

Acts 12:1-5

About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. He killed James the brother of John with the sword, and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread. And when he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people. So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.

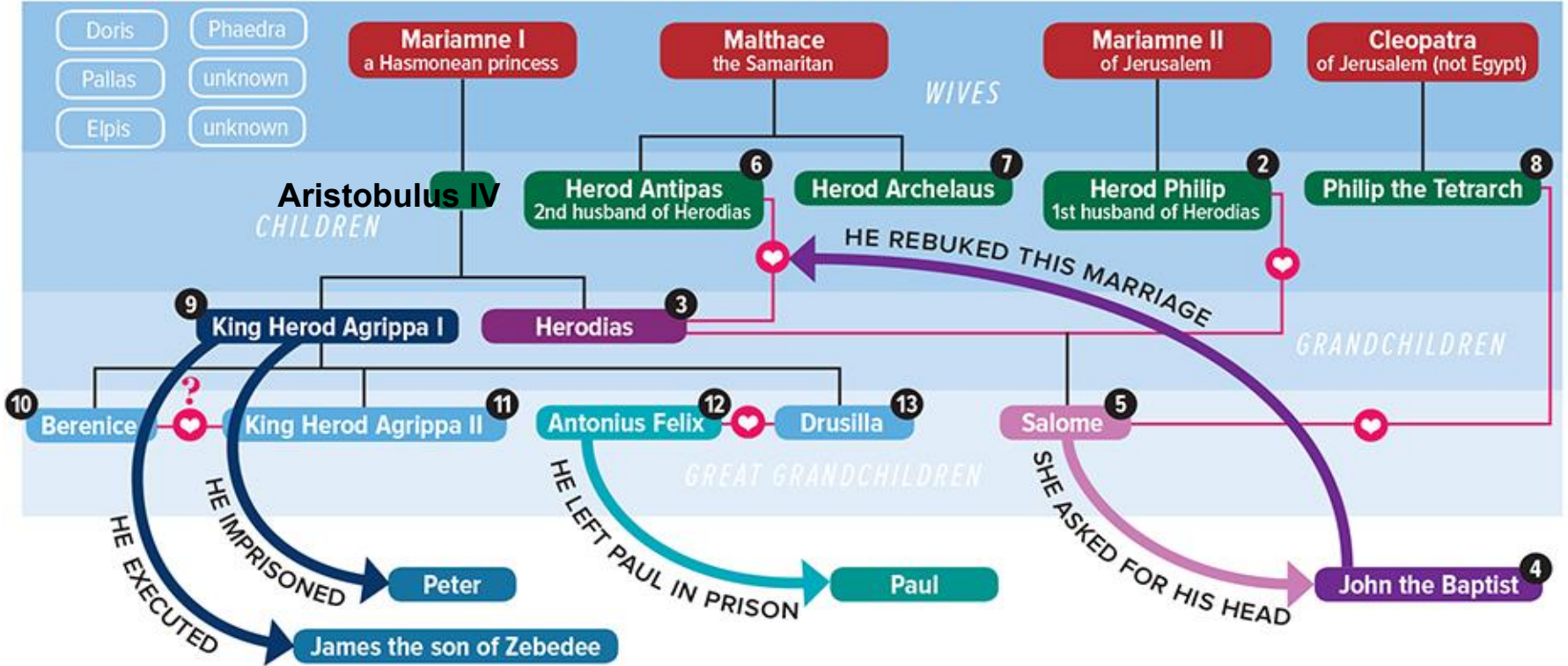
**Herod the Great**  
 Governor of Galilee (r. 47–37 B.C.E.)  
 King of the Jews (r. 37–4 B.C.E.)

