Paul to be brought.

Acts 25:7-8

- ⁷ And when he was come,
the Jews which came down from
Jerusalem stood round about,
and laid many and grievous
complaints against Paul,
which they could not prove.
- ⁸ While he answered for himself,
Neither against the law of the Jews,
neither against the temple,
nor yet against Caesar,
have I offended any thing at all.

Acts 25:9-11

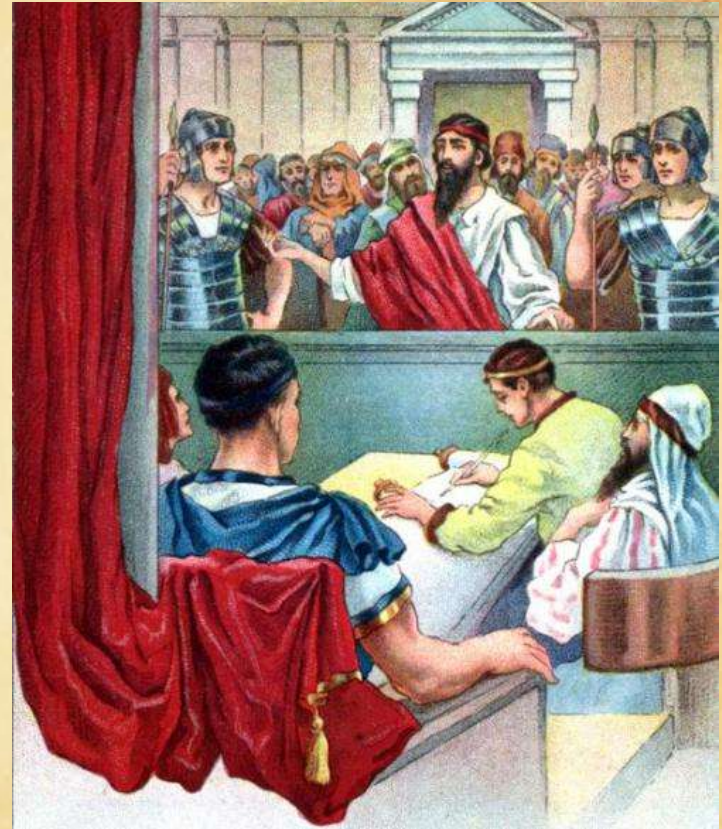
⁹ But Festus,
willing to do the Jews a pleasure,
answered Paul, and said,
Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem,
and there be judged of these things
before me?

¹⁰ Then said Paul,
I stand at Caesar's judgment seat,
where I ought to be judged:
to the Jews have I done no wrong,
as thou very well knowest.

¹¹ For if I be an offender,
or have committed any thing worthy
of death, I refuse not to die:
but if there be none of these things
whereof these accuse me,
no man may deliver me unto them.
I appeal unto Caesar.

Acts 25:12

¹² Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go.



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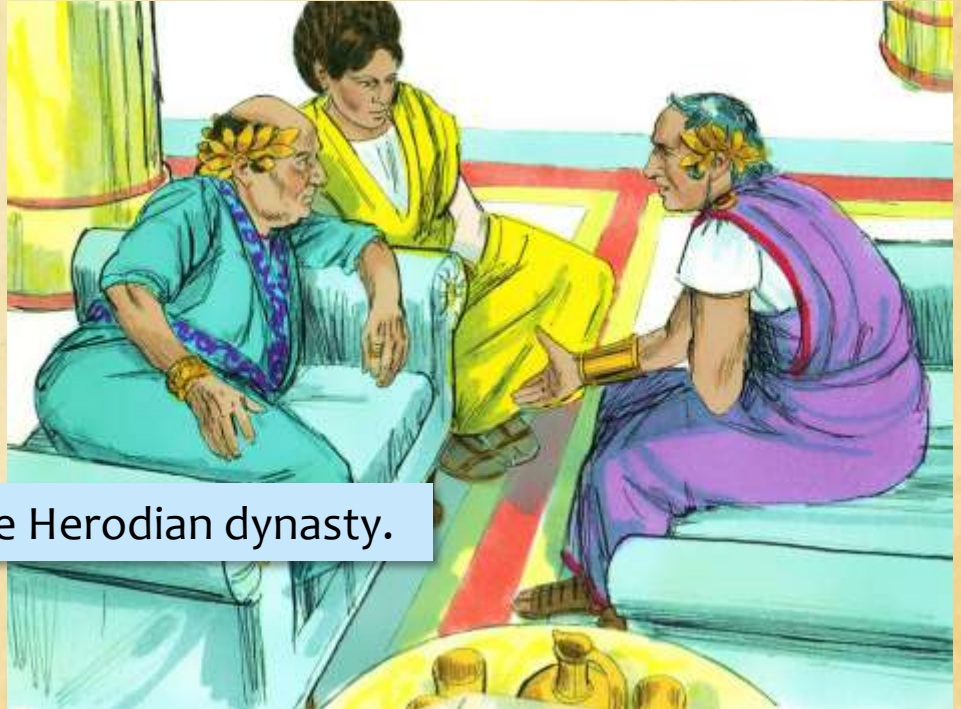
Acts 25:13

¹³ And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came unto Caesarea to salute Festus.



