

The Gospel According to

SAINT MATTHEW

SAINT MARK

SAINT LUKE

SAINT JOHN

CHAPTER 3, VERSES 1, 4-6	CHAPTER 1, VERSES 4-6	CHAPTER 3, VERSES 4-6	NOTHING RECORDED
<p>3:1 - In those days¹ came John² the Baptist³, preaching⁴ in the wilderness⁵ of Judæa⁶.</p> <p>3:4 - And the same John² had his raiment⁷ of camel's hair⁸, and a leathern⁹ girdle¹⁰ about his loins¹¹; and his meat¹² was locusts¹³ and wild honey¹⁴.</p> <p>3:5 - Then went out¹⁵ to him Jerusalem¹⁶, and all Judæa⁶, and all the region round about¹⁷ Jordan¹⁸.</p> <p>3:6 - And were baptized¹⁹ of him in Jordan¹⁸, confessing²⁰ their sins²¹.</p>	<p>1:4 - John² did baptize²² in the wilderness⁵, and preach²³ the baptism²⁴ of repentance²⁵ for the remission²⁶ of sins²¹.</p> <p>1:5 - And there went out¹⁵ unto him all the land of Judæa⁶, and they of Jerusalem¹⁶, and were all baptized¹⁹ of him in the river of Jordan¹⁸, confessing²⁰ their sins²¹.</p> <p>1:6 - And John² was clothed⁷ with camel's hair⁸, and with a girdle¹⁰ of a skin⁹ about his loins¹¹; and he did eat locusts¹³ and wild honey¹⁴;</p>	<p>3:4 - Now in the fifteenth year²⁷ of the reign²⁸ of Tiberius²⁹ Cæsar³⁰, Pontius³¹ Pilate³² being governor³³ of Judæa⁶, and Herod³⁴ being tetrarch³⁵ of Galilee³⁶, and his brother³⁷ Philip³⁸ tetrarch³⁵ of Ituræa³⁹ and of the region of Trachonitis⁴⁰, and Lysanias⁴¹ the tetrarch³⁵ of Abilene⁴²,</p> <p>3:5 - Annas⁴³ and Caiaphas⁴⁴ being the high priests⁴⁵, the word⁴⁶ of God⁴⁷ came unto John² the son of Zacharias⁴⁸ in the wilderness⁵.</p> <p>3:6 - And he came into all the country about¹⁷ Jordan¹⁸, preaching the baptism²⁴ of repentance²⁵ for the remission²⁶ of sins²¹;</p>	

CHRONOLOGY: Between 23 October 26CE and 27 November 26CE

LOCATION: The Wilderness of Judea and Bethabara on the Jordan River

COMMENTARY: John the son of Zacharias, known to us as John the Baptist, starts his ministry. It is the 15th year of the reign of Caesar Tiberius. John is preaching in the desert area east of Jerusalem. He is dressed in the clothing of the poor. He has rough clothing made from camel hair, and a leather belt or girdle. Consistently, he also eats the food of the poor desert dwellers. He eats locust, probably dried in a salt brine and dipped in wild honey. The Jews would have recognized his attire and behavior as a symbol for a prophet of God. People came from the adjacent areas to hear him preach. He preaches the Gospel of Repentance for the remission of sins. It is a happy message, that brings hope. He invites those confessing their sins to covenant in the waters of Baptism. Luke sets the stage for John's ministry by outlining the political and religious rulers of the time.

FOOTNOTES:

- 1- **In those days** – This phrase, "in those days", is used by Matthew as an anchor point for dating, i.e. in the days of John the Baptist' ministry. Unfortunately, this is a weak anchor point from our perspective. Perhaps John was so renowned during his ministry that the people would easily equate the dates to "those" days. Luke gives us a much more definitive anchor point for dating John's ministry. See footnote #27 of this chapter for Luke's dating. Though Luke provides a better anchor point, it is not without problems. Trying to place dates to events that took place well over 2,000 years ago is always difficult. The more significant the anchor point, the better the dating. Elder McConkie was confident in his dating. He wrote, "It is summer time. We are in Judea. The year is A.D. 26. In six months Jesus will begin his ministry, but for now the day belongs to John. All eyes focus on him; for a brief period the kingdom will rest with him alone. He will prepare the way." (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 249).
- 2- **John** – The name "John" is translated from the Greek word "Ἰωάννης" or "Iōannēs". Translated literally it means "Jehovah is a gracious giver". The name has Hebrew origins. It comes from the Hebrew word "יְהוָה חָנָן;" or "Yēhōwchānan". The Hebrew word translated literally is "Jehovah has graced".

John was one of the great servants of God who ancient prophets had foretold during the days of the Old Testament. He was promised to come and prepare the way for the Messiah. Isaiah wrote, "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:3). Malachi recorded the Lord's revelation to him about John. He wrote, "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." (Malachi 3:1). It is quite interesting that the name Malachi means messenger. "The words "my messenger".... in Hebrew malachi, which is also the name of the prophet who pronounced the prophecy of the messenger who would prepare the way of the Messiah. Jesus himself explained that the messenger was John the Baptist (Matthew 11:10)." (The Four Gospels, Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 73).



John was to prepare the way of the Lord's earthly ministry as well as His second coming. This would be done in several ways, including but not limited to, the following:

1. John would turn people's thoughts towards **repentance** and righteous living. This is the "Good News" of the gospel, that we might repent. Such repentance is made possible by the Messiah. John paved the way for the Messiah in that he helped people realize their need for forgiveness. So necessary is this process of repentance to our salvation that Jesus illustrated the process by coming to John for His own baptism. Though He himself did not need forgiveness, He understood that exaltation is achieved by strict obedience and humility towards the Laws of Heaven. Nephi wrote, "Wherefore, I would that ye should remember that I have spoken unto you concerning that prophet which the Lord showed unto me, that should baptize the Lamb of God, which should take away the sins of the world. And now, if the Lamb of God, he being holy, should have need to be baptized by water, to fulfil all righteousness, O then, how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, by water! And now, I would ask of you, my beloved brethren, wherein the Lamb of God did fulfil all righteousness in being baptized by water? Know ye not that he was holy? But notwithstanding he being holy, he showeth unto the children of men that, according to the flesh he humbled himself before the Father, and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments. Wherefore, after he was baptized with water the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove." (2nd Nephi 31:4-8).



Speaking of the gospel of repentance, the Lord taught Joseph Smith, "Which gospel is the gospel of repentance and of baptism, and the remission of sins, and the law of carnal commandments, which the Lord in his wrath caused to continue with the house of Aaron among the children of Israel until John, whom God raised up, being filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. For he was baptized while he was yet in his childhood, and was ordained by the angel of God at the time he was eight days old unto this power, to overthrow the kingdom of the Jews, and to make straight the way of the Lord before the face of his people, to prepare them for the coming of the Lord, in whose hand is given all power." (Doctrine and Covenants 84:27-28).

2. John held the **Priesthood** of Aaron, and therefore was commissioned to administer the ordinance of baptism. He prepared people for the Messiah by helping them enter the **covenant of baptism**. Lehi saw John's work during the meridian of time and his son recorded, "And he spake also concerning a prophet who should come before the Messiah, to prepare the way of the Lord— Yea, even he should go forth and cry in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight; for there standeth one among you whom ye know not; and he is mightier than I, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. And much spake my father concerning this thing. And my father said he should baptize in Bethabara, beyond Jordan; and he also said he should baptize with water; even that he should baptize the Messiah with water. And after he had baptized the Messiah with water, he should behold and bear record that he had baptized the Lamb of God, who should take away the sins of the world." (1st Nephi 10:7-10).



John prepared the way of the Messiah in the last days, as well, by restoring the Priesthood of Aaron. Joseph Smith recorded that John the Baptist appeared to him and Oliver Cowdery and conferred upon them the Priesthood of Aaron. John said, "Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness." (Doctrine and Covenants 13). Almost immediately thereafter, Joseph and Oliver were commanded to baptize one another. Joseph wrote, "Accordingly we went and were baptized. I baptized him first, and afterwards he baptized me—after which I laid my hands upon his head and ordained him to the Aaronic Priesthood, and afterwards he laid his hands on me and ordained me to the same Priesthood—for so we were commanded." (Joseph Smith History 1:71).



3. John **taught** and prepared many of the Messiah's disciples. "John the Baptist came first to prepare the way for the Messiah, and he helped train and teach future apostles, for example, John and Andrew and possibly others" (The Four Gospels - Verse by Verse, D. Kelley Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 75). He also trained the leaders of the restoration. He taught Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on the banks of the Susquehanna.

John prepared for his mission by submission and repentance. He was called, but exercised his own agency in fulfilling that call. "We know that John was in the desert, for a period of trial and testing and training - perhaps not much different from Jesus' forty days of fasting and testing in the wilderness, as he began his ministry - but we do not know much else about his early life. The New Testament is not a biography of Jesus, let alone John. The idea that our Lord's forerunner was a Nazarite for life, had never cut his hair or married, and that he lived always in the deserts is speculation that cannot be true. It is true John did not drink wine or strong drink; that he went into the desert for a testing period before his ministry; that while there he ate locusts and wild honey; and that he came forth among the people wearing what was in their minds the prophetic garb, raiment woven from camel's hair, held in place by a leather girdle. We suppose this mode of dress was simply to alert the people to his prophetic status, for the period of his ministry was to be short, and he needed to attract as much attention as possible. That he was married, had children, and lived as normal a life as his ministerial assignments permitted, we cannot doubt." (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 251). It goes to reason that John would have fulfilled all of the commandments required for exaltation. It makes sense that he would have been married and had offspring, though we have no record to confirm such a statement.

- 3- **Baptist** – The word "Baptist" is translated from the Greek word "βαπτιστής" or "baptistēs". It means one who administers the rite of Baptism. "Some manuscripts (i.e. Sinaiticus), for which "John the Baptist" has become a fixed expression, insert the definite article Iohannes, so that the reading becomes 'John-the-Baptizing-One appeared'; others (e.g. Vaticanus), after making this insertion, eliminate the 'and' after 'in the wilderness' to smooth out the grammar." (The Gospel According to Mark 1-8, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 150).

The term "Baptist" was not part of John's name, but rather a description of his work. It is not unlike saying, "Mark the Blacksmith" or "Tom the Gardner". John was a missionary at heart. He spent his day preaching, converting and baptizing. Baptism is the culmination of one's initial conversion to the gospel, and surely doesn't represent the culmination of spiritual progress. Rather, it represents a vital beginning. "In pre-NT Greek, including the LXX, this verb means 'to dip, plunge, or immerse' and can be used, for example, of dipping a cup in a wine bowl, sinking a ship, or plunging a sword into someone's body. It can also have a figurative sense, being used, for example, for the immersion of people in various sorts of evils." (The Gospel According to Mark 1-8, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 150). When we are baptized we covenant with God to follow him. Symbolically, we immerse ourselves in his ways and commandments. Baptism is further discussed in footnotes #19, #22 and #24 of this chapter.

- 4- **preaching** – The word "preaching" is translated from the Greek word "κηρύσσω" or "kēryssō". It means to be a herald, or to officiate as a herald. It also means to publish or proclaim openly. "This verb is derived from the Greek noun 'keryx', 'proclaimer' or 'herald'; in latter times the verb came into Hebrew Aramaic as a loanword. The herald's office was an important one throughout the ancient world, but the verb keryssein has particularly important background in the OT." (The Gospel According to Mark 1-8, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 150).

"John came in a day of spiritual darkness and apostasy. The world was ruled by Rome, and Rome was the world. Everything that was carnal, sensual, and devilish was enshrined - it is not too strong a statement to say worshipped - as part of the imperial way of life. Adultery, incest, abortion, all were a way of life among the Romans. There were no accepted standards of morality and decency, and little or no belief in the immortality of the soul. All the gods of all the nations of the empire were revered and worshipped in the capital city, and the emperor and others were defied and adorned as gods. Sacrifices were offered on the great altar in Herod's Temple to the emperor and for the well-being of the empire. The Jews themselves - in general and as a people - no longer walked in the light that once was theirs." (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 250). Amazingly, not all was lost. There was still hope, regardless of their fallen state.

Hope starts with the simple, almost straightforward process, of teaching the word of God. The word is a powerful force among the children of God. It is accompanied by the Holy Ghost who bears testimony of all truth. Alma learned this simple truth, "...the preaching of the word had a great tendency to lead the people to do that which was just—yea, it had had more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword, or anything else, which had happened unto them—therefore Alma thought it was expedient that they should try the virtue of the word of God." (Alma 31:5). Because all salvation and repentance is made possible through Jesus, He is often referred to as "the word". It is through the word that we have hope. Speaking of the Messiah, Isaiah wrote, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;" (Isaiah 61:1). This was the state of Judæa during the time of John. They were captive to sin, and broken through their own disobedience.

John was called to preach and prepare the people for salvation. He did so under the authority of heaven. God has taught, "Again I say unto you, that it shall not be given to any one to go forth to preach my gospel, or to build up my church, except he be ordained by some one who has authority, and it is known to the church that he has authority and has been regularly ordained by the heads of the church." (Doctrine and Covenants 42:11). John was set apart and consequently given authority to preach and prepare for the Messiah. The Doctrine and Covenants reveals, "For he was baptized while he was yet in his childhood, and was ordained by the angel of God at the time he was eight days old unto this power, to overthrow the kingdom of the Jews, and to make straight the way of the Lord before the face of his people, to prepare them for the coming of the Lord, in whose hand is given all power." (Doctrine and Covenants 84:24). Even so, John had years of personal preparation in addition to a call and authority. So it is with us. The Lord commanded, "But purify your hearts before me; and then go ye into all the world, and preach my gospel unto every creature who has not received it;" (Doctrine and Covenants 112:28).

5 - **wilderness** – The word "wilderness" is translated from the Greek word "ἐρημος" or "erēmos". It means a solitary, lonely, desolate or uninhabited. The wilderness symbolizes sin, danger, the absence of spirit, and covenants (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 192). Coming out of wilderness is symbolic for abandoning sin. Symbolically, John was coming out of a lost and sinful society. He was abandoning their ways and preaching a new way of living. In a literal sense, John lived in the Judean wilderness. He literally came forth from the wilderness to preach the repentance.

6 - **Judæa** – The word "Judæa" is translated from the Greek word "Ιουδαία" or "Ioudaia". Translated literally, it means "he shall be praised". In reference to this footnote, the word refers to southern portion of Palestine lying on this side of the Jordan and the Dead Sea, to distinguish it from Samaria, Galilee, Peraea, and Idumæa. It may also be referring to the Roman province of Judæa. The Roman Province of Judæa includes the region of Judæa with Samaria and Idumæa. The question is, what does this footnote refer to, the Roman province of Judæa or the geographical region of Judæa? I would assume the later.



7 - **raiment** – The word "raiment" is translated from the Greek word "ἔνδυμα" or "endyma". It means "a garment", "raiment", "cloak" or "an outer garment". Clothing symbolizes one vocation and/or material circumstances (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, pages 34-35). "Down through the ages, ascetics have worn rough and uncomfortable clothing as a sign of penitence...for example, the 'clothing feom trees' (= leaves or bark) worn by the hermit Bannus in Josephus' Life and the hair shirt of the middle ages." (The Gospel According to Mark 1-8, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 151).