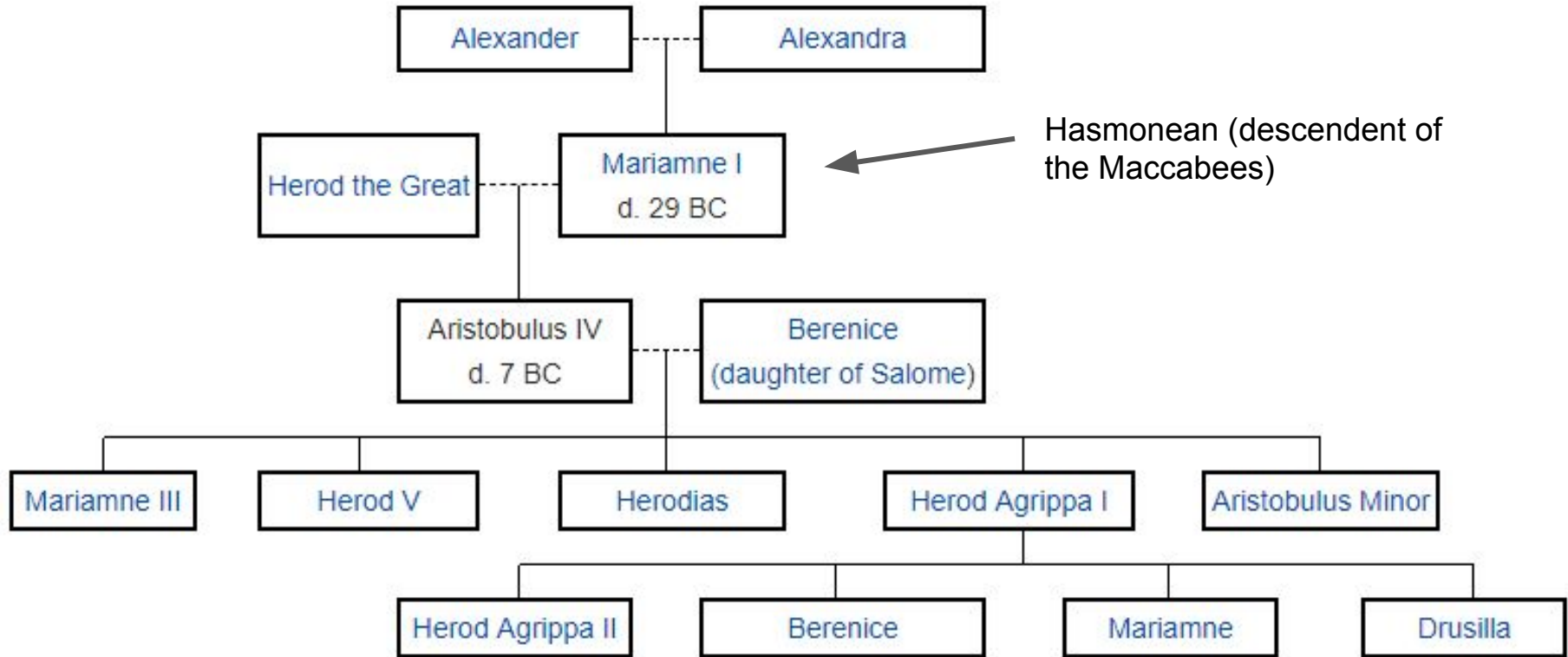
**Jesus**  
 HE TRIED TO KILL

*OTHER WIVES*

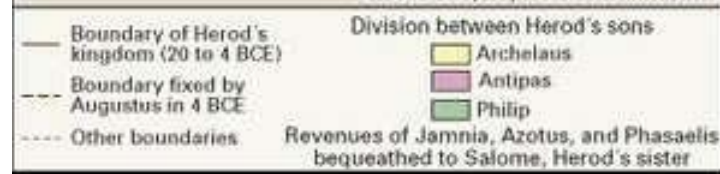
- Doris
- Phaedra
- Pallas
- unknown
- Elpis
- unknown

**Herod the Great's Family Tree**





Credit: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristobulus\\_IV](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristobulus_IV)



37 - 4 BC	Herod the Great	Hung out with Julius Caesar and Mark Antony. Tried to kill Jesus as a baby.
	Aristobulus IV (son of Herod the Great by Hasmonean princess) <u>Father of Herod Agrippa I</u>	Educated in Caesar Augustus's household.
4 BC - AD 6	Herod Archelaus (son of Herod the Great)	½ dad's land (Judea and Samaria) Jesus in Egypt. Replaced by Roman procurators (one of which was Pontius Pilate)
4 BC - AD 39	Herod Antipas (son of Herod the Great)	¼ dad's land. (Galilee and Perea) Jesus called him the Fox in Luke 13:32. Married Herodias, his brother's wife. Killed John the Baptist. Pontius Pilate sent Jesus to him when he was visiting Jerusalem.
4 BC - AD 34	Herod Philip the Tetrarch (son of Herod the Great)	¼ dad's land. (north and east of Galilee) Married his niece Salome.

<p>AD 37 - 44</p>	<p>Herod Agrippa I (Grandson of Herod the Great, son of Aristobulus)</p>	<p>Grew up with in Rome after father's execution. He was friends with Caligula and Claudius who expanded his land when they were emperors.</p> <p>More land than Herod the Great. Impressive statesman: worked to please the Jews under him by appealing to his Hasmonean ancestry and "conscientiously observing the law and now by persecuting the church" (Stott).</p> <p>Killed James, imprisoned Peter (Acts 12)</p>
<p>AD 50's - died AD 93</p>	<p>Herod Agrippa II (Great-grandson of Herod the Great, son of Herod Agrippa I)</p>	<p>Interviewed Paul in Caesarea (Acts 25-26)</p>

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“About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church.”

Seemingly to bolster his control by pleasing the Jewish leaders.

The “some” here are the apostles. He tried to stop the movement by killing the leaders.

“He killed James the brother of John with the sword”

Agrippa I beheaded James (son of Zebedee, brother of John - “Thunder Brothers”). Peterson notes, “use of *the sword*, rather than any other means of execution, suggests that Herod may have seen the Christian movement as being also a political threat to his regime” (Peterson).

It is said that one of the guards was so moved by James that he chose to be executed with him (The Voice of the Martyrs).

“when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also.”

Peterson notes that one reason the people were willing to allow the apostles, who had generally been viewed favorably by the public, to be arrested and killed was due to Peter's (and the church's) new relationship with the Gentiles.

This is probably also why Luke arranges his writing of Acts the way he does. John brought up the question of why does Luke jump around in time when retelling historical events. I think the reason why is because it makes for a more understandable story. He's helping to make the connections between historical events.

“This was during the days of Unleavened Bread.”

“The Feast of Unleavened Bread followed immediately after Passover and lasted one week, during which time the Israelites ate no bread with yeast in remembrance of their haste in preparing for their exodus from Egypt.”

(<https://www.gotquestions.org/Jewish-festivals.html>)

“And when he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people.”

To be clear, that's a lot of soldiers for one guy. It's almost like Peter has had a history with prisons...

He may or may not have been intending a trial before executing him.

“So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.”

10,000? All praying together, but not together.

“On the one side, the king exercises his own political authority to bind and humiliate Peter in a public prison. On the other side, the church, still based in a private home\*, appeals - through prayer - to superior divine authority for Peter’s release and vindication. Peter’s deliverance is presented as an answer to this prayer, even though those who interceded for him were actually surprised by the outcome (vv 15-17).”

\*According to John Piper, there was more than one home (which a nice one could have 50 - 60 people if they packed in). These were small pockets of people spread out through the city but connected.