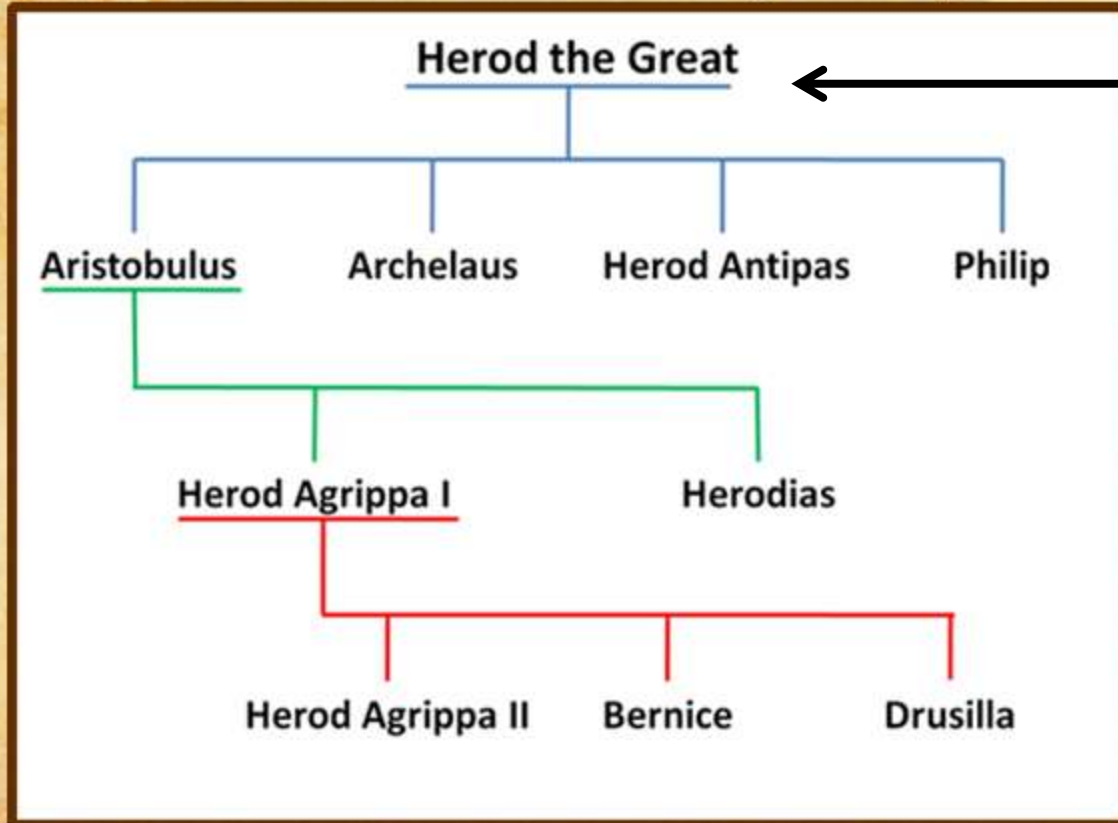
Acts 25:13

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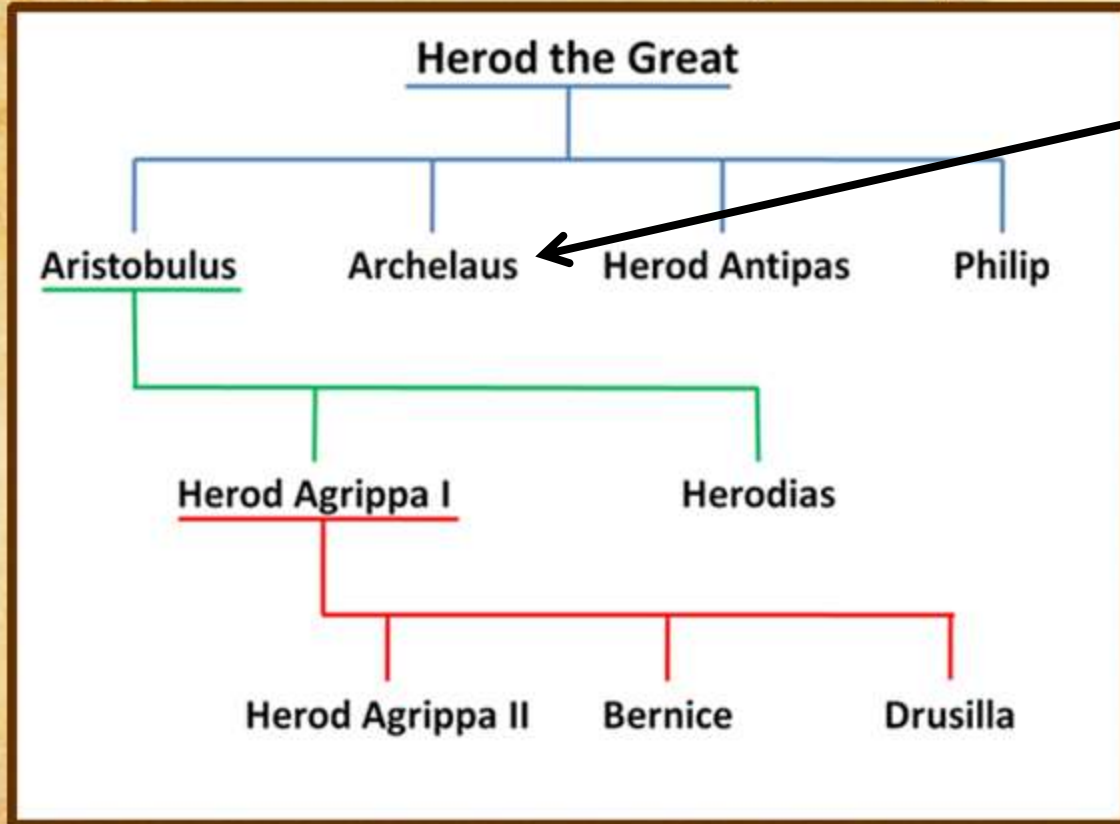
Herod Agrippa II was the last king of the Herodian dynasty.

The Herodian Dynasty



