

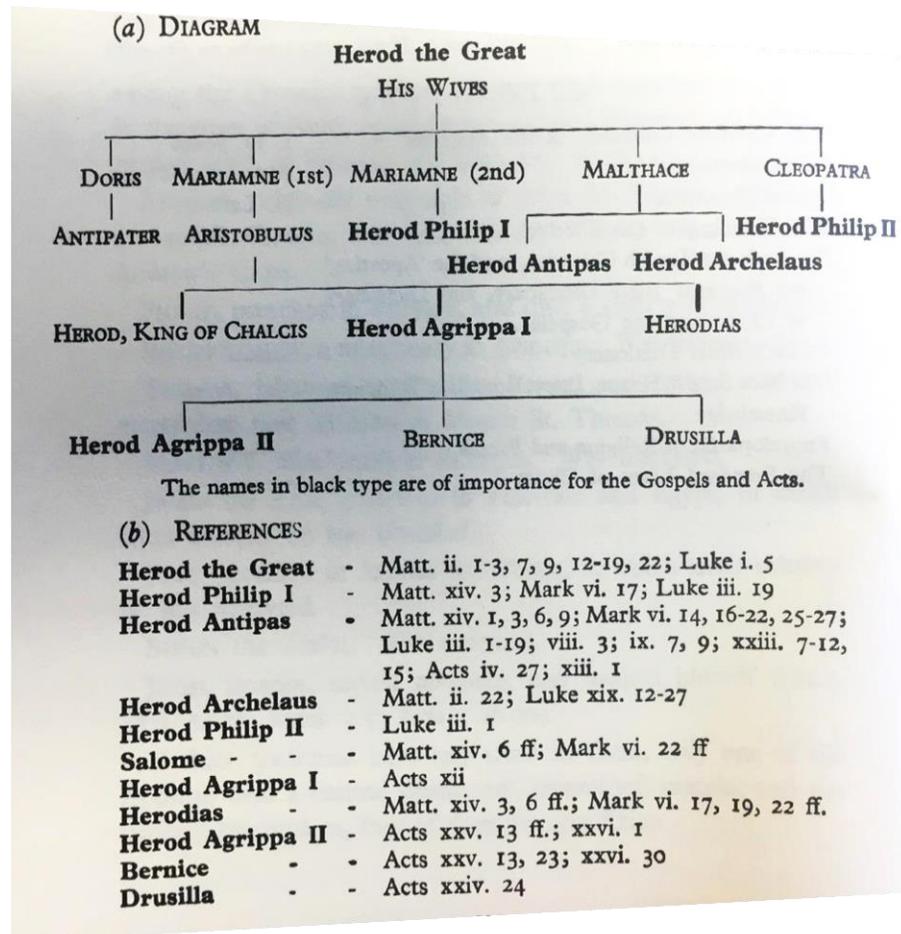
Jesus Christ's work through the Apostles in Judea and Samaria

Persecution fans the flame

".... and ye shall be witness unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judae'a, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." **Acts 1:8**

Introduction: We close Acts chapter 11 with Paul and Barnabas leaving Antioch to deliver relief to the saints in Judea. Now for the people that make up the church are called Christians. Distinction between Judaism and Christianity are becoming more evident. Now we will see persecution causing more growth among these Gentile converts. This church growth will be a launching pad for Paul's numerous missionary journeys. In this chapter we will see Peter's last big involvement in the book of Acts till we arrive at the Jerusalem council in Acts chapter 15.

The Herodian Family



I. Persecution of the Church

A. Drought in the Land 11:28

B. Demise of James 2

1. Sons of Zebedee **Matthew 4:21**
2. James the Greater (Son of Zebedee)
3. James the Less (Son of Alphaeus)
4. James the half-brother of Jesus (Son of Joseph)
5. His death was no surprise to God

Note - Though events in life may seem shocking to us, they are no surprise to God

C. Detainment of Peter 3-4

1. Motives Herod had – popularity
2. Moment Herod chose – Days of unleavened bread
3. Method Herod used
 - a. Apprehended Him
 - b. Put him in prison
 - c. Delivered him to 4 Quaternions of Soldiers (16)

Note – 4 during any given shift, 2 outside and 2 with Peter

II. Prayer of the Church 5

A. Peter was kept in Prison

B. Pray was made by the church

1. Without ceasing
2. Individually
3. Collectively

C. Luke 18:1-8

Note – the church tapped into the divine resource of prayer

1. Judge
 - a. Feared Not God
 - b. Feared Not Man “regarded”
2. Widow
 - a. Dire situation
 - b. Persecuted
3. Persistence Pays Off
 - a. **Luke 18:1** “that men ought always to pray and not to faint;”

III. Perfect timing of God 6-10

A. Announcement to Peter

1. “that same night”
2. Mini Gospel Picture
 - a. Messenger 7
 - b. “light shined in the prison” 7
 - c. “smote Peter on the side” 7 -- “Wake Up!”

- d. *"his chains fell off his hands"* 7
- e. *"follow me"* 8

B. Amazement of Peter

- 1. We should not be surprised when God does the miraculous

C. Access Given to Peter

- 1. God can open any door

IV. Product of Praying People

A. Realized God's Graciousness (Peter) 11

- 1. Delivered from Herod
- 2. Delivered from the expectation of the Jews

B. Returned back to work 12

- 1. **His first inclination was to the people (church)**
- 2. People continued to pray
 - a. **Matt 18:19-20**
 - b. **2 Chronicles 20:4**
 - c. **Ester 4:16**
 - d. **"While I was yet speaking" Isa 65:24**
 - e. **"While I was yet speaking" Dan 9:20-21**

C. Rejoicing in the Lord

- 1. How much joy comes from answered prayer?
- 2. How much joy comes from God's prevailing?
- 3. Our disbelief when God actually moves on our behalf

V. Plunge Downward From Pride 18-25

A. Herod's examination 19

B. Herod's displeasure 20

C. Herod's pride 21,22

D. Isa 42:8

E. God does not like pride at all

Word of God Grew and Multiplied 24 - 25