8 - **Camel's hair** – The phrase "camel's hair" is translated from the Greek phrase "κάμηλος θρίξ" or "kamēlos thrix". It means literally camel hair. The "camel" symbolizes humility, obedience, and docility (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 28). While, "hair" symbolizes beauty, holiness, life, mourning, shame, strength, and temptation. (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 67). "Camel's hair is clipped from the animal's neck, back, and hump and woven into a coarse, durable, rough, and often itchy cloth like material and used for clothing." (LDS Bible Dictionary, "Camel's Hair"). It was not the clothing of preference. The rich preferred silks and linens. The poor were force to use cheaper clothing like camel's hair. The Essenes believed in wearing clothing made from resources made available to them in the desert. Raiment from Camel's hair did not include the camel's hide. Elder Talmage wrote, "The garment of camel's hair was not the camel's skin with the hair on, which would be too heavy to wear, but raiment woven of camel's hair..." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 120). Clothing made from camel hair was typical among them. "The 'raiment of camel's hair' was a coarse, rough outer garment, such as is still worn by the Arabs. It is made of the thin coarse hair of the camel. Some think, because Elijah is called 'a hairy man' in 2 Kings i,8, that he wore a garment of this sort. A rough garment seems to have been characteristic of a prophet." (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, page 333).

9 - **leathern** – The word "leathern" is translated from the Greek word "δερμάτινος" or "dermatinos". It means "leathern" or "to be made of skin". Skin symbolizes that from which it is take. To wear the skin of something, i.e. leather, is to take upon one its power or attributes. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 153). We might assume the leather to be taken from camel hide; however, we have no indication as to where the hide came from. Any leather would have been considered a material of the poor, and camel would have furthered that symbolic message.



10 - **girdle** – The word "girdle" is translated from the Greek word "ζώνη" or "zōnē". The word means "a girdle" or "a belt", serving not only to gird on flowing garments but also, since it was hollow, to carry money in. A girdle symbolizes binding, the circle of life, chastity, and covenants. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, pages 73-74). "The girdle is one of the most useful articles of Eastern costume, and frequently the most ornamental of them all. With

the long dress of the Orientals it becomes a necessity, since it would be difficult to walk or run unless the dress were tightened...It is also thought to give strength to the body while engaged in severe bodily labor or exercise, and hence the word is sometimes used figuratively to denote strength...Girdles are of various sizes and are made of different materials, from calico to cashmere. The rich use silk or linen, and sometimes decorate their girdle with gold silver, and precious stones. The poor have them of coarser materials, leather being very commonly used." (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, page 162).

Girdles were commonly worn by the king's forerunner or crier. Since he could not run in the robes worn by men of that era, a girdle allowed him to "tuck" up the loose garments under the girdle, which is wrapped around one's loins. Thus, he was able to run ahead of the king and clear the way. Hence, when the Lord says "girdle up thy loins", he is asking that we prepare ourselves for the work. (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, page 163).

- 11 - **loins** – The word "loins" is translated from the Greek word "ὀσφύς" or "osphys". It means the hip. Others define the loins as the lower ribs, the pelvis, and lower back. The Hebrews used the word metaphorically for posterity and reproduction. The loins represented the place where the generative power (semen) resided.
- 12 - **meat** – The word "meat" is translated from the Greek word "τροφή" or "trophē". It means food or nourishment. Symbolically, it represents the sustaining of mortal life. If the food is good, it represents a life of prosperity. If the food is bad, it represents a life of evil and wickedness.

- 13 - **locust** – The word "locust" is translated from the Greek word "ἀκρίς" or "akris". It means a locust. Locust symbolize destruction, famine, and insignificance. (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 100). "A locust, particularly that species which especially infests oriental countries, stripping fields and trees. Numberless swarms of them almost every spring are carried by the wind from Arabia into Palestine, and having devastated that country, migrate to regions farther north, until they perish by falling into the sea. The Orientals accustomed to feed upon locusts, either raw or roasted and seasoned with salt (or prepared in other ways), and the Israelites also were permitted to eat them." (Strong's Concordance of the Bible).



The Lord proclaimed locust to be a clean food and acceptable before him. "Even these of them ye may eat; the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind." (Leviticus 11:22).

The Locust was a normal part of the diet during the days of John the Baptist, "though usually by the poorer classes only." The Locust were prepared in various ways; "they are plunged into salt boiling water, dried in the sun, and eaten with butter, but only by the poorest beggars." Of John the Baptist diet, Elder Talmage wrote, "His only food was the locusts which leaped or flew on the bare hills, and the honey of wild bees which he found, here and there, in the cliffs of the rocks, and his only drink a draught of water from some rocky hollow. Locusts are still the food of the poor in many parts of the East. 'All the Bedouins of Arabia, and the inhabitants of towns in Nedj and Hedjaz, are accustomed to eat them,' says Burckhardt. 'I have seen at Medina and Tayi, locust shops, where they are sold by measure. In Egypt and Nubia they are eaten only by the poorest beggars. The Arabs, in preparing them for eating, throw them alive into boiling water, with which a good deal of salt has been mixed, taking them out after a few minutes, and drying them in the sun. The head, feet, and wings, are then torn off, the bodies cleansed from the salt, and perfectly dried. They are sometimes eaten boiled in butter, or spread on unleavened bread mixed with butter.' In Palestine, they are eaten only by the Arabs on the extreme frontiers; elsewhere they are looked on with disgust and loathing, and only the very poorest use them. Tristram, however, speaks of them as 'very palatable.' 'I found them very good,' says he, 'when eaten after the Arab fashion, stewed with butter. They tasted somewhat like shrimps, but with less flavour.' In the wilderness of Judea, various kinds abound at all seasons, and spring up with a drumming sound, at every step, suddenly spreading their bright hind wings, of scarlet, crimson, blue, yellow, white, green, or brown, according to the species. They were 'clean,' under the Mosaic Law, and hence could be eaten by John without offence." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, pages 120-121). "The fact that John ate this kind of food illustrates the extreme poverty of the forerunner of Christ, and shows the destination he suffered by living in the wilderness far away from the haunts of men." (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, page 333).

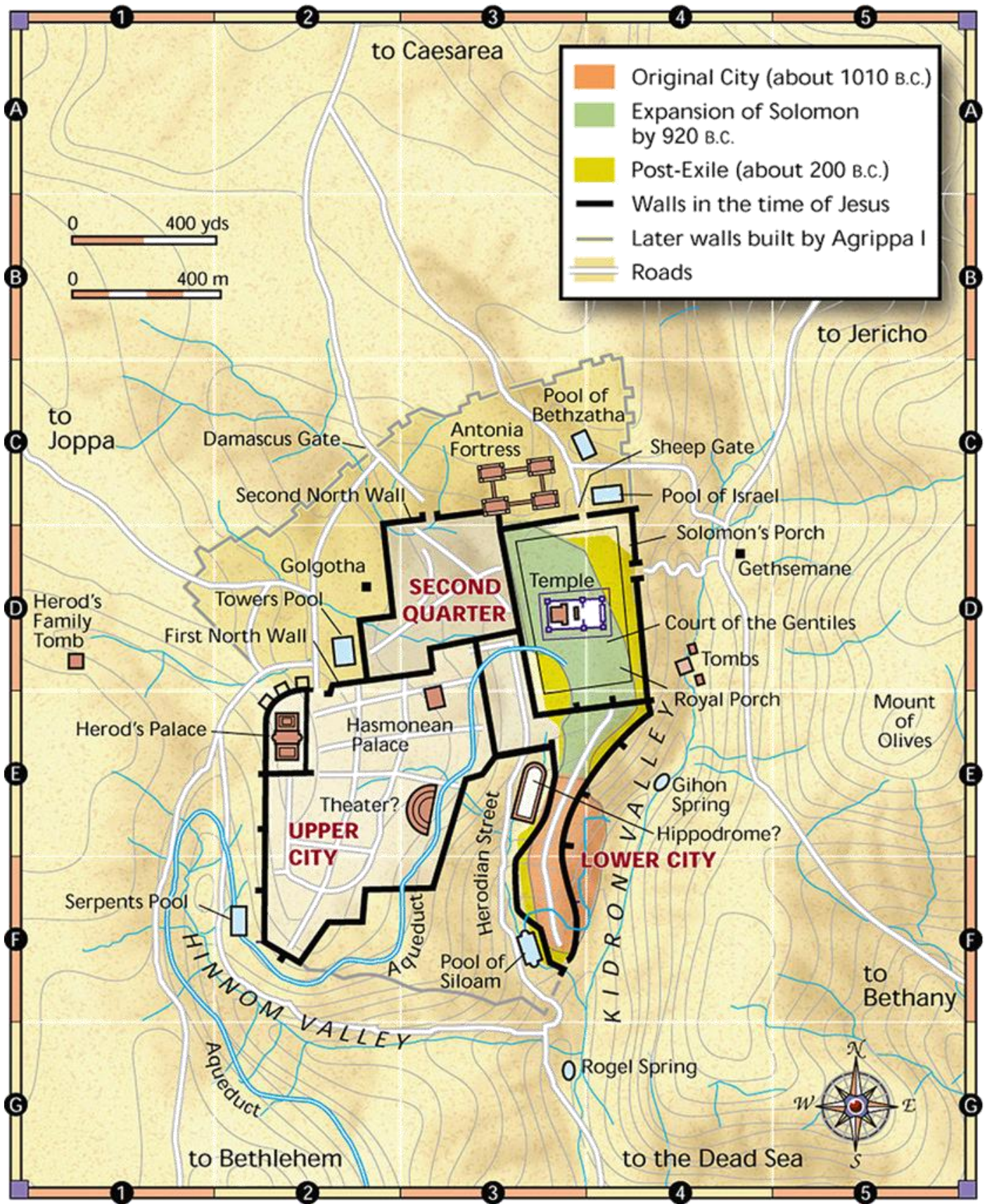
Some have proposed that John did not eat locust at all. They argue that John ate carob pods. Albright clarifies, "locusts was a common item of diet among Arabs in the Near and Middle East to this day. The vitamin content of the insect is high. There is no basis for the identification of the word with 'carob', the pods of the carob tree, known sometimes as 'St. John's bread'." (Matthew - A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, page 25).

- 14 - **wild honey** – The phrase "wild honey" is translated from the Greek phrase ἄγριος μέλι or "agrios meli". It translates as honey produced or found in the uncultivated or wild areas not managed by man. Honey symbolizes growth, hope, rebirth, sweetness and the divine word. (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, pages 75-76). "The wild bees in Palestine are far more numerous than those kept in "hives, and the greater part of the honey sold in the southern districts is obtained from wild swarms. Few countries, indeed, are better adapted for bees. The dry climate, and the stunted but varied flora, consisting largely of aromatic thymes, mints, and other similar plants, with crocuses in the spring, are very favourable to them, while the dry recesses of the limestone rocks everywhere afford them shelter and protection for their combs. In the wilderness of Judea, bees are far more numerous than in any other part of Palestine, and it is, to this day, part of the homely diet of the Bedouins, who squeeze it from the combs and store it in skins." (Life and Words of Christ, Geikie, vol. 1, page 355) " (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 120).



- 15 - **went out** – Implies that the people sought out John. They went to him.
- 16 - **Jerusalem** – The city name "Jerusalem" is translated from the Greek word "Ἱεροσόλυμα" or "Hiersosolyma". The Greek word is pronounced "hē-e-ro-so'-lū-mā". It literally means "set ye double peace". This probably has reference to Jerusalem's two main hills or mounts. The name has Hebrew origins. The Hebrew word for

"Jerusalem" is "ירושלים" or "Yérushalaim". The Hebrew name means "teaching of peace". "Irushaloam" means city of peace. Jerusalem symbolizes the center, divine abode, holiness, hope and rebirth. (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, pages 81-83).



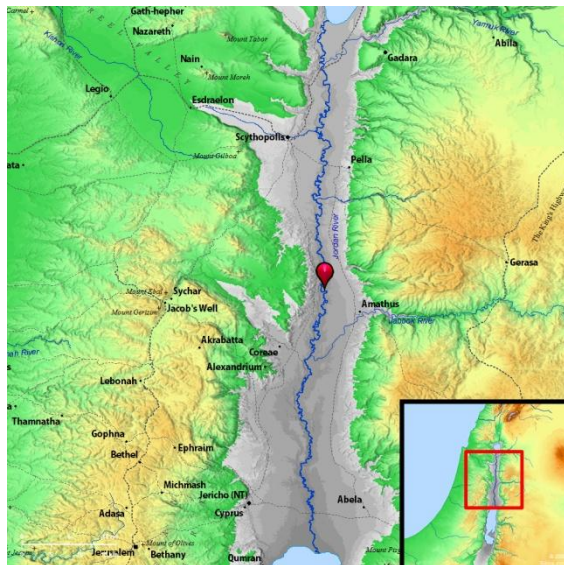
"Jerusalem was synonymous with leadership. The head-quarters of the early Christian Church were in the same place where centuries earlier God had chosen to place his name, where the Holy Temple had epitomized Judaic life for a millennium." (The Four Gospels, verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden & Andrew C. Skinner, page 79).

17 - **all the region round about** – The phrase "all the region round about" is translated from a single Greek word "περίχωρος" or "perichōros". The word means neighboring, lying round about. In reference to this footnote, it means the region of Jordan. Several Gospel writers include with "all the region round about Jordan" both Jerusalem and all of Judaea. The Yale commentary explains, "Literally 'all of the Judaeen region'. The name of the region is transferred to its inhabitants, just as one might say, 'All of America loves baseball.'" (The Gospel According to Mark 1-8, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 150). We should not assume that this meant that "every" inhabitant of the region went to John, but rather that news of him spread through the region and many people throughout the region came to hear him. "Luke depicts John as an itinerant desert preacher, addressing his message to all who would come to listen to him in the Jordan valley. Luke does not specify the regions from which the people came; contrast Mark 1:5, 'from all Judea' and 'all the Jerusalemites' The 'region' is not clearly distinct from 'the desert.'" (The Gospel According to I-IX, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 459).

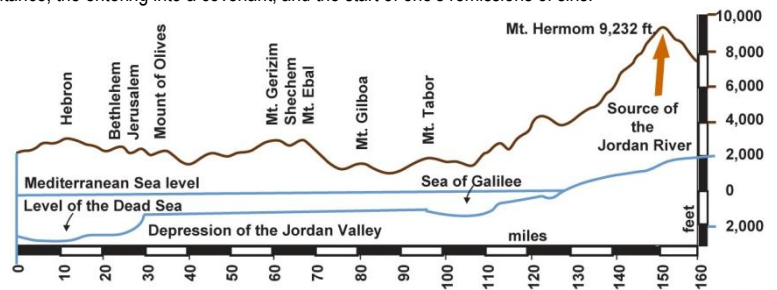


We know that there were those who were interested in his message. They were people searching for that which was missing in their lives. We also know that there were those that were there for political and secular reasons. The Jewish leaders had heard of John and sent individuals to question and evaluate the work that was occurring in the wilderness.