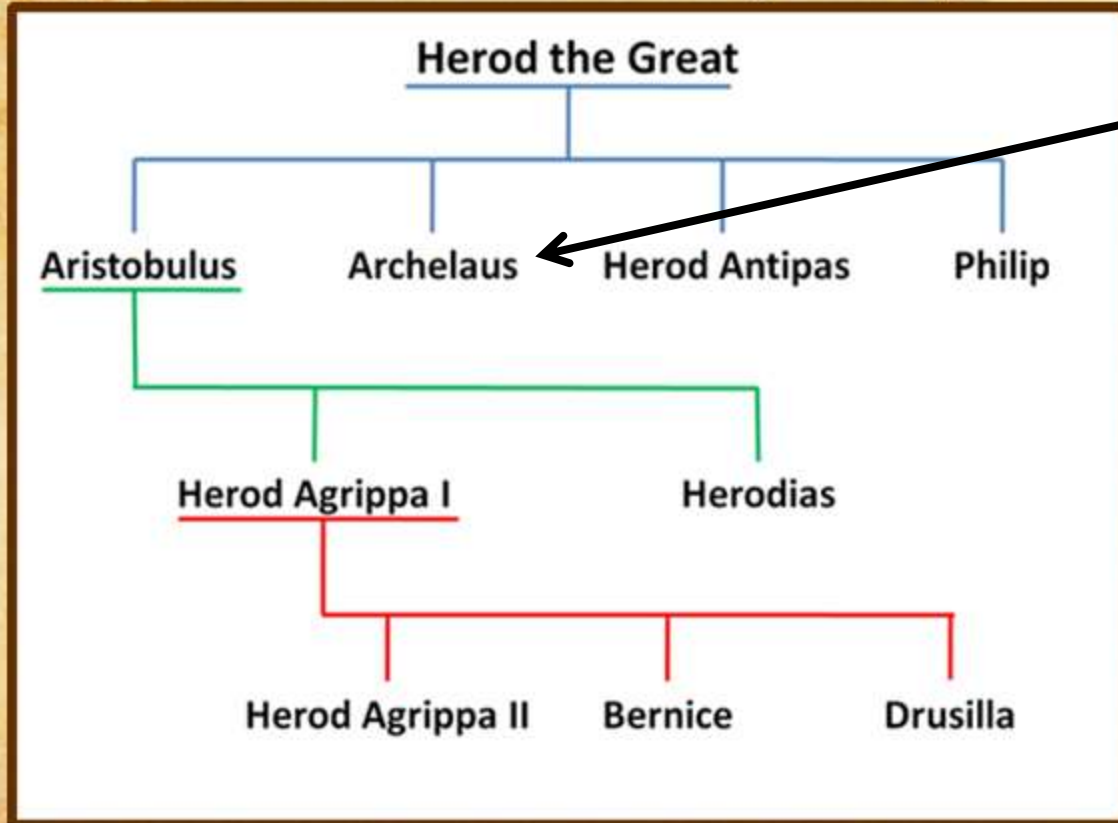
Herod the Great was the king of Judaea when Christ was born. He was responsible for the "Massacre of the Innocents."

The Herodian Dynasty



Herod's son Archelaus ruled after his death.

