

The Line of Herod the Great

When I first became a believer, I read through the gospels and, like most people, saw the name Herod several times and gave no thought to it. There are actually 5 different Herod's in Scripture, and a number of relatives of Herod the Great who figure into the isagogics of New Testament Scripture; therefore, it may be helpful to be able to sort through these different Herod's, as well as their wives and children.

The family of Herod originated from Edom (also known as Idumæa in the Greek) which ruled over Palestine from 46 B.C. to approximately 100 A.D. Prior to this, they had been forcibly converted to Judaism (around 125 B.C.). They are known for founding several cities and improving existing cities.

Prior to Herod, and, I think in his line (I am unsure about this), we have Antipas, who was appointed by the Romans as governor of Idumea and died in 78 B.C. His son (I believe) is Antipater. He was appointed the Procurator of Judea 47–43 B.C. by Julius Cæsar. Antipater's son, I believe, is Herod, who had 5 sons, giving us...



Herod the Great

Herod the Great (circa 62¹–4 B.C.) ruled over Palestine from 37–4 B.C. In my notes, I have that he was appointed by Mark Anthony as the Tetrarch of Galilee in 37 B.C. A Tetrarch, by the

¹ The World Book Encyclopedia lists this as 73 B.C. *The World Book Encyclopedia*; ©1983 by World Book, Inc.; Vol. 9, p. 198.

way, rules a fourth of a province and is often referred to as a king. He erected the Temple for the Jews, historically known as Herod's Temple (Matt. 2 Luke 1:5).

Herod managed to remain on friendly terms with the Roman emperors, which allowed him to remain as a ruler over Palestine for as long as he did (the Jews as a whole were very unhappy about Romans ruling over them, and many associated Herod more with the Romans than they did as a Jew like themselves).²

Herod the Great had 10 wives and a large number of children. I am unsure of the two Herod Philip's below.

Herod the Great is mentioned in Matt. 2 Luke 1:5. He is the Tetrarch of Galilee who sought to kill all of the children in order to kill the Messiah (Whom he apparently believed would displace him). Even though the idea of the modern Roman calendar was based upon the birth of Jesus Christ, it was flawed. Since Herod sought to kill off of the Jewish babies in order to kill the Christ child, this would mean that Jesus was born between 6–4 B.C.

I don't quite follow this, as the Temple of Herod would be found in Jerusalem, which is south of Galilee.

Herod's sons and their progeny:

- I. **Herod Antipas:** He is also known as *Antipas the Fox* and *Herod the Tetrarch*; and he is found in Matt. 14:1 Mark 6 Luke 3:1. He ruled as Tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea (which is smaller than, but roughly equivalent to Gad) from 4 B.C. to 39 A.D.

[Herodias](#) left [Herod Philip](#) to live with Herod Antipas as his wife instead. John the Baptizer had told him that it was unlawful for him to be married to his brother's wife (Herodias) and Herod Antipas seized John the Baptizer on behalf of Herodias (see Mark 6:17–18). Herod Antipas both feared and respected John the Baptizer, but, at the behest of his wife, he had John beheaded (see [Salome](#) below).

[Herodias](#) also persuaded him to request that the Roman emperor make him governor of Palestine. However, his nephew, [Herod Agrippa](#), make false accusations against him, and the Roman emperor banished him to Gaul (Herod Antipas died about a year later).

- II. **Herod Philip (Bösthos):** Herod Philip (Bösthos) is found in Matt. 14:3 Mark 6:17 Luke 3:19.

² The Edomites are first cousins to the Jews, and the Herod family had been converted to Judaism quite a bit earlier.

1. **Salome:** The daughter of Herodias and Herod Philip (not named in the New Testament, but called the daughter of Herodias) danced before Herod Antipas, her uncle. He offered her whatever she wanted, and she, instructed by her mother, asked for the head of John the Baptizer. Matt. 14:6–11
- III. **Herod Philip II:** Herod Philip II was the Tetrarch of Ituræa and Trachonitis (territories east of the Jordan). We find him mentioned only in Luke 3:1.
- IV. **Aristobulus:** Aristobulus is not mentioned in the New Testament; he had a son and a daughter:
1. **Herodias:** Herodias first married her uncle [Herod Philip \(Bösthos\)](#) (they had a daughter, [Salome](#), called the daughter of Herodias) and later married his brother Antipas the Fox ([Herod Antipas](#)), one of her other uncles. She is the one who asked for the head of John the Baptizer. We find her mentioned in Matt. 14:1–14 and Mark 6.
 2. **Herod Agrippa I:** Herod Agrippa I (circa 10 B.C.–44 A.D.) is the grandson of [Herod the Great](#). He both killed the Apostle James and seized and imprisoned Peter. God killed Herod Agrippa I for these things. Acts 12:1, 6, 18–24
 - (1) Herod Agrippa II: Herod Agrippa II (circa 27–100 A.D.) was not made king of Palestine because he was only 17 when his father died. However, when his uncle died in 50 A.D., Emperor Claudius made him king of Chaleis, which is an area in Lebanon. Paul spoke to him and Testis, and Agrippa told Paul, “You have almost persuaded me to become a Christian.” He was convinced that Paul should have been free all along. We find him in Acts 25:13 26
 - (2) Drusilla: Drusilla is the wife of Felix (the governor of Judea—Acts 23–24) and she is mentioned in Acts 24:24.
 - (3) Bernice: Bernice is found in Acts 25:13 26:30. She is the sister of Herod Agrippa II and the wife of Fetus (who was the governor of Judea after Felix—Acts 25–26).
- V. **Archelaus:** He ruled after Herod in Judea in 4 B.C.; he is found in Matt. 2:22.

Bibliography

Much of this, I took from my notes inside my Bible, which originally came from the study of the book of Matthew under R. B. Thieme Jr. This is a copy of notes which I had in my Bible, which were copied from my notes in a previous Bible, which were copied and condensed from other notes, which I took at a point where I knew nothing about Herod. I would guess that these ultimately came from Bob's lessons from Matt. 2. Mistakes were undoubtedly made when making these several transfers—I tried to correct everything from Scripture and from Durant's history. What was interesting about Thieme's teaching was, Herod was not made out to be a monster that we find Biblical authorities making him out to be—I think this is part of the hook that Bob used, but without sacrificing academic integrity.

The Story of Civilization; 3. Cæsar and Christ, by Will Durant; MJF Books, ©1971; p. .

The World Book Encyclopedia; ©1983 by World Book, Inc.; Vol. 9, pp. 198–199.