18 - **Jordan** – The word "Jordan" is translated from the Greek word "Ιορδάνης" or "Iordanēs". The word means "the descender". In chapter 3 of the Book of Joshua, the Israelites entered into the land promised to them, through a covenant they made with God, by crossing the Jordan River. Through the power of the Priesthood, the Jordan was parted and the Israelites crossed through the Jordan on dry ground. After crossing the River, they left 12 stones as a memorial of their covenant. Thus forth, the River Jordan was seen as a symbol of the covenant between God and his people.



The Jordan river is an interesting River. It's origins are the mountains and hills north of the Sea of Galilee. The rain water, pure and clear, flows from these tributaries and fills the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee is a beautiful living lake. It is active with many varieties of fish. It is home to birds and many types of wildlife who live off the life sustaining waters of the Lake. The Sea of Galilee remains a clean lake because as the water flows in from the north, it releases water to the south. It gives as it takes. The southern outlet is the headwaters of the Jordan River. The Jordan takes dirt and impurities with it as it carries the water downstream. The Jordan then empties its water into the Dead Sea. Unlike the Sea of Galilee the Dead Sea has no outlets. It retains the impurities, and evaporates the pure water, making it so polluted that nothing can live in it. It is lifeless. Symbolically, the Jordan River washed the impurities from the Sea of Galilee. The fact that John Baptized in the muddy Jordan was significant. John's baptism would be the culmination of repentance; the entering into a covenant, and the start of one's remissions of sins.



The JORDAN RIVER

19 - **baptize** – The word "baptize" is translated from the word "βαπτίζω" or "baptizō". It means "to dip repeatedly", "to immerse", "to submerge (of vessels sunk)", "to cleanse by dipping or submerging", "to wash", "to make clean with water", "to wash one's self", "bathe", or "to overwhelm".

Most of the Christian world will claim that the ordinance of Baptism came with John, and did not exist prior to the meridian of time. Somehow, baptism was invented during the Christian Era. It is suspected that the Essenes, with their desire to be ritually pure, invented baptism and taught it to John. "There seems no question that John took over the practice of baptism, including the emphasis on repentance, from the Essenes, but gave it a far more profound meaning." (Matthew - A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, page 25). Even so, it is not believed that the Essenes baptism was identical to John's. "Certainly Qumran's lustrations were regularly repeated as normal ritual, but for the Essenes baptism was a sign of a spiritual state already attained, and there is no indication that they endowed their (self-administered) baptism with sacramental efficacy. John's baptisms may well have been repeated, and there is no indication in the NT material that his baptism was a once-and-for-all rite. It may here be significant that the one still-existing Gnostic sect which consistently traces its origin back to John the Baptist (i.e., the Mandaean sect of the lower Tigris Valley) does repeat baptism as a continuously efficacious rite with quasi-sacramental intention." (Matthew - A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, page 26).

The restored Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints has added much to our understanding of the ordinance of baptism. We know that baptism was first instituted in the days of Adam. Long after the fall, and sometime after the death of Abel, Adam was visited by the Lord. Adam had worked through the process of repentance, and was ready to further covenant with the Lord. "And it came to pass, when the Lord had spoken with Adam, our father, that Adam cried unto the Lord, and he was caught away by the Spirit of

the Lord, and was carried down into the water, and was laid under the water, and was brought forth out of the water. And thus he was baptized, and the Spirit of God descended upon him, and thus he was born of the Spirit, and became quickened in the inner man." (Moses 6:64-65). Righteous men from that point forward practiced the rite of baptism. They conducted this covenant making rite under the right of the Priesthood. After Adam was baptized, he was given the Priesthood so that he could administer the saving ordinances to his children. We read the account of the Lord giving Adam the Priesthood, "And thou art after the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity to all eternity." (Moses 6:67).

Whether or not the ordinance of baptism was restored to the earth at the time of John, or if he simply restored it to its proper form and authority, we do not know. Baptism, if done properly, is done using the priesthood of Aaron and under priesthood authority. Baptism is done by full immersion. "Baptism by immersion in water is 'the introductory ordinance of the gospel, and must be followed by baptism of the Spirit in order to be complete.' As the Prophet Joseph Smith once said: 'You might as well baptize a bag of sand as a man, if not done in view of the remission of sins and getting of the Holy Ghost. Baptism by water is but half a baptism, and is good for nothing without the other half—that is, the baptism of the Holy Ghost.'" (General Conference, "Born Again", James E. Faust, April 2001). In his role as frontrunner, John baptized men and women preparing them for the Savior who would provide the washing of the Holy Ghost.



20 - confessing – The word "confessing" is translated from the Greek word "ἔξομολογέω" or "exomologeō". It means "to confess", "to profess", or "to acknowledge openly and joyfully". President Harold B. Lee said, "That confession must be made first to him or her who has been most wronged by your acts. A sincere confession is not merely admitting guilt after the proof is already in evidence. If you have 'offended many persons openly,' your acknowledgment is to be made openly and before those whom you have offended that you might show your shame and humility and willingness to receive a merited rebuke. If your act is secret and has resulted in injury to no one but yourself, your confession should be in secret, and your Heavenly Father who hears in secret may reward you openly. Acts that may affect your standing in the Church, or your right to privileges or advancement in the Church, are to be promptly confessed to the bishop whom the Lord has appointed as a shepherd over every flock and commissioned to be a common judge in Israel. He may hear such confessions in secret and deal justly and mercifully, as each case warrants. ... Following confession, one in sin must show forth the fruits of his repentance by good deeds that are weighed against the bad. He must make proper restitution to the limit of his power to restore that which he has taken away or to repair the damage he has done." (Youth and the Church, Harold B. Lee, Deseret Book Co., 1970, page 99).

21 - sins – The word "sins" is translated from the Greek word "ἁμαρτία" or "hamartia". It means "to be without a share in", "to miss the mark", "to err", "be mistaken" or "to do or go wrong". It can mean to wander from the law of God or violate His law. "Sin is the intentional disobedience to God's commandments. It makes Heavenly Father sad, and its results are suffering and sadness" (General Conference, "Avoiding the Trap of Sin", Jairo Mazzagardi, October 2010). "No one is ever prepared for the Lord while he remains in his sins. The Lord does not save people in their sins, but from their sins. The plan of salvation is designed to enable men to free themselves from sin so they can, as clean and spotless beings, enter the presence of Him who is without sin. No one is ever prepared for the Lord until he confesses and forsakes his sins, until he repents, until he is baptized for the remission of sins." (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 252).

22 - baptize – The word "baptize" is translated from the word "βαπτίζω" or "baptizō". It means "to dip repeatedly", "to immerse", "to submerge (of vessels sunk)", "to cleanse by dipping or submerging", "to wash", "to make clean with water", "to wash one's self", "bathe", or "to overwhelm".

Baptism takes on many symbols, and thus becomes a multifaceted teaching tool. One of the many symbols carried by this sacred rite is the symbolism of death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As we are laid under the water, we are symbolically buried. The death of mortality is guaranteed to all mankind. We will all face the bonds of death. Jesus too faced them, and was placed in a tomb sealed with stone. Of our own ability, death would be our end. Jesus, however, lived a perfect life and therefore death could have no claim on him. Arising from the grave, he gave this same gift to all. Our rising from the water's of baptism symbolizes the gift of resurrection given to all men. It also symbolizes the overcoming of a different death. As we partake of the gift of the atonement, we conquer spiritual death as well. This is the second gift of the atonement, but it is only given to those that submit themselves. The covenant of baptism is the beginning of our request for the second gift.

"Sometimes we may look with envy on the new convert stepping out of the baptismal font; we feel almost jealous of the fact that there goes the cleanest, purest person on earth. How would it be, we wonder, if we could be baptized again and be freed from all our sins? The fact is, we can be freed from all our sins on a regular basis. If we go to sacrament meeting each week, the most sacred public meeting we have in the Church, and we go there having thoroughly repented of all our sins, and we worthily eat that little piece of bread and drink that little cup of water, renewing the covenants we made at baptism, we may leave that meeting totally free of sin." (The Four Gospels - Verse by Verse, D. Kelley Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 77).

23 - preach – See footnote #4 of this chapter

24 - baptism – The English word "baptism" is derived indirectly through Latin from the Greek noun "βάπτισμα" or "baptisma". It translates literally as "washing-ism", which is in the New Testament is a term for ritual washing. It is used by Hellenistic Jews during the Second Temple period in such places as the Septuagint. The Greek verb for the same word is "βαπτίζω" or "baptizo", meaning "I wash", which is used in Jewish texts for ritual washing. The Greek verb "βάπτω" or "bapto" means "dip", from which the verb baptizo is derived, is in turn hypothetically traced to a reconstructed Indo-European root "dip". The Greek words are used in a great variety of meanings.



Another significant symbolic meaning for the rite of baptism is the symbolism of birth, or as it is referred to it, "re-birth". When a woman delivers a child her water breaks. The child comes forth from the water. The child then passes through the mother's pain, and her blood, to enter mortality. We are then called after our parent's name. When we are baptized, we pass through the waters of baptism. We take upon us the name of Jesus Christ. As the Holy Ghost is given to us, the blood of the Savior washes our sins, and we are born spiritually. We become His sons and daughters. Through this process, we are forgiven of our sins. This is the gospel. **"Our message constitutes the gospel, or 'good news,' of repentance. And the culmination of our faith and repentance is simple, beautiful ordinance of baptism. But that brief act of total immersion in water never has and never will take away anyone's sins. It is not the baptismal water that cleanses sin; it is the faith and the repentance that precede the baptism that remove the stain and the pain from us - faith in the Savior's atoning sacrifice and the genuine repentance to fulfill our part of making the Atonement work for us personally."** (The Four Gospels - Verse by Verse, D. Kelley Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 76).

25 - repentance – The word "repentance" is translated from the Greek word "μετάνοια" or "metanoia". It means "a change of mind, as it appears to one who repents, of a purpose he has formed or of something he has done". **"Literally, 'change of mind'. The Greek word, which is used outside of the biblical sphere only for regret for individual acts, has been immeasurably deepened by the influence of the Jewish concept of teshubah (literally 'turning' or 'return'), which has its root in the call of the OT prophets for the nations to return to its God and implies a total change in spiritual orientation. Repentance was a prominent theme in first-century Judaism."** (The Gospel According to Mark 1-8, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 150). Repentance and baptism have an interesting relationship. As one's heart changes, and desires are re-focused, I have found that the want for a fresh start is prominent. The ancient Jews used writing tablets. These were wooden trays filled with wax. They would use a stylus to etch the wax with letters. They called these tablets slates. When the slate was full of undesirable characters, the slate was placed in the sun. The wax would melt and all the characters would disappear. The slate was then taken to a cooler location and the wax would solidify. In the process, one acquired a clean slate. Baptism, and associated sacraments, provide the repentant with clean slates. **"Baptisma must be understood of a ritual washing having a religious connotation, and the following phrases specify the connotation. It is associated with metanoia, 'repentance' (lit. 'a change of mind', but when used in a religious sense, it connotes 'conversion, reform of life'). For the OT background of the relation of metanoia to human sin, and more generically the prophetic emphasis on human beings 'turning' to God from sin."** (The Gospel According to I-IX, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 459).

26 - remission – The word "remission" is translated from the Greek word "ἄφεσις" or "aphesis". It means to release from bondage or imprisonment. It also means to pardon or release from sins, or the remission of the penalty. **"Literally means a sending away or release; the NT sense of release from guilt before God."** (The Gospel According to Mark 1-8, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 150). Another word for remission might be forgiveness. As we struggle through life, we each make mistakes. Some of us make large mistakes, other make repeated series of smaller mistakes. Whatever the case, we will each find ourselves wanting forgiveness. Nothing could be sweeter than a remission of our sins. Christ said, **"Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more. By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them."** (Doctrine and Covenants 58:42-43). The process sounds simple enough, but given what is at stake, it would be best to thoroughly study the concept of remission. The following scripture help us understand the remission of our sins;

Scripture Reference	Doctrine Taught
Doctrine and Covenants 27:2	Remission of sins is a result of the Shedding of the Savior's blood
1st Nephi 31:17	Remission of sins comes by the Holy Ghost after Repentance
3rd Nephi 7:16	Remission of sins comes through Faith
Moroni 10:33	Remission of sins comes through Covenant
Doctrine and Covenants 13:1	Remission of sins comes through Baptism by Immersion
Moroni 8:15	Remission of sins comes through keeping the commandments
Alma 38:8	Remission of sins comes after we have cried unto the Lord
Doctrine & Covenants 64:10	Remission of sins comes after we forgive others
Mosiah 26:29	Remission of sins comes only with sincerity of our heart
Doctrine and Covenants 31:5	Remission of sins comes as we serve the Lord
Doctrine and Covenants 95:1	Chastening often proceeds a Remission of sins
Doctrine and Covenants 42:88	Remission of sins comes after confessing ones sins
Isaiah 1:16	Remission of sins comes after one ceases to do evil

Evidently, the process of confessing and forsaking includes things like covenant making, Christ-like behavior in all aspects of our lives, and faith in the great atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. And then shall the Lord forgive. To the Hebrews, he said, **"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."** (Hebrews 8:12). This seems almost incomprehensible to our finite minds. How could an omnipotent God forget our sins? The answer lies in the atonement. He forgets, because the price has been paid. Jesus' atonement was that thorough. Isaiah taught, **"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."** (Isaiah 1:18). Jesus' ability to totally wash us clean is absolute. Within Isaiah's message, is metaphor not readily seen in the English Language. It is significant to understand this business of remission. Let's look at the words "Scarlet" and "Crimson".

The word "scarlet" is translated from the Hebrew word "שָׁנִי" or "shaniy".

- I. scarlet, crimson
 - A. properly, the insect 'coccus ilicis', the dried body of the female yielding colouring matter from which is made the dye used for cloth to colour it scarlet or crimson

The word "crimson" is translated from the Hebrew word "תוֹלַעַת" or "towla".

- I. worm, scarlet stuff, crimson
 - A. worm - the female 'coccus ilicis'
 - B. scarlet stuff, crimson, scarlet
 - i. the dye made from the dried body of the female of the worm "coccus ilicis"
- II. worm, maggot
 - A. worm, grub
 - B. the worm "coccus ilicis"



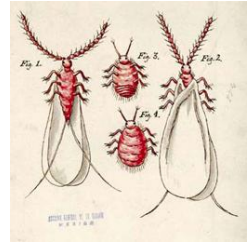
Clearly, the Hebrew version of the Isaiah scripture adds significantly to the meaning. It is apparent that the prophet was referring to a dye producing worm rather than color. To better understand the scripture, we need to understand the worm. When the female of the scarlet/crimson worm species (coccus ilicis) is ready to give birth to her young, she attaches herself to the trunk of a tree. Generally, she searches out a kermes tree, and therefore her species is sometimes referred to as a "kermes" worm. The worm fixes herself so firmly and permanently to the tree that she will never leave again. Her eggs deposited beneath her body were thus protected until the larvae are hatched and are ready for life



on their own. As the mother dies, she excretes a crimson red fluid. This fluid stained her body and the surrounding wood. The stain is so permanent that it does not fade or wash away. From the dead bodies of such female scarlet worms, the commercial scarlet dyes of antiquity were extracted.