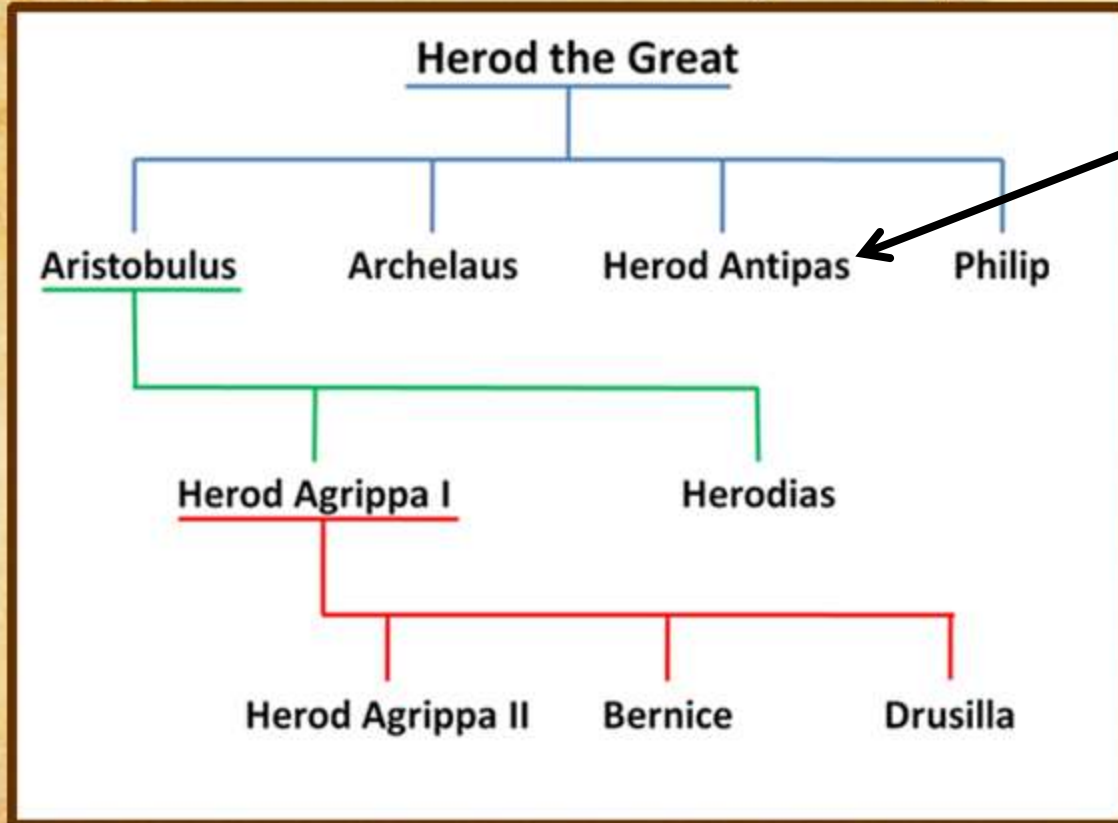
The Herodian Dynasty



Matthew 2:22a

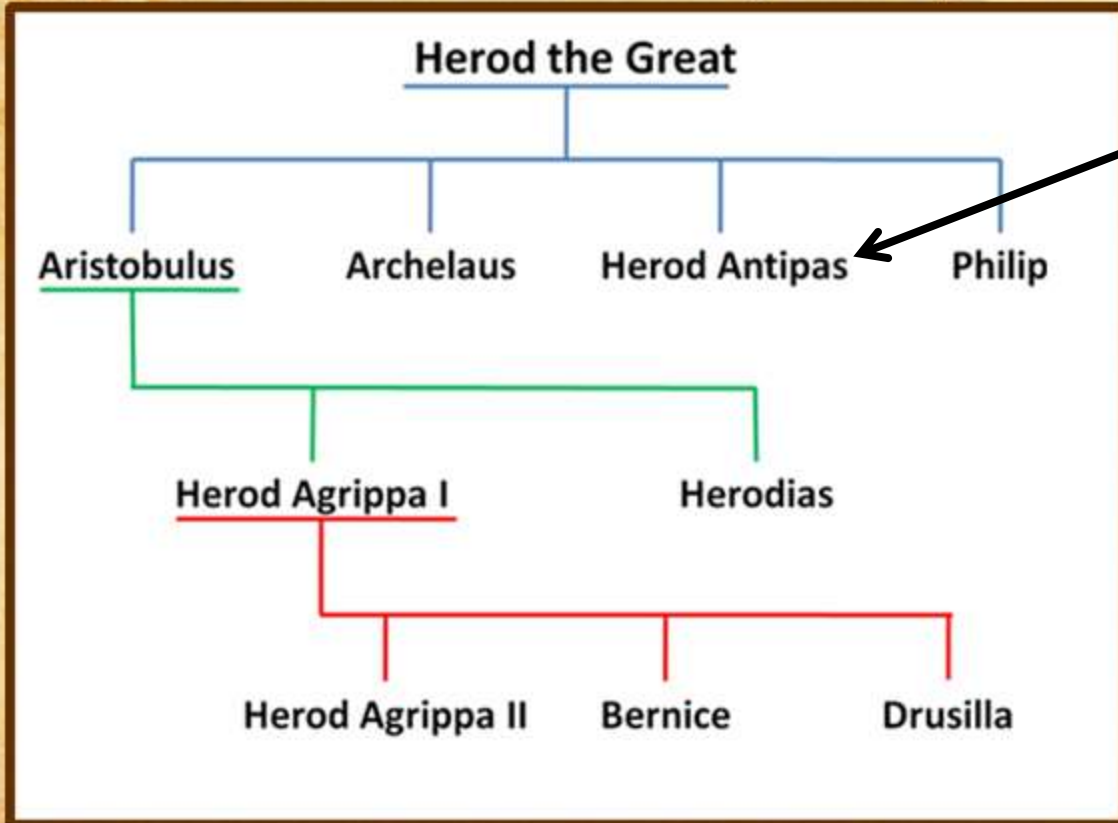
But when [Joseph] heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither...