Ancient producers of permanent dyes sought after the dead bodies of crimson worms. They would find them attached to trees, or plants. By scraping the remains of the bodies off the plants, a granulated dye was produced. Such a dye yielded vibrant red colors that were color fast.

Isaiah understood that sin stains us spiritually. It is like a permanent dye, that we have no ability to remove. The Savior, through His atonement, can fully and perfectly restore us to a state of purity.



27 - in the fifteenth year – The term "fifteenth" is translated from the Greek word "πεντεκαιδέκατος" or "pentekaidekatos". It means fifteenth. Emperor or Caesar Tiberius began his reign as "princiate" of Rome on 18 September 14CE. It is recorded that John began his ministry in or during the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius. That gives us a one year window for the dating of this chapter. This would place the date of Jesus birth at 1BCE, however, he was made co-regent with Augustus, by the Roman Senate, starting on the 23rd October 12CE, after returning victorious from Germania. He was co-regent over some of the provinces starting in 11CE. Adjusting the date for co-regency moves the birth year of Jesus to 3BCE or 4BCE, as the start of one's reign is typically counted from the point of any co-regency. One last variable needs to be introduced. The 15th year could be the year starting with the 14th anniversary and ending with the 15th. Below are the anchor points for Tiberius' reign.

- 6BCE - Tiberius was granted tribunal power (tribunicia potestas) and control in the East.
- 12CE - Tiberius was made "co-regent" with Augustus.
- 14CE - Augustus dies, and Tiberius is named in his will as successor to the throne.

In trying to establish the date for John's ministry, Fitzmyer wrote the following; **"Five problematic factors complicate the reckoning and have to be admitted: (a) Did Luke begins his reckoning of Tiberius' regnal years from the co-regency of Tiberius (with Augustus) over certain provinces, dated to A.D. 11 (=A.U.C. 764) by Velleius Paterculus (2.121) or to A.D. 12 (=A.U.C. 765) by Suetonius (Tib. vita, 21)? This seems to be unlikely, but cannot be wholly excluded. (b) Did Luke reckon from the death of Augustus (19 August A.D. 14) or from the vote of the Roman Senate acknowledging Tiberius as Augustus' successor (17 September A.D. 14)? (c) Did Luke distinguish the accession year from the regnal years i.e. did he count the period from 19 August or 17 September to a following New Year's day as the accession year so that the first "regnal year" began only on New Year's Day? (d) Or did he count the partial accession year as the first regnal year, with the second beginning on the next New Year's Day? (e) Which calendar would Luke have been using in either of the latter two ways of reckoning Tiberius' regnal years?"** (The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 455). Using our best guess with the variables at play, I would estimate the year of John's ministry and the related birth of the Savior as follows;

Co-Regency Theory

23 October 12CE + 15 years = 23 October 27BCE - 29 ½ years = April 3BCE (Birth of Jesus Christ)
 23 October 12CE + 15 years = 23 October 27BCE + 3 ½ years = April 31BCE (Death of Jesus Christ)

or

Co-Regency "15th year" Theory, Author's Theory

23 October 12CE + 14 years = 23 October 26BCE - 29 ½ years = April 4BCE (Birth of Jesus Christ)
 23 October 12CE + 14 years = 23 October 26BCE + 3 ½ years = April 30BCE (Death of Jesus Christ)

or

Talmage Theory

18 September 14CE + 15 years = 18 September 29BCE - 29 ½ years = April 1BCE (Birth of Jesus Christ)
 18 September 14CE + 15 years = 18 September 29BCE + 3 ½ years = April 33BCE (Death of Jesus Christ)

28 - reign – The word "reign" is translated from the Greek word "ἡγεμονία" or "hēgemonia". The word means "chief command", "rule, or "sovereignty". The reign of Caesar, best describes the conditions surrounding the life of the Messiah. Edersheim wrote, **"For, alike in the Roman world and in Palestine, the time had fully come; not, indeed, in the sense of any special expectancy, but of absolute need. The reign of Augustus marked, not only the climax, but the crisis, of Roman history. Whatever of good or of evil the ancient world contained, had become fully ripe. As regarded politics, philosophy, religion, and society, the utmost limits had been reached. Beyond them lay, as only alternatives, ruin or regeneration. It was felt that the boundaries of the Empire could be no further extended, and that henceforth the highest aim must be to preserve what had been conquered. The destinies of Rome were in the hands of one man, who was at the same time general-in-chief of a standing army of about three hundred and forty thousand men, head of a Senate (now sunk into a mere court for registering the commands of Caesar), and High-Priest of a religion, of which the highest expression was the apotheosis of the State in the person of the Emperor. Thus, all power within, without, and above lay in his hands. Within the city, which in one short reign was transformed from brick into marble, were, side by side, the most abject misery and almost boundless luxury. Of a population of about two millions, well-nigh one half were slaves; and, of the rest, the greater part either freedmen and their descendants, or foreigners. Each class contributed its share to the common decay. Slavery was not even what we know it, but a seething mass of cruelty and oppression on the one side, and of cunning and corruption on the other. More than any other cause, it contributed to the ruin of Roman society. The freedmen, who had very often acquired their liberty by the most disreputable courses, and had prospered in them, combined in shameless manner the vices of the free with the vileness of the slave. The foreigners - especially Greeks and Syrians - who crowded the city, poisoned the springs of its life by the corruption which they brought. The free citizens were idle, dissipated, sunken; their chief thoughts of the theatre and the arena; and they were mostly supported at the public cost. While, even in the time of Augustus, more than two hundred thousand persons were thus maintained by the State, what of the old Roman stock remained was rapidly decaying, partly from corruption, but chiefly from the increasing cessation of marriage, and the nameless abominations of what remained of family-life."** (Life of the Messiah, Alfred Edersheim, Chapter 11, paragraph 2). This was the Rome of Tiberius; Evil, Fallen and Reprobate. Tiberius reigned from 12CE as co-regent and from 14CE as "regent" or "Emperor" of Rome. He reigned until his death in 37CE. He was the Emperor during the time period of Jesus' ministry and crucifixion.

29 - **Tiberius** – The name "Tiberius" is translated from the Greek word "Τιβέριος" or "Tiberios". The name means "from the Tiber (as in god-river)". Tiberius was the second Emperor of the Roman Empire and the Emperor at the time of Jesus. Bruce R. McConkie describes him as follows; **"Tiberius Caesar, an evil and wicked wretch who walked in all the ways of the Caesars who went before and the Caesars who came after, and who ruled with all the despotism of Augustus and reveled in all the vices of Caligula, sat securely on the throne of the world. Rome ruled the world, and the world was wickedness."** (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 250). Elder McConkie's description is harsh but accurate. Tiberius contributed to the circumstances that led to the crucifixion of the Son of God.



DRUSUS
NERO

To better understand Tiberius, we need to look at the entirety of his life. We will try to provide a concise summary of his life starting with his parents. Understand that entire works have been written of him. His father, "Claudius Tiberius Nero" was a man of status and wealth. His prestige began as he served **"as a quaestor of Julius Caesar during the Alexandrian war and commander of a fleet, contributed materially to the victory."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, IV, page 92). Ultimately, the family's road to fame started with Nero. Tiberius was born to Nero and his wife Livia Drusilla. **"He was born at Rome, on the Palatine, the sixteenth day before the Kalends of December"** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, V, page 92). That equates to November 16, 42BCE. He had a younger brother, by his parents, named Drusus Nero. He loved his brother.



YOUNG
TIBERIUS NERO

Tiberius **"passed his infancy and his youth amid hardship and tribulation"** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, VI, page 93). After Julius Caesar was assassinated, the Nero family found themselves in political turmoil. They lived in exile, and twice almost lost their lives due to the crying of a young Tiberius revealing the hiding family. Trying to realign the family with the right side of the empire was not an easy task. In an odd turn of events, during the reign of Caesar Augustus, Augustus requested that Nero surrender his wife to him. This was not an unusual request as history shows that the Caesar's often controlled the power of families via marriage and divorce. Livia became the third wife of Caesar Augustus. This made Tiberius the step-son of the Emperor. Oddly, Nero gave the bride away at their wedding. The family was now back in the Royal graces in a big way. Tiberius was later adopted as the legal son of Augustus and renamed Tiberius Julius Caesar.



LIVIA

Shortly after Livia became the wife of Augustus, Nero died. **"At the age of nine, he (Tiberius) delivered a eulogy of his dead father from the rostra. Then just when he was arriving at puberty, he accompanied the chariot of Augustus in his triumph after Actium, riding the left trace-horse, while Marcellus, son of Octavia (Augustus), rode the one on the right. He presided, too, at the city festival, and took part in the game of Troy during the performances in the circus, leading the band of older boys."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, VI, page 93).

Tiberius grew to manhood. His adolescence was filled with gladiator shows, stage plays, and the decadence associated with Roman high society. Along the way, he fell in love. **"He married Agrippina, daughter of Marcus Agrippa, and granddaughter of Caecilius Atticus, a Roman knight, to whom Cicero's letters are addressed."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, VII, pages 93-94). Not too much time passed and Agrippina, whose full name is Vipsania Agrippina, gave Tiberius a son. They named their son Drusus. Drusus was the name of Tiberius' grandfather and his brother. Their marriage appeared to good, when Augustus made demands of his son. Agrippina **"was second time with child"** and Tiberius was **"forced to divorce her and to contract a hurried marriage with Julia, daughter of Augustus."** Tiberius was required to marry his step sister. **"This caused him no little distress of mind, for he was living happily with Agrippina, and disapproved of Julia's character, having perceived that she had a passion from him even during the lifetime of her former husband, as was in fact the general opinion. But even after the divorce he regretted his separation from Agrippina, and the only time that he chanced to see her, he followed her with such an intent and tearful gaze that care was taken that she should never again come before his eyes."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, VII, page 94).



VIPSANIA
AGRIPPINA



JULIA,
DAUGHTER
OF
AUGUSTUS

Tiberius' life had taken a twisted turn. He lost the love of his life. His life with his new wife started out **"in harmony at first...but he soon grew cold, and went so far as to cease to live with her at all, after the severing of the tie formed by a child which was born to them, but died at Aquileia in infancy"**. (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, VII, page 94). After losing his child, and separating from his second wife, he lost his brother Drusus in the war. His beloved brother, Drusus, broke his leg by falling from a horse while campaigning in Germany. Tiberius was at Ticinum, on the Po River, south of what is now Milan, 400 miles away. Riding day and night to be with his brother, he arrived just in time to see Drusus die. Suetonius records, **"He lost his brother Drusus in Germany and conveyed his body to Rome, going before it on foot all the way."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, VII, page 94). These series of events shaped the future ruler of Rome. We find that he become more solitary, and quiet.

As a grown man, Suetonius describes Tiberius as follows; **"He was large and strong frame, and of a stature above the average; broad of shoulders and chest; well proportioned and symmetrical from head to foot. His left hand was the more nimble and stronger, and its joints were so powerful that he could bore through the flesh, sound apple with his finger, and break the head of a boy, or even a young man, with a fillip. He was of fair complexion and wore his hair rather long at the back, so much so as even to cover the nape of his neck; which was apparently a family trait. His face was handsome, but would break out on a sudden with many pimples. His eyes were usually large and, strange to say, had the power of seeing even at night and in the dark, but only for a short time when first open after sleep; presently they grew dim-sighted again. He strode along with his neck stiff and bent forward, usually with a stern countenance and for the most part in silence, never or very rarely conversing with his companions, and then speaking with great deliberation and with a kind of supple movement of his fingers. All of these mannerisms of his, which were disagreeable and signs of arrogance, were remarked by Augustus, who often tried to excuse them to the senate and people by declaring that they were natural failings, and not intentional. He enjoyed excellent health, which was all but perfect during nearly the whole of his reign, although from the thirtieth year of his age he took care of it according to his own ideas, without the aid or advice of physicians."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, LXVIII, page 120).



Tiberius was a man of deep thought and a skilled strategist, and at the same time godless. His faithless demeanor strangely leaned towards superstition and chance. Suetonius records, **"Although somewhat neglectful of the gods and of religious matters, being addicted to astrology and firmly convinced that everything was in the hands of fate, he was nevertheless immoderately afraid of thunder. Whenever the sky was lowering, he always wore a laurel wreath, because it is said that that kind of leaf is not blasted by lightning."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, LXVIII, page 120).

Tiberius, as was the case with most Roman leaders, started his career in the battlefield. **"His first military service was a tribune of the soldiers in the campaign against the Cantabrians; then he led an army to the Orient and restored the throne of Armenia to Tigranes, crowning him on the tribunal."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, IX, page 94). He was skilled and successful. His methodical mind lent itself well to war. He was quickly honored by the Senate and Caesar. **"He entered upon the offices of quaestor, praetor, and consul before the usual age, and held them almost without an interval; then after a time he was made consul again, at the same time receiving the tribunical power for five years."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, IX, page 95).

"At the floodtide of success, though in the prime of life and health, he suddenly decided to go into retirement and to withdraw as far as possible from the center of the stage." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, X, page 95). Some believe that Tiberius' failed marriage to Julia had been a disgrace to him, and that he was forced to retire to remove himself from the public eye. Julia, in the meantime, was busy having affairs and disgracing herself. Though Tiberius was technically retired, he remained engaged in life. While in retirement at Rhodes, he lectured in the schools and visited the sick. It seemed like he was striving for a life of good, but this would not be his legacy. He stayed retired in Rhodes until **"he learned that his wife Julia had been banished because of her immorality and adulteries, and that a bill of divorce had been sent her in his name by authority of Augustus."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, X, page 96). **"So he returned in the eighth year after his retirement, with that strong and unwavering confidence in his destiny, which he had conceived from his early years because of omens and predictions."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XIV, page 97).

Tiberius' return to Rome required him to engage in the work of leading the affairs of the Empire. He was deployed by Augustus to Rome's front lines. Tiberius was one of Rome's greatest generals, conquering Pannonia, Dalmatia, Raetia, and temporarily, parts of Germania; laying the foundations for the northern frontier. He came to be remembered as a dark, reclusive, and sombre ruler who never really desired to be emperor; Pliny the Elder called him "tristissimus hominum", which means "the gloomiest of men." **"He was given the tribunician power for a second term of three years, the duty subjugating Germany was assigned him, and the envoys of the Partians, after presenting their instructions to Augustus in Rome, were bidden to appear also before him in his province. But when the revolt of Illyricum was reported, he was transferred to the charge of a new war, the most serious of all foreign wars since those with Carthage, which he carried on for three years with fifteen legions and a corresponding force of auxiliaries, amid great difficulties of every kind and the utmost scarcity of supplies...Circumstances gave this exploit a larger and crowning glory; for it was at just about time that Quintilius Varus perished with three legions in Germany, and no one doubted that the victorious Germans would have united with the Pannonians, had not Illyricum been subdued first. Consequently a triumph was voted him and many high honours. Some also recommended that he be given the surname of Pannonicus, others of Invictus, others of Pius. Augustus however vetoed the surname, reiterating the promise that Tiberius would be satisfied with the one which he would receive at his father's death."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XVI-XVII, page 99).

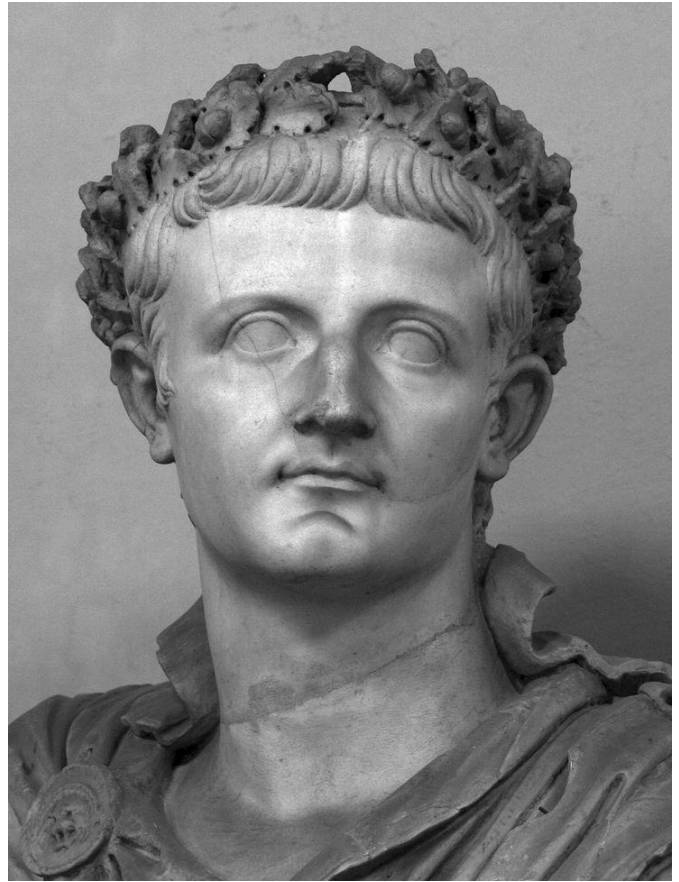
While Tiberius was away from the northern frontier, reporting in Rome, problems arose in Germany. Three legions of Roman soldiers had been wiped out by the Germans, along with a Roman General. The General was an accomplished strategist by the name of Varus. Many believe that Rome had all but lost to Germany. **"The next year he",** Tiberius, **"returned to Germany, and realising that the disaster to Varus was due to that general's rashness and lack of care, he took no step without the approval of a council... He also observed more scrupulous care than usual...he took his meals sitting on the bare turf, often passed the night without a tent, and gave all his orders for the following day, as well as notice of any sudden emergency, in writing; adding the injunction that if anyone was in doubt about any matter, he was to consult him personally at any hour whatsoever, even of the night."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XVIII, pages 99-100). He was absolutely determined to correct Varus' missteps and lay claim to Germany. **"He required strict discipline"** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XIX, page 100). At times he resorted to torture, for disobedience and crimes within his own troops. Tiberius conquered Germany. He accomplished this by a meticulous and obsessive attention to every detail of the war. No details escaped his sight.



"After two years he returned to the city from Germany and celebrated the triumph which he had postponed, accompanied also by his generals, for whom he had obtained the triumphal regalia. And before turning to enter the Capital, he dismounted from his chariot and fell at the knees of his father, who was presiding over the ceremonies...then he gave a banquet to the people at a thousand tables, and a largess of three hundred sesterces to every man." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XX, page 100). Tiberius had many faults, but he excelled at war. The Roman senate was impressed. They were willing to grant him more power and authority. The senate was aware of Augustus' failing health and authorized co-regency with Tiberius.

"Since the consuls caused a law to be passed soon after this that he should govern the provinces jointly with Augustus and hold the census with him, he set out for Illyricum on the conclusion of the lustral ceremonies; but he was at once recalled, and finding Augustus in his last illness but still alive, he spent an entire day with him in private." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XXI, page 100). No one knows what was discussed, but it is assumed that Augustus was preparing Tiberius to rule Rome. Augustus apparently felt that Tiberius was capable but, based on his military rule, he knew him to be a ruthless and merciless dictator. Suetonius wrote, **"I know that it is commonly believed, that when Tiberius left the room after this confidential talk, Augustus was overheard by his chamberlains to say: 'Alas for the Roman people, to be ground by jaws that crunch so slowly' "** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XX, page 100).

The death of Caesar Augustus was not a surprise. He died on August 19, 14CE. Tiberius was the chosen successor, but not necessarily Augustus' first choice. Augustus would have preferred either of his biological sons, Gaius or Lucius. Unfortunately, both

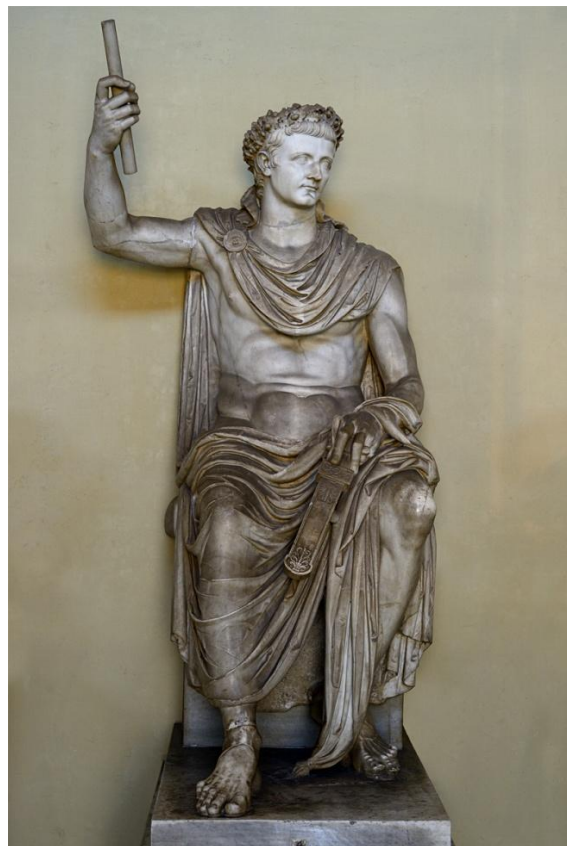


sons died prior to his death and Tiberius became the successor by default. As was customary, Augustus left a will outlining his final wishes. **"The will began thus: 'Since a cruel fate has berif me of my sons Gaius and Lucius, be Tiberius Caesar heir to two-thirds of my estate'. These words in themselves added to the suspicion of those who believed that he had named Tiberius his successor from necessity rather than from choice, since he allowed himself to write such a preamble."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XXIII, page 102). There was little doubt that Tiberius was to be the next Emperor of Rome. The only other candidate was another adoptive son of Augustus, named Agrippa Postumus. Agrippa was the son of his daughter Julia from her first marriage (her second marriage was to Tiberius). Julia fell from grace, and therefore Agrippa had been adopted by his grandfather, Augustus himself. Agrippa later fell from grace himself and was exiled by Augustus, but was still alive at Augustus' passing. Knowing that Agrippa could claim a right to the throne **"Tiberius did not make the death of Augustus public until the young Agrippa had been disposed of."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XXII, page 102). Agrippa was mysteriously executed by his guards on August 20, 14CE, just one day after Augustus' death. The execution is suspected to have been ordered by Tiberius. He started his reign with a murder.

The "to be" Emperor called the Senate together to establish himself as the next Caesar. It is not sure whether Tiberius was actually distraught over Augustus' death or not. **"When, however, by virtue of his tribunicial power, he had convened the senate and had begun to address it, he suddenly groaned aloud, as if overcome by grief..."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XXIII, page 102). Whether he was sad, or just acting, it was the appropriate response. The Senate decreed a new Caesar, Tiberius. When Tiberius was made Emperor on September 18, 14CE, he was renamed **"Tiberius Caesar Divi Augusti filii Augustus"**. His new name means, **"Tiberius Caesar, Son of the Divine Augustus, the Emperor"**.

In typical fashion, Tiberius assumed the role of Emperor, but was calculated in his rise to power. He was not prone to hasty decisions. **"Though Tiberius did not hesitate at once to assume and to exercise the imperial authority, surrounding himself with a guard of soldiers, that is, with the actual power and the outward sign of sovereignty, yet he refused the title for a long time..."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XXIV, page 102). He learned this behavior from the failings of Varus in Germany. Seeing that Varus lost three legions by rash actions, Tiberius learned to be calculating. Knowing Rome, and the politics, he approached the office of Emperor in the same cautious fashion. **"The cause of his hesitation was fear of the dangers which threatened him on every hand, and often led him to say that he was 'holding a wolf by the ears'...Once relieved of fear, he at first played a most unassuming part, almost humbler than that of a private citizen."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XXV-XXVI, page 103).

Tiberius' reign can be broken into two parts. The first part of his reign was used to set the facade that he was a benevolent ruler, who loved his people. **"Little by little he unmasked the ruler, and although for some time his conduct was variable, yet more often showed himself kindly and devoted to the public weal."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XXXIII, page 106). The second part of his reign was spent in seclusion. He ignored his people and satisfied his own lusts and need for power.

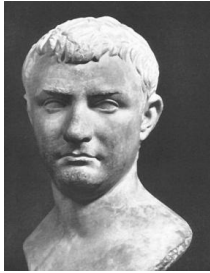


In the initial part of his rule, he acted as the kind, humble ruler. **"He so loathed flattery that he would not allow any senator to approach his litter, either to pay respects or on business, and when an ex-consul in apologizing to him attempted to embrace his knees, he drew back in such haste that he fell over backwards."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XXVII, page 104). Supporting the wishes of the mob, Tiberius tried to abolish religions, within Rome itself, that were somewhat offensive to the Roman populace. **"He abolished foreign cults, especially the Egyptian and the Jewish rites, compelling all who were addicted to such superstitions to burn their religious vestments and all their paraphernalia. Those of the Jews who were of military age he assigned to provinces of less healthy climate, ostensibly to serve in the army; the others of that same race or of similar beliefs he banished from the city, on pain of slavery for life if they did not obey. He banished the astrologers as well, but pardoned such as begged for indulgence and promised to give up the art."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XXXVI, page 107). In the guise of maintaining a peaceful state, he enforced a strict police state. **"He took great pains to prevent outbreaks of the populace and punished such as occurred with the utmost severity. When a quarrel in the theatre ended in bloodshed, he banished the leaders of the faction, as well as the actors who were cause of the dissension; and no entreaties of the people could ever induce him to recall them."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XXXVII, page 107).

"For two whole years after becoming emperor he did not set foot outside the gates; after that he went nowhere except to the neighboring towns, at farthest to Antium, and even that very seldom and for a few days at a time." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XXXVIII, page 108). This limited exposure to the Empire was exasperated by the death of his sons, which ushered in the second part of his reign. **"But after being bereft of both his sons - Germanicus had died in Syria and Drusus at Rome - he retired to Campania, and almost everyone firmly believed and openly declared that he would never come back, but would soon die there. And both predictions were all but fulfilled; for he did not return again to Rome..."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XXXIX, page 108).

The second part of his reign is best described as isolated and self absorbed. **"...He utterly neglected the conduct of state affairs..."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XLI, page 109). **"He gave no public shows at all, and very**

seldom attended those given by others." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XLVII, page 110). His life became more and more dark, filled with wicked and evil behaviors. We was obsessed with amassing wealth and satisfying his personal needs. "...As time went on, he even resorted to plunder. All the world knows that he drove Gnaeus Lentulus Augur, a man of great wealth, to take his own life through fear and mental anxiety, and to make the emperor his sole heir..." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XLIX, page 111).



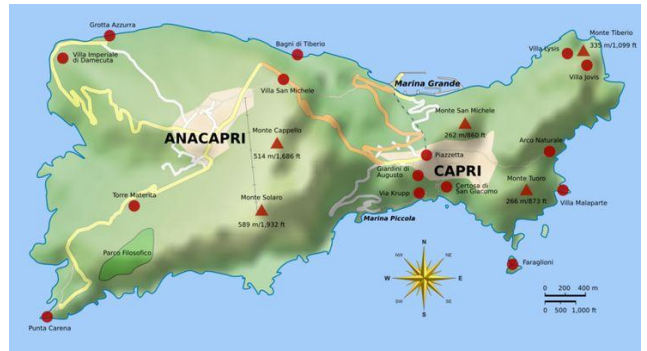
aelius sejanus

As Tiberius grew older, he became increasingly paranoid and suspicious. This led to even odder decisions and behavior. Somewhere during the course of his life he became suspicious of his own mother. Suetonius wrote, "Vexed by his mother Livia, alleging that she claimed an equal share in the rule, he shunned frequent meetings with her and long and confidential conversations...he took no trouble to visit her." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, L-LI, page 112). He even failed to acknowledge her burial proceedings at the time of her death. His paranoia extended beyond the family. At one point, he had all but turned the government over to a close and trusted friend by the name of "Aelius Sejanus". This allowed Tiberius to live a reclusive lifestyle without being bothered by affairs of state. He later suspected Sejanus of plotting against him. Tiberius "... learned about the death of his son Drusus. At first supposing that he had died of disease, due to his bad habits, on finally learning that he had been poisoned by the treachery of his wife Livilla and Sejanus, there was no one whom Tiberius spared from torment and death." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, LXII, page 118). He had his dear friend Sejanus executed. "...He broke out into every form of cruelty, for which he never lacked occasion, venting it on the friends and even the acquaintances, first of his mother, then of his grandsons and granddaughter, and finally of Sejanus. After the death of Sejanus he was more cruel than ever..." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, LXI, page 116).

His latter reign was full of bizarre stories of cruelty. "He did so many other cruel and savage deeds under the guise of strictness and improvement of the public morals, but in reality rather to gratify his natural instincts." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, LIX, page 115). Obviously not all his evils were due to paranoia. Some were just selfish and evil. He developed a lack of respect for woman. "How grossly he was in the habit of abusing women even of high birth is very clearly shown by the death of a certain Mallonia. When she was brought to his bed and refused most vigorously to submit to his lust, he turned her over to the informers, and even when she was on trial he did not cease to call out and ask her 'whether she was sorry'; so that finally she left the court and went home, where she stabbed herself..." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XLV, page 110). His reign created a culture of betrayal and false witness. Lies and misrepresentations to accomplished personal and political agendas were the norm. These led to all manners of torture and executions. "It is a long story to run through his acts of cruelty in detail; it will be enough to mention the forms which they took, as samples of his barbarity. Not a day passed without an execution, not even those that were sacred or holy....Many were accused and condemned with their children and even by their children. The relatives of victims were forbidden to mourn for them....The word of no informer was doubted. Every crime was treated as capital." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, LXI, page 117).