The Herodian Dynasty



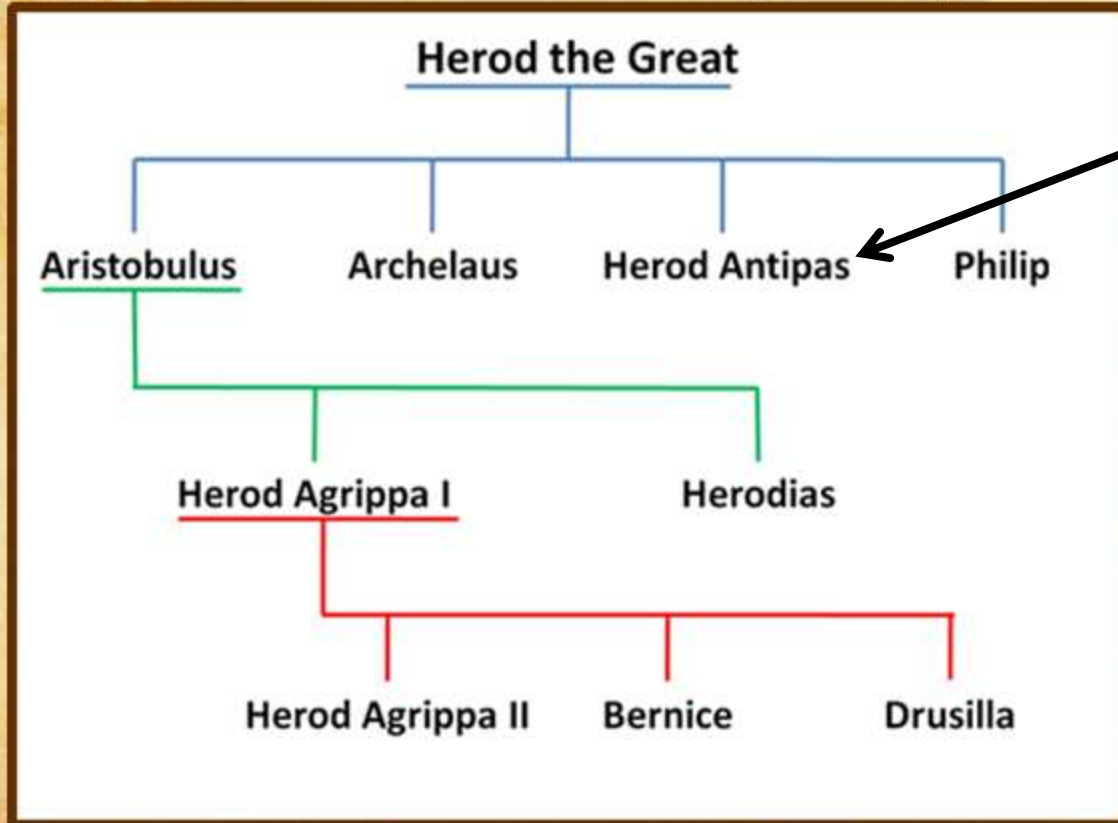
Herod Antipas was the tetrarch of Galilee during the time of Christ's ministry on earth.

The Herodian Dynasty



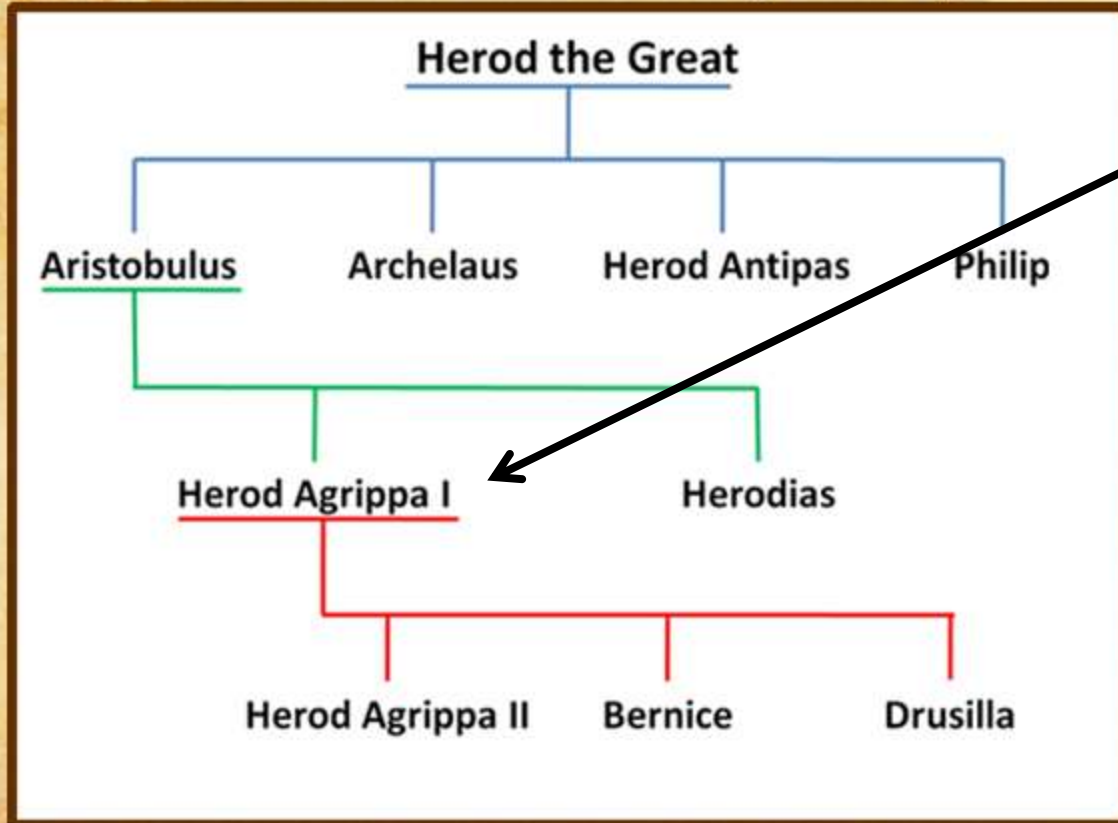
He was married to his niece, Herodias, who had been the wife of his brother Philip.

The Herodian Dynasty



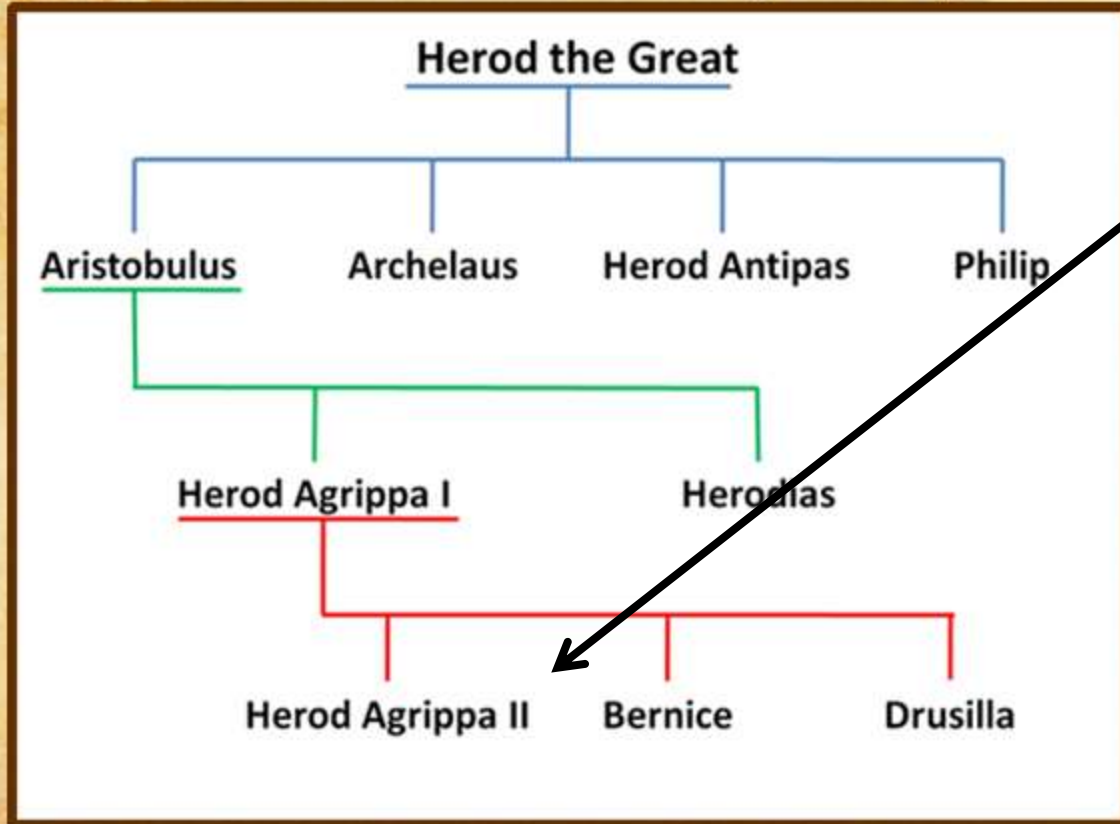
This is the Herod who beheaded John the Baptist, and mocked Jesus by putting him in “a gorgeous robe” (Luke 23).