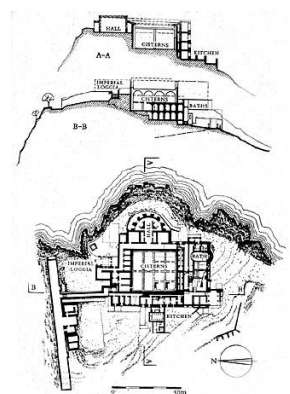
"In AD 27, at age 67, Tiberius left Rome to visit some of the southern parts of Italy. En route he paused to go to the island of Capri. His intention appears to have been only to stay for a time, but he never returned to Rome. It is the remaining decade or so of Tiberius's life that has given rise to the legend of Tiberius the monster. It seems probable, to begin with, that Tiberius, never handsome, had become repulsively ugly. First his skin broke out in blotches, and then his complexion became covered with pus-filled eruptions, exuding a bad smell and causing a good deal of pain. He built himself a dozen villas ringing Capri, with prisons, underground dungeons, torture chambers, and places of execution. He filled



his villas with treasure and art objects of every kind and with the enormous retinue appropriate to a Caesar: servants, guards, entertainers, philosophers, astrologers, musicians, and seekers after favour. If the near-contemporary historians are to be believed, his favourite entertainments were cruel and obscene. Even under the most favourable interpretation, he killed ferociously and almost at random. It is probable that by then his mind was disordered." (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/594862/Tiberius/7251/Reign-as-emperor>).



Capri, or Capreae, began as a vacation spot for the Emperor. In typical fashion, Tiberius enjoyed the isolation and the escape from public life. He had an elaborate palace built for himself on the cliffs. The palace was protected by a natural sea wall of several hundred feet. The palace was equipped with cisterns for the storage of water and food. It had prisons, torture chambers, and all the amenities of a king. He thought he would find safety and refuge there. "A few days after his arrival at Capri, a fisherman coming up to him unexpectedly, when he was desirous of privacy, and presenting him with a large mullet, he ordered the man's face to be scrubbed with the fish; being terrified at the thought of his having been able to creep upon him from the back of the island, over such rugged and steep rocks. The man, while undergoing the punishment, expressing his joy that he had not likewise offered him a large crab which he had also taken, he ordered his face to be farther lacerated with its claws." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, LX, page 116).



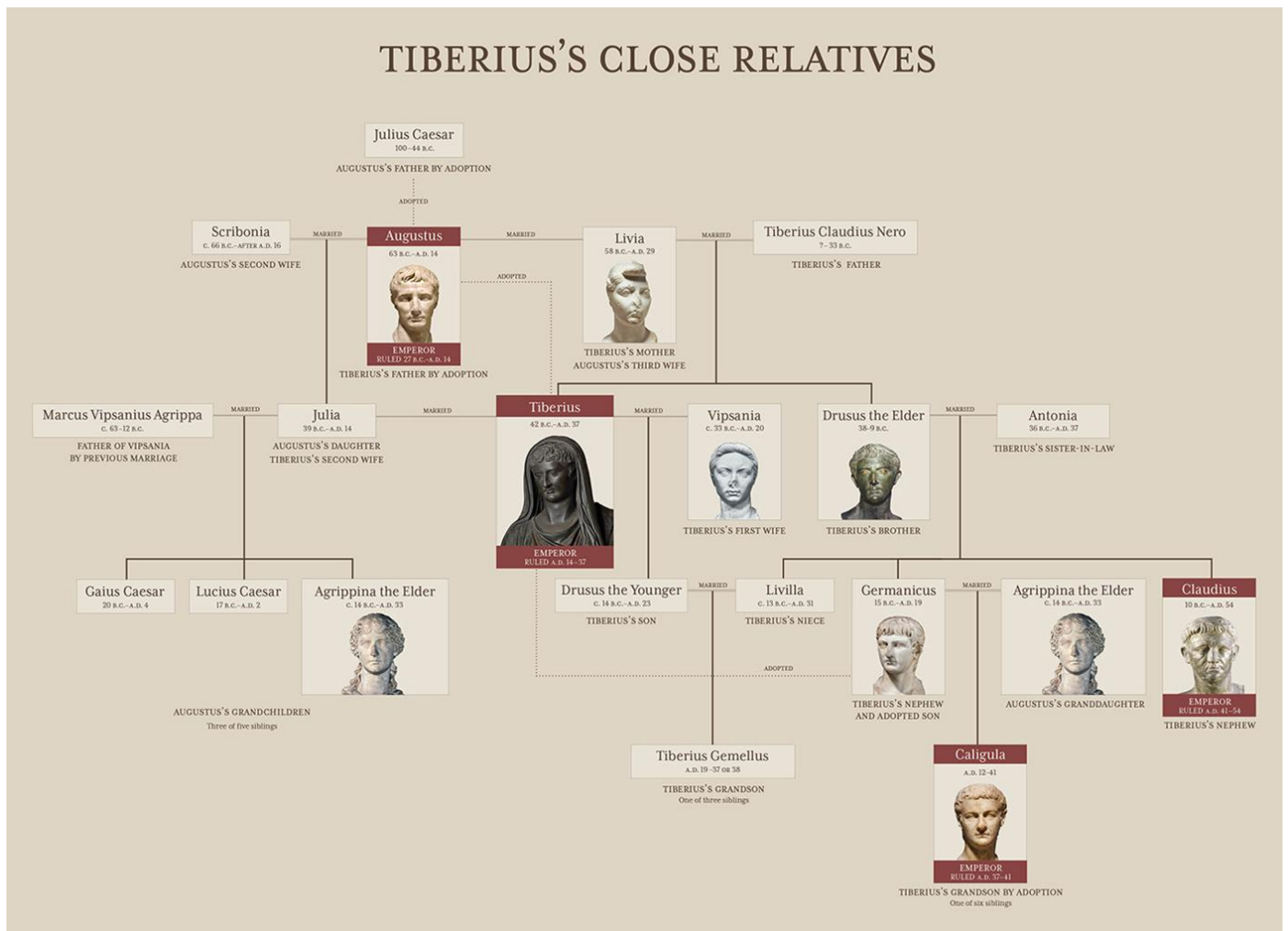
Once his palace was completed, he started to use its natural qualities as a tool for death. "At Capreae they still point out the scene of his executions, from which he used to order that those who had been condemned after long and exquisite tortures be cast headlong into the sea before his eyes, while a band of marines waited below for the bodies and broke their bones with boathooks and oars, to prevent any breath of life remaining in them." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, LXII, page 118). It has been suggested that Tiberius sexually assaulted young boys and girls and then ended their young lives using this method.

Tiberius turned into not nothing less than a sexual deviant and predator while living on the island of Capri. It is reported that he had the royal guard deliver young boys and girls for his sinful gratifications. His palace was designed around torture rooms and rooms for sexual pleasure. **"In his retreat at Capri, he also contrived an apartment containing couches, and adapted to the secret practice of abominable lewdness..."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XLIII, page 109). He was a sick man that was obsessed with sin. **"He likewise contrived recesses in woods and groves for the gratification of lust, where young persons of both sexes prostituted themselves in caves and hollow rocks, in the disguise of little Pans and Nymphs. So that he was publicly and commonly called, by an abuse of the name of the island, Caprineus."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XLIII, page 109). So consumed and addicted with sexual sin, Tiberius thought of little less. He is reported to have killed those he preyed upon so that they could never tell the tale of his sick acts. **"It is also reported that, during a sacrifice, he was so captivated with the form of a youth who held a censor, that, before the religious rites were well over, he took him aside and abused him; as also a brother of his who had been playing the flute; and soon afterwards broke the legs of both of them, for upbraiding one another with their shame."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, XLIV, page 109).



"In the spring of AD 37, Tiberius took part in a ceremonial game that required him to throw a javelin. He wrenched his shoulder, took to his bed, became ill, and lapsed into a coma. His physicians, who had not been allowed to examine him for nearly half a century, now studied his emaciated body and declared that he would die within the day. The successor, Caligula, was sent for. The Praetorian Guard declared their support for the new emperor. The news of the succession was proclaimed to the world. Then Tiberius recovered consciousness, sat up, and asked for something to eat. The notables of Rome were thrown into confusion. Only the Praetorian commander, Macro, kept his head, and on the next day he hurried to Tiberius's bed, caught up a heap of blankets, and smothered Tiberius with them." (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/594862/Tiberius/7251/Reign-as-emperor>). Suetonius gives a slightly different account of his death. He recorded **"...he died shortly afterwards,"** the episode with the javelin, **"at a villa formerly belonging to Lucullus, in the seventy-eighth year of his age, and the twenty-third of his reign, upon the seventeenth of the calends of April [16th March], in the consulship of Cneius Acerronius Proculus and Caius Pontius Niger. Some think that a slow-consuming poison was given him by Caius..."** (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, LXXIII, page 122). One thing that most agrees with the stories is that Tiberius was indeed murdered. Tiberius died on March 16, 37CE.

"The people were so much elated at his death, that when they first heard the news, they ran up and down the city, some crying out, "Away with Tiberius to the Tiber;" others exclaiming, "May the earth, the common mother of mankind, and the infernal gods, allow him no abode in death, but amongst the wicked." (The Lives of the Caesars, Suetonius, originally published around 117CE, translated by J.C. Rolfe, Book 3, LXXV, page 123). Regardless of the people's distain for Tiberius, he managed to leave Rome in great financial shape. He was frugal with spending and taxes and left a treasury that would sustain Rome through several disastrous Caesars. If not for Tiberius, Rome would not have stood as long as it did.



30 - Cæsar – The word "Cæsar" is translated from the Greek word "Καῖσαρ" or "Kaisar". It is known as a name, and then a title. It was the name of Julius Caesar, who some feel was the instigator of the Roman Empire. It later became the title of all Roman Emperors. The title of "Caesar" has several plausible meanings;

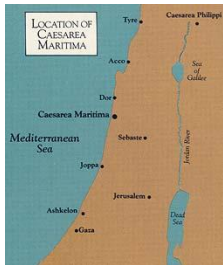
1. From the Greek word "**Caesus**" meaning to "cut down" or "severed".
2. From the Greek word "**Caesai**" meaning "Elephant". Julius Caesar often used the symbol of the Elephant for his reign. The first coins he had struck had the elephant on them.
3. From the Greek word "**Caesaries**" meaning "hairy" or "because of the hair". Julius Caesar and his father had a receding hairline, making this either sarcastic or of some other reference. It is said that the Caesar wore their hair long in the back covering their neck.
4. From the Greek word "**oculis caeslis**" meaning bright eyes



31 - Pontius – The name "Pontius" is translated from the Greek word "Πόντιος" or "Pontios". The name "Pontius" means "of the sea". According to the traditional accounts, the name "Pontius", it is derived from a location. People with the name "Pontius" are believed to come from "Pontii", a province in north west Italy along the coast line; hence, of the sea. It was here that Pontius Pilate is said to have been born. Of course this speculation is based solely upon his name. Another source says that he was from the Samnite clan. The Samnites come from the Apennine mountain spine in central Italy, about 45 miles east or Rome. If this were the case, he might be Roman born, but not pure Roman blood. It is speculated that though the Samnites were aristocrats, they were demoted to the equestrian order because they were not pure blood. There is evidence that other members of the Pontius family served in both military and civil positions within the Roman Empire.

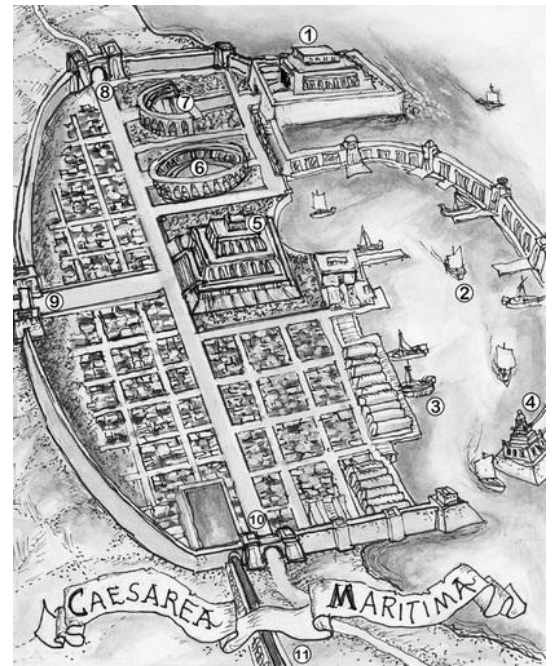
32 - Pilate – The word "Pilate" is translated from the Greek word "Πιλᾶτος" or "Pilatós". The name "Pilate" means "armed with a spear". This name is also fitting since Pontius Pilate is said to have descended from a royal equestrian (knight) class of a family. Details of his life are few and questionable. We do not know what year he was born or even what city. Based on his name and class, he was surely born in Italy or he would not have been afforded such rank. He is said to have descended from the Samnite clan.

According to available history, Pontius Pilate comes suddenly upon the scene of history in the year 26CE. He succeeded Valerius Gratus as prefect of Judaea. He was appointed the sixth prefect of Judaea (some accounts argue that he was the fifth) through the intervention of Sejanus, the son-in-law and spokesman of the Roman Emperor Tiberius. Fitzmyer records, "**When Herod's son Archelaus was desposed (A.D. 6), Judea (and Samaria) came under the direct control of Roman officials. Pilate was appointed the sixth prefect of Judea by Sejanus, Tiberius' anti-Jewish advisor, and he held the prefecture from A.D. 26-36. A stern, high-handed ruler, he scarcely ingratiated himself with the local Jewish population.**" (The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 456).



A prefect or a procurator was a position of great power and authority. Pontius Pilate would have lived like a king. His official residence was the palace of Herod at Caesarea Maritima. There he commanded a military force of about 3,000 soldiers. Eusebius recorded, "**...about the twelfth year of the reign of Tiberius, who had succeeded to the empire after Augustus had ruled fifty-seven years, Pontius Pilate was entrusted with the government of Judea, and that he remained there ten full years, almost until the death of Tiberius.**" (Ecclesiastical History, Eusebius, 325CE, Book 1, IX).

A casual reading of the gospel records might give the impression that Pontius Pilate was generally a good man, who succumbed to the pressures of the Jewish hierarchy. A deeper study reveals something contrary. Elder McConkie wrote, "**Pontius Pilate, an evil Roman underling who chose, knowingly, to send an Innocent Man to the cross, lest Tiberius hear the rumor that Jesus claimed to be the King of the Jews, was governor of Judea. The scepter, now departed from Judah, left the chosen people in Gentile hands, and the Gentile hands strangled the Jewish religion.**" (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 250).



- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Herod's Palace - Residence of Pontius Pilate | 7. Roman Theater |
| 2. Harbor Port of Caesarea | 8. Gate to Lydda and Jerusalem |
| 3. Warehouses and Docks | 9. Galilee Gate (to the eastern trade routes) |
| 4. Harbor Lighthouse | 10. Gate to Tyre and Sidon |
| 5. Temple of Caesar Augustus | 11. Roman Aqueduct |
| 6. Roman Amphitheater | |

There are but a few records of Pilate's life. Philo records the following, "**Pilate was one of the emperor's lieutenants, having been appointed governor of Judaea. He, not more with the object of doing honour to Tiberius than with that of vexing the multitude, dedicated some gilt shields in the palace of Herod, in the holy city; which had no form nor any other forbidden thing represented on them except some necessary inscription, which mentioned these two facts, the name of the person who had placed them there, and the person in whose honour they were so placed there. But when the multitude heard what had been done, and when the circumstance became notorious, then the people, putting forward the four sons of the king, who were in no respect inferior to the kings themselves, in fortune or in rank, and his other descendants, and those magistrates who were among them at the time, entreated him to alter and to rectify the innovation which he had committed in respect of the shields; and not to make any alteration in their national customs, which had hitherto been preserved without any interruption, without being in the least degree changed by any king of emperor. "But when he steadfastly refused this petition (for he was a man of a very inflexible disposition, and very merciless as well as very obstinate), they cried out: 'Do not cause a sedition; do not make war upon us; do not destroy the peace which exists. The honour of the emperor is not identical with dishonour to the ancient laws; let it not be to you a pretence for heaping insult on our nation. Tiberius is not desirous that any of our laws or customs shall be destroyed. And if you yourself say that he is, show us either some command from him, or some letter, or something of the kind, that we, who have been sent to you as ambassadors, may cease to trouble you, and may address our supplications to your master.'**" "But this last sentence exasperated him in the greatest possible degree, as he feared least they might in reality go on an embassy to the emperor, and might impeach him with respect to other particulars of his government, in respect of his corruption, and his acts of insolence, and his rapine, and his habit of insulting people, and his cruelty, and his continual murders of people untried and uncondemned, and his never ending, and gratuitous, and most grievous inhumanity. Therefore, being exceedingly angry, and being at all times a man of most ferocious passions, he was in great perplexity, neither venturing to take down what he had once set up, nor wishing to do any thing which could be acceptable to his subjects, and at the same time being sufficiently acquainted with the firmness of Tiberius on these points. And those who were in power in our nation, seeing this, and perceiving that he was inclined to change his

mind as to what he had done, but that he was not willing to be thought to do so, wrote a most supplicatory letter to Tiberius. And he, when he had read it, what did he say of Pilate, and what threats did he utter against him! But it is beside our purpose at present to relate to you how very angry he was, although he was not very liable to sudden anger; since the facts speak for themselves; for immediately, without putting any thing off till the next day, he wrote a letter, reproaching and reviling him in the most bitter manner for his act of unprecedented audacity and wickedness, and commanding him immediately to take down the shields and to convey them away from the metropolis of Judaea to Caesarea, on the sea which had been named Caesarea Augusta, after his grandfather, in order that they might be set up in the temple of Augustus. And accordingly, they were set up in that edifice. And in this way he provided for two matters: both for the honour due to the emperor, and for the preservation of the ancient customs of the city." (On the Embassy to Gaius: The First Part of the Treatise on Virtues, Philo, verse 38).

Because we know so little about Pilate's life, it has made for a good mystery. As is typical with good mysteries, theories and wishful thinking start to fill in the blanks, often being presented as facts. This is the case with Pontius Pilate. An interesting story has developed with no factual foundation. Allegedly, Pontius Pilate married the grand-daughter of Caesar Augustus, which I cannot find on any official pedigree. Her name was Claudia Porcula or Claudia Porcles. As the "story" goes, Porcula accompanied her husband, Pontius Pilate, to Judea. While she was there, she converted to Judaism. One day she dreamt a dream. In the dream, she was told that Jesus was the promised Messiah and that she was to tell her husband to spare his life. Again, there is no evidence that this story is true. In fact, such direction would have gone against the gospel plan and hindered the great atonement from occurring. Nevertheless, the story goes on to say that Tiberius, the Emperor at the time, was sick on the island of Capri with a disease that the doctor's could not cure. He had heard about a great healer amongst the Jews, and sent a servant to bring this healer to him. The servant set out for Judea and Pontius Pilate. In the mean time, Jesus was presented to Pontius Pilate for execution by the Jews. Only the authority of Rome could authorize an execution. Pilate wielded that authority for Judea. Typically, this would not have been a problem for the procurator. Tiberius was not favorable to the Jews, and anyone guilty of insurrection was naturally killed. Pilate would not have been concerned about the death of a Jew. His concern would have been peace in his province. However, the story says that Porcula was urging her husband not to kill Jesus because of her dream. This troubled Pilate, consequently washed his hands of the verdict. He then allowed Jesus to be executed, based on the desires of the Jews. Shortly thereafter, Tiberius' servant arrived to find that Pilate had just killed the healer that Caesar needed. The servant returned with the bad news. ("Homilies of Matthew", Origen, XXXV)

Shortly after Jesus' death, Pilate's rule was brought to an end. Some would argue that the execution of Jesus played a significant role in this. History supports that it had more to do with trouble that arose in Samaria. An imposter claimed that it was in his power to discover the sacred vessels which, as he alleged, had been hidden by Moses on Mount Gerizim. He commanded an army of armed Samaritans in no small numbers. Pilate seems to have thought the whole affair was a trick, covering some other more important design. He quickly gathered his forces to attack them, and many were slain. They appealed to Vitellius, who was at that time legate in Syria, saying that nothing political had been intended, and complaining of Pilate's whole administration. He was summoned to Rome to answer their charges, but before he could reach the city the Emperor Tiberius had died. He was relieved of his post.

The next Emperor was a man named Caius, better known to us as Caligula. Eusebius speaks of Pilate's death, recording, "It is worthy of note that Pilate himself, who was governor in the time of our Savior, is reported to have fallen into such misfortunes under Caius, whose times we are recording, that he was forced to become his own murderer and executioner; and thus divine vengeance, as it seems, was not long in overtaking him. This is stated by those Greek historians who have recorded the Olympiads, together with the respective events which have taken place in each period." (Ecclesiastical History, Eusebius, 325CE, Book 2, VII). There are other non-supported stories of his death. The chronicle of Malalas alleges, with less probability, that he was beheaded under Nero. Ancient church writers take one of two stances on Pontius Pilate. There is a group that feels Pontius Pilate was an innocent bystander in Jesus' death, and because of his wife's alleged conversion, they seem him as some sort of saint. There is another group that see him as an evil man that allowed the Messiah to die. This group supports stories of Pilate dying a horrific death as some sort of penance.

33 - governor – The word "governor" is translated from the Greek word "ἡγεμονεύω" or "hēgemoneuō". It means to command or rule a province. To be a governor, proconsul or procurator. Luke uses the title 'governor' for Pilate. "...This was a generic title for someone holding a high command in a given area; it is also used of Pilate by Josephus (Ant. 18.3.1,55). It was often employed for the governor of Egypt. Ms. D, however, reads epitropeuontos, 'when Pilate was procurator of Judea.' This reading agrees with the Latin title usually given to Pilate, procurator (see Tacitus Annales 15.44,2; Tertullian Apologeticus 21.18). See Mason, Greek Terms, 49, 142-143 (Greek epitropos = 'governing [praesidial] procurators'). This commonly used title, however, is an anachronism for Pilate. It had long been so regarded by Roman historians." (The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 456).

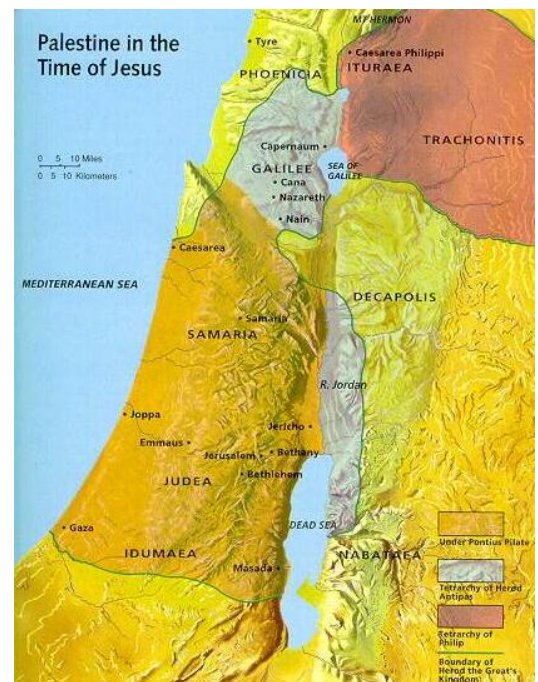
The title of Procurator is preferred by most scholars. "Their view has been confirmed by the discovery in 1961 of a fragmentary inscription at Caesarea Martima, recording the dedication of a building, the Tiberium, apparently erected by Pilate in honor of emperor Tiberius. It not only represents the first epigraphic testimony to Pilate's presence in Judea, but gives him specifically the Latin title, [praef]-ectus iudae[ae]." (The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 456).

34 - Herod – The name "Herod" became a title. It is translated from the Greek word "Ἡρώδης" or "Hērōdēs". His name means "heroic". The Herod spoken of in this verse is Herod Antipas (it is often believed that his name was Antipater and that Antipas was just a nickname), not to be confused with Herod the Great's father, Antipater. Herod Antipas was tetrarch of Galilee. "This is Herod Antipas, the younger son of Malthace and Herod the Great, who received part of his father's realm at his death and ruled from 4 B.C. He received the revenue of Perea and Galilee, which annually yielded a tribute of two hundred talents'. This is the 'Herod' of the rest of the Lucan Gospel. He ruled as tetrarch until A.D. 39, when the emperor Caligula disposed and exiled him for seeking to make the courtesy title of 'king' into a real title." (The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 457).

Antipater was born in 21 BCE. He is often referred to as Antipas. He was the son of Herod the Great and one of his wives, Malthace. Malthace was a Samaritan, which was not a favorable nationality for the Jews. Not much is known of his childhood. In fact, we hear very little of him until the death of his father between 4 BCE and 1 BCE. At the point of Herod the Great's death, Caesar Augustus named him to the throne of Galilee. He would rule, under Rome's authority, a quarter of his father's previous vassal state.

Herod Antipas followed his father's lead as a builder. He undertook building projects in Sepphoris and Betharamphtha. He then constructed a new capital in Galilee, and named it after the Emperor of the time, Tiberius. Since the new capital sat on the west coast of the Sea of Galilee, he renamed the Sea as the Sea of Tiberius. The city of Tiberius would become the seat of rabbinical learning.

Antipas is best known for the circumstances surrounding his marriages. He was first married to the daughter of Aretas IV, king of Nabatea. Her name was Phasaelis. Antipas fell in love with his half-brother Philip II's wife Herodias. Antipas divorced his wife Phasaelis in favor of Herodias. Herodias was the granddaughter of Herod the Great through his wife Mariamne I. Herod Antipas entered into an incest relationship, and sent his first wife packing. John the Baptist criticized Antipas for this behavior. Herodias wanted John killed. Antipas chose to imprison the prophet. Antipas feared killing the prophet, regardless of his disdain for him, so Herodias appealed to Antipas' lust. She must have known him pretty well. She had her daughter Salome



dance for him. As he watched her, his lust increased to the point that he promised to give her whatever she wanted. She asked that her mother's wish be fulfilled and John's head be delivered on a platter. Antipas honored his word, so that he would not be seen as a liar in front of his court. John the Baptist was killed at the command of Herod Antipas. No wonder Elder McConkie wrote; **"Herod Antipas, an evil ruler whose lusts and incestuous life fitted the pattern of the Herods, and who chose to slay the innocent forerunner of the Lord rather than be embarrassed before his court, was Tetrarch of Galilee, and he, ruling in lust and evil, invited a satanic gloom of spiritual darkness to cover his kingdom."** (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 250-251). The beheading of John apparently haunted Antipas for years. **"Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead;"** (Luke 9:7).



When Antipas' first wife arrived safely home, her father, King Aretas IV declared war on Antipas. The war with Nabatea started in 36CE. The war went poorly for Antipas. Philip sided with Aretas, which was not a surprise. Antipas appealed to Tiberius for help. Tiberius ordered the Roman Governor of Syria, Lucius Vitellius to come to his aid. Vitellius took two Roman legions to assist, but help stopped before it really came. Emperor Tiberius dies mid way. Vitellius called off the troops.

A new Emperor took the Roman Throne in 37CE. His name was Caligula. During Tiberius' reign, Herodias' brother Agrippa was imprisoned for declaring that Tiberius should be killed to make way for Caligula to take the throne. When Caligula took the throne, he freed Agrippa and gave him Philip's Tetrarchy, only expanded, and removed the title of tetrarch in favor of the title of "King". This angered Antipas. He subsequently claimed the title of "king" without permission. Agrippa not only reported Antipas' actions to Caligula, but reported that Antipas had stockpiled arms for 70,000 men. Caligula saw this as a threat to the throne, and gave Galilee to Agrippa in 39CE. Antipas and Herodias were placed in exile in Gaul, where he died.

35 - tetrarch – The word "tetrarch" is translated from the Greek word "τετραρχῆω" or "tetraarchēō". A tetrarch is a governor of a fourth part of a region. **"The title 'tetrarch' originally designated one who ruled over a fourth part of an area; by the time of the gospel tradition it had become a stereotyped title for a petty prince."** (The Gospel According to I-IX, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 457). There were obviously four tetrarchs;

- Herod Philip - Tetrarch over Ituraea, Trachontis and the associated lands.
- Herod Antipas - Tetrarch over Galilee.
- Lysanias - Tetrarch over Alibene.
- Pontius Pilate - Governor over Judea

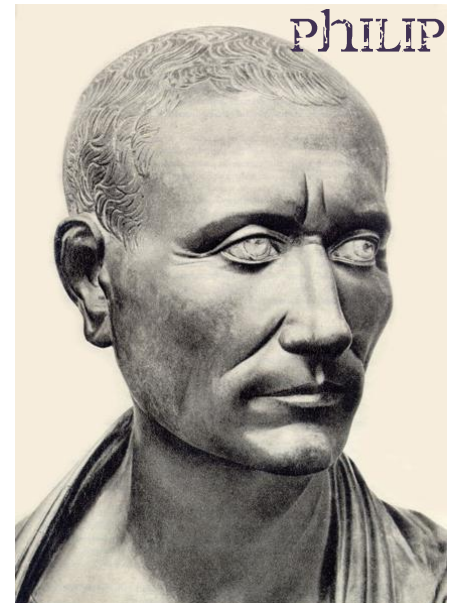
36 - Galilee – The word "Galilee" is translated from the Greek word "Γαλιλαία" or "Galilaia". The word means "Circuit". **"Most of Galilee consists of rocky terrain, at heights of between 500 m (1,640 ft) and 700 m (2,296 ft). Several high mountains are in the region, including Mount Tabor and Mount Meron, which have relatively low temperatures and high rainfall. As a result of this climate, flora and wildlife thrive in the region, while many birds annually migrate from colder climates to Africa and back through the Hula–Jordan corridor. The streams and waterfalls, the latter mainly in Upper Galilee, along with vast fields of greenery and colourful wildflowers, as well as numerous towns of biblical importance, make the region a popular tourist destination. Due to its high rainfall (900 mm (35 inches) –1200 mm (47 inches)), mild temperatures and high mountains (Mount Meron's elevation is 1,000 m (3,281 ft) –1,208 m (3963 ft)), the upper Galilee region contains some distinctive flora and fauna: prickly juniper (Juniperus oxycedrus), Lebanese cedar (Cedrus libani), which grows in a small grove on Mount Meron, cyclamens, paeonias, and Rhododendron ponticum which sometimes appears on Meron."** (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galilee>). Galilee is the bread basket of Palestine. Galilee is full of farms, and fishermen. It give life to the entire region.



The Roman province of Galilee has a southern border of the Valley of Jezreel, an Eastern border of the Sea of Galilee, a Northern border of Lebanon, and a Western border of the Plain of Acre.

37 - brother – The word brother is translated from the Greek word "ἀδελφός" or "adelphos". The word means a biological brother, ancestor, a countryman, fellow believer, or associate, though it general has reference to blood relationship. Philip and Antipas shared the same father, Herod the Great, but not the same mothers. They were half-brothers.

38 - Philip – The name "Philip" is translated from the Greek word "Φίλιππος" or "Philippos". The name means "lover of horses". It should be noted that this Philip is often referred to as "Philip II" to differentiate him from "Philip I" who was an older half brother from Herod the Great's wife Mariamme II. Phillip II, or sometimes he is just called **"Philip, was the son of Herod the Great and Cleopatra of Jerusalem. His tetrarchy is variously described. Luke here mentions only two of the small areas over which he ruled. Not even Josephus was consistent in naming the areas; in Ant 17.11.4 § 319 he lists them as Batanaea, Trachonitis, Auranitis, and part of the domain of Zenodorus, but in Ant 17.8.1 § 189, as Gaulonitis, Trachonitis, Batanaea and Paneas. This may be the reason why Luke uses choras, 'the region of...' mentioning only two of the areas. At any rate, they were east of the Jordan, to the north, bordering on Syria, roughly north of the Decapolis and south of Damascus. Phillip ruled from 4 B.C. until A.D. 34, when he died without an heir, his territory became part of the Roman province of Syria."** (The Gospel According to I-IX, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 457).



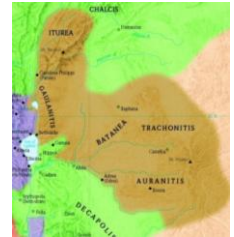
Phillip II is the not the same person as Herod II. Phillip I is called Herod II. All these names can cause quite the confusion. Phillip II was born around 23BCE. He was not originally chosen to succeed Herod the Great; however, in 7BCE Herod the Great executed his sons Alexander and Aristobulus IV for suspected conspiracy. This moved Phillip up the chain and in line for succession. He would have been the sole heir; however, toward the end of Herod the Great's life there was a plot to kill him by poison. The plot was foiled and as it turned out Phillip's mother was discovered to have known about the plot and failed to do or say anything. This infuriated Herod the Great, and he changed his will to eliminate Phillip.

Prior to being removed from the will, Phillip I (not Phillip II) was giving the widow of Aristobulus IV as a wife. Her name was Herodias. They had a daughter together. Her name was Salome. Salome married Phillip II (the Philip we are discussing).

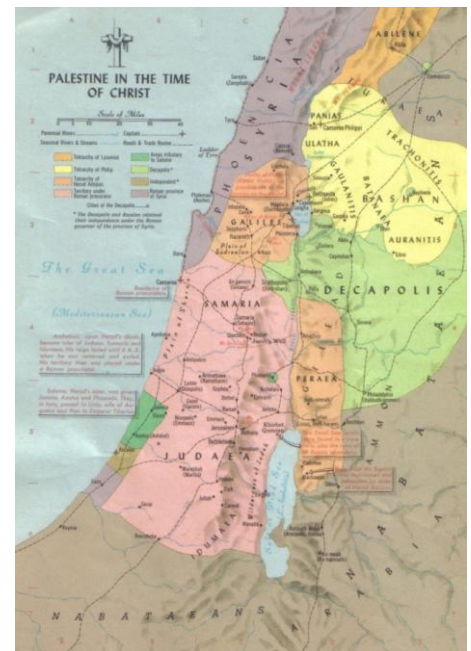
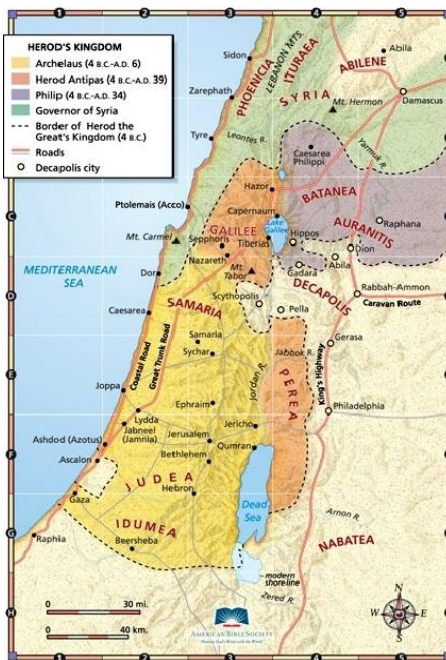
When Caesar Augustus read Herod's will, he honor the request for Archelaus to rule Judea, only he substantially reduced the province of Judea. This left areas of the old province available to for other rulers. Philip was place back in grace by Caesar himself and was "...granted control of the lands north and east of Galilee, including the slopes of Mount Hermon and the Lebanese Beq'a. This area comprised Iturea and Trachonitis. Important towns were Caesarea Philippi, at the foot of Mount Hermon, and Bethsaida, at the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee. South of Iturea were regions called Ulatha and Gaulanitis (today's Golan); south of Trachonitis were Batanea and Auranitis." (The Four Gospels: verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 77).

As if he needed another name to go by, Philip II returned from Rome as Philip the Tetrarch. "Philip the tetrarch, though a milder and more humane ruler than Antipas, yet carried in his veins the blood of Herod the Idumean, and was a symbol of the worldliness that lay upon Jewish Israel. Though less evil than his brother, his rule was far from that which is inspired from above." (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, page 251). Not much is known of him. It is known that Philip the Tetrarch rebuilt the city of Caesarea Philippi, calling it by his own name to distinguish it from the Caesarea on the sea-coast, which was the seat of the Roman government. Philip the Tetrarch died in 34cE.

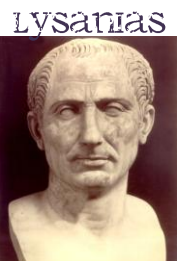
39 - Ituræa – The word "Ituræa" is translated from the Greek word "Ἰτουραῖος" or "Itouraios". The word means "past the limits" or "he will arrange". Iturea Ancient Greek: Ἰτουραία, Itouraiá is the Greek name of a Levantine region north of Galilee during the Late Hellenistic and early Roman periods. It extended from Mount Lebanon across the plain of Massyas to the Anti-Lebanon mountains in Syria, with its centre in Chalcis. "A mountainous region, lying northeast of Palestine and west of Damascus. At the time when John the Baptist made his public appearance it was subject to Philip the tetrarch, son of Herod the Great, among the regions assigned to this prince after his father's death. It was brought under Jewish control by king Aristobulus around 100 B.C. Its inhabitants had been noted for robbery and skilful use of the bow." (Strong's Concordance of the Bible).



40 - Trachonitis – The word "Trachonitis" is translated from the Greek word "Τραχωνίτις" or "Trachōnitis". The word means "a rugged region". "A rough region, inhabited by robbers, situated between Antilibanus on the west and on the east by the mountains of Batanaea and on the north by the territory of Damascus" (Strong's Concordance to the Bible).



41 - Lysanias – The name "Lysanias" is translated from the Greek word "Λυσανίας" or "Lysanias". The name means "that drives away sorrow".



We know very little of this man. "But who was Lysanias? He is scarcely the Lysanias, son of Ptolemaeus, "king" of Chalcis in Coele-Syria; this Lysanias was put to death by Mark Anthony at the instigation of the Egyptian Cleopatra in 36 B.C. Such a 'gross chronological blunder' has at times been ascribed to Luke, but gratuitously. However vague references in Josephus, referring to an 'Abila, which belonged to Lysanias' (Ant. 20.7,1 § 215; 2.12,8 § 247) in contexts mentioning Chalcis or the territory given over to Herod Agrippa, seem to refer to a Lysanias different from the one put to death by Mark Anthony. This is also suggested by two fragmentary Greek inscriptions which mention a 'Lysanias the tetrarch' (CIG 4521, 4523), one of which names still another Lysanias. Possibly a descendant of the son of Ptolemaeus is involved. But we have no way of identifying the Lucan Lysanias with either of these persons." (The Gospel According to I-IX, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 457-458).

42 - Abilene – The word "Abilene" is translated from the word "Ἀβιληνή" or "Abilēnē". The word means "grassy meadow". It is a region of Syria between Lebanon and Hermon towards Phoenicia, 18 miles from Damascus and 37 miles from Heliopolis. "Abilene (Abilēnē) or simply Abila was a plain, a district in Coele-Syria, of which the chief town was Abila Lysaniou (Abilan de tēn Lusaniou). The limits of this region are nowhere exactly defined, but it seems to have included the eastern slopes of Anti-Lebanon range, and to have extended south and southeast of Damascus as far as the borders of Galilaea, Batanaea, and Trachonitis. According to Flavius Josephus, Abilene was a separate Iturean kingdom until 37 AD. Abilene, when first mentioned in history, was governed by a certain Ptolemaeus, son of Mennaues, who was succeeded, about 40 BC, by a



son named Lysanias. Lysanias was put to death in 33 BC, at the instigation of Cleopatra, and the principality passed, by a sort of purchase apparently, into the hands of one Zenodorus, from whom it was transferred (31 BC) to Herod the Great. At the death of the latter (4 BC) one portion of it was annexed to the tetrarchy of his son Herod Philip II, and the remainder bestowed upon that Lysanias who is named by Luke." ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abilene_\(biblical\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abilene_(biblical))). Another source writes, "Abilene was a region named after its capital city, Abila (not to be confused with Abila, a city of the Decapolis farther south), which was situated about twenty miles northwest of Damascus. The governor of Abilene, Lysanias, is mentioned not only by Luke but on an inscription at Abila dating from the reign of Tiberius." (The Four Gospels: verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 77).

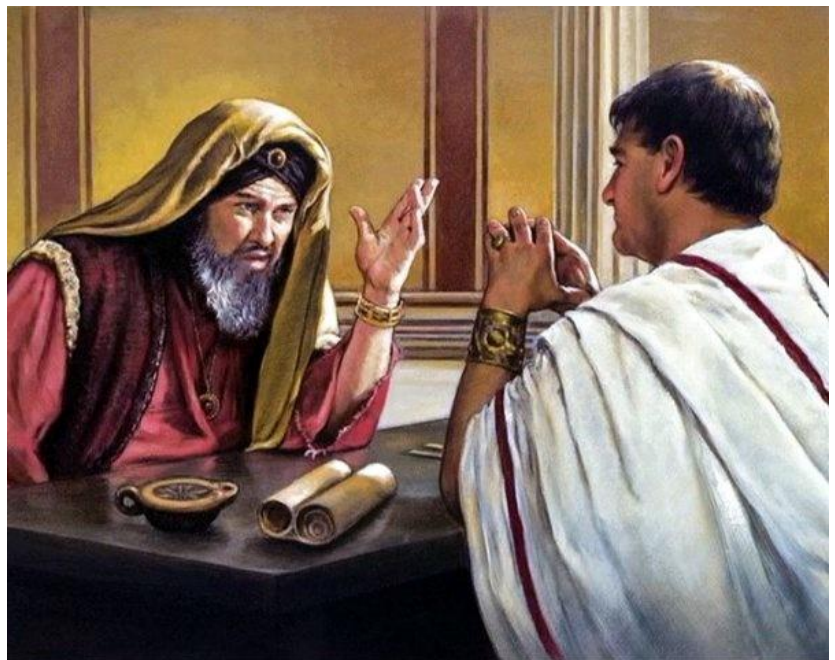
- 43 - **Annas** – The name "Annas" is translated from the Greek word "Ἄννας" or "Annas". His name means "humble", which is an oxymoron. Elder McConkie wrote, "Luke speaks also of 'Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests,' which is itself an announcement of the spiritual degeneracy of the nation. In olden times high priests were called of god; not so in these days. Annas had been appointed by Quirinius, and we may suppose he had such influence with the Lord as Quirinius was able to confer, which was not enough, however, to keep him from being disposed by Valerius Gratus (Pilate's predecessor), who then named Caiaphas to the presiding position. He was deposed in due course by Vitellius in A.D. 37. Caiaphas was the son-in-law of Annas, and both of them exercised power and influence with the people." (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 251).



Annas is also referred to as Ananus or Ananias. He was the son of Seth, though we know nothing of his father. It is estimated that he was born in either 23BCE or 22BCE. The year of his death is unknown, but probably around 40CE. He was appointed by the Roman legate Quirinius as the first High Priest of the Roman province of Iudaea in 6CE. He was the first High Priest not appointed by a Herod in decades. His appointment came after the Romans removed Archelaus as the Ethnarch of Judaea. Thereafter, Judaea was governed directly under Roman rule. Annas officially served as High Priest for ten years (6–15CE), when at the age of 36 he was deposed by the procurator Gratus. Yet while having been officially removed from office, he remained as one of the nation's most influential political and social individuals, aided greatly by the use of his five sons and his son-in-law as puppet High Priests. His death is unrecorded, but his son Annas the Younger, also known as Ananus ben Ananus was assassinated in 66CE for advocating peace with Rome.

The succession of high priests in Jerusalem is as follows: "To the civil rulers Luke now adds mention of religious leaders of Palestinian Judaism. Annas, or Ananus, son of Seth, was appointed high priest by the Roman governor, P. Sulpicius Quirinius, in A.D. 6 and held this position until he was disposed in A.D. 15. He was succeeded by Ishmael, son of Phiabi (A.D. 15), Eleazar, his own son (16-17), Simon, son of Camith (17-18), and eventually by his son-in-law, Joseph, called Caiaphas. The latter held the post of high priest from A.D. 18-36." (The Gospel According to I-X, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 458).

The fact that Luke calls out both Annas and Caiaphas as the "high priests" is puzzling. "Just what Luke intends by 'the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas' is not easy to say. Since there was never more than one high priest at a time, the phrase raises a question again about either the accuracy of Luke's information or of his interpretation. On the other hand, it may have been customary to speak of an ex-high priest as such even when he was already out of office, and Luke may simply be referring to a period when Palestinian Jewry was dominated by two powerful figures." (The Gospel According to I-X, The Anchor/Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 458). Another theory would be that one served as Nasi and the other served as Av bat Din. The Nasi, or High Priest, was the high position in the Jewish religious structure. The Nasi, which is literally "prince", was a patriarch or head of the court. He presided over trials. The Nasi had the power to appoint and suspend community leaders inside and outside of Israel. The Romans respected the Nasi and gave extra land to him as well as control of his own taxation of the people for self governance. These taxes were above and beyond Roman tax. The position of Nasi had been the position that the prophet held. For decades there was no prophet. The Nasi position was re-created by the Jewish Sanhedrin in 135BCE after finding a lack of confidence in the Av beit Din. In a way, they started to appoint their own prophet. The Av Beit din was a member of the 70 person Sanhedrin. He was in a sense the vice-president of the council, and the next in line to be the Nasi. When there was no prophet, he was in charge. He also presided when the Nasi was not available. It is possible that when Luke referred to Annas and Caiaphas as the high priests, he meant the Nasi and Av Beit Din. Both Annas and Caiaphas had key roles in the Savior's crucifixion. John wrote, "And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people." (John 18:13-14).



- 44 - **Caiaphas** – The name "Caiaphas" is translated from the Greek word "Καϊάφας