The Herodian Dynasty



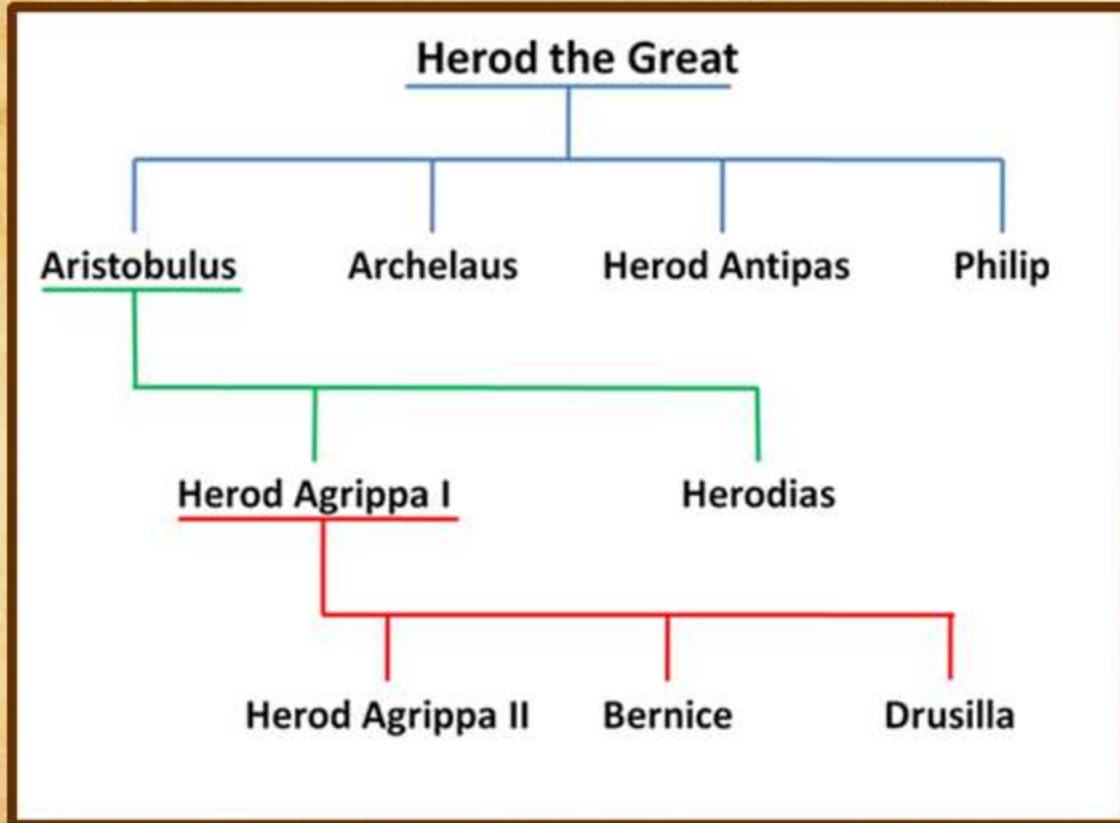
Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great, killed James and imprisoned Peter.

The Herodian Dynasty



He is the king who heard Paul's testimony.

The Herodian Dynasty



From Herod the Great to Agrippa, the Herodian dynasty lasted from 40 BC to AD 92.

Verses 14 to 21 reveal that Festus sought counsel from King Agrippa concerning Paul:



Acts 25:14-16

- ¹⁴ And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, saying,
There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix:
- ¹⁵ About whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed *me*, desiring to *have* judgment against him.
- ¹⁶ To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him.



Acts 25:17-21

- 17 Therefore, when they were come hither, without any delay on the morrow I sat on the judgment seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth.
- 18 Against whom when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed:
- 19 But had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.

- 20 And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked *him* whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters.
- 21 But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Caesar.

Acts 25:22

²² Then Agrippa said unto Festus,
I would also hear the man myself.

To morrow, said he, thou shalt hear
him.



In Caesarea

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Acts 25:23

And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth.

Acts 25:24-27

- ²⁴ And Festus said,
King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us,
ye see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have
dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and *also* here,
crying that he ought not to live any longer.
- ²⁵ But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death,
and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus,
I have determined to send him.
- ²⁶ Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord.
Wherefore I have brought him forth before you,
and specially before thee, O king Agrippa,
that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write.
- ²⁷ For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal
to signify the crimes *laid* against him.

Acts 26:1-3

- 1 Then Agrippa said unto Paul,
Thou art permitted to speak for thyself.
Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and
answered for himself:
- 2 I think myself happy, king Agrippa,
because I shall answer for myself this
day before thee touching all the things
whereof I am accused of the Jews:
- 3 Especially *because I know* thee to be
expert in all customs and questions
which are among the Jews:
wherefore I beseech thee to hear me
patiently.



Acts 26:4-5

- 4 My manner of life from my youth,
which was at the first among mine
own nation at Jerusalem,
know all the Jews;
- 5 Which knew me from the beginning,
if they would testify, that after the
most straitest sect of our religion I
lived a Pharisee.



Acts 26:4-5

- 4 My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews;
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straitest

- 1) exceedingly exact
- 2) careful

sect

- 1) the same word as “heresy”
- 2) a body of men following their own tenets.

Acts 26:4-5

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The Pharisees were the most precise and rigorous in interpreting the Mosaic law, and in observing even the more minute precepts of the law and tradition.

Thayer's Greek Lexicon

Acts 26:6-8

- 6 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers:
- 7 Unto which *promise* our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come.
For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.
- 8 Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?



Acts 26:9-11

- 9 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.
- 10 Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against *them*.
- 11 And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled *them* to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted *them* even unto strange cities.



Acts 26:12-15

- ¹² Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests,
- ¹³ At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.
- ¹⁴ And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, **Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.**
- ¹⁵ And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, **I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.**





Acts 26:16-18

- ¹⁶ But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;
- ¹⁷ Delivering thee from the people, and *from the* Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee,
- ¹⁸ To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from the* power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Acts 26:19-21

- ¹⁹ Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:
- ²⁰ But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.
- ²¹ For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.



Acts 26:22-23

- ²² Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:
- ²³ That Christ should suffer, *and* that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.



Acts 26:24-27

- ²⁴ And as he thus spake for himself,
Festus said with a loud voice,
Paul, thou art beside thyself;
much learning doth make thee mad.
- ²⁵ But he said, I am not mad, most noble
Festus; but speak forth the words of truth
and soberness.
- ²⁶ For the king knoweth of these things,
before whom also I speak freely:
for I am persuaded that none of these things
are hidden from him;
for this thing was not done in a corner.
- ²⁷ King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?
I know that thou believest.



Acts 26:24-27

- ²⁴ And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, **thou art beside thyself;** much learning doth make thee mad.
- ²⁵ But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness.
- ²⁶ For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.
- ²⁷ King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.

To be “beside yourself” is to have lost your understanding of what is real, or lost your mind.

Acts 26:24-27

- ²⁴ And as he thus spake for himself,
Festus said with a loud voice,
Paul, thou art beside thyself;
much learning doth make thee mad.
- ²⁵ But he said, I am not mad, most noble
Festus; but speak forth the words of truth
and soberness.
- ²⁶ For the king knoweth of these things,
before whom also I speak freely:
for I am persuaded that none of these things
are hidden from him;
for this thing was not done in a corner.
- ²⁷ King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?
I know that thou believest.

Here, to be “mad” is to be insane
or crazy.

Acts 26:28-29

- ²⁸ Then Agrippa said unto Paul,
Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.
- ²⁹ And Paul said, I would to God, that not only
thou, but also all that hear me this day, were
both almost, and altogether such as I am,
except these bonds.



Acts 26:30-32

³⁰ And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them:

³¹ And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.

³² Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar.



Acts 26:30-32

- ³⁰ And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them:
- ³¹ And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.
- ³² Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar.



End of Chapter 26



UP NEXT:
The Voyage to Rome

Questions to test your understanding of this lesson:

1. What name did Tertullus call Christians when he spoke to Governor Felix? (24:5)
2. What did Felix hope to get from Paul? (24:26)
3. How long was Paul kept in confinement BEFORE the new governor was appointed? (24:27)
4. What was the name of the new governor of Judaea? (24:27)
5. Why did the Jewish leaders want him to bring Paul back to Jerusalem? (25:3)
6. Who did Paul say he wanted to judge his case? (25:11)
7. Who was the king of Judaea at this time?
8. In Acts 26:20-21, why did Paul say the Jews wanted to kill him?
9. What did Festus say at the end of Paul's testimony? (26:24)
10. What did the king say after Paul's testimony? (26:28)

Each question is worth 10 points. Do NOT share your answers with other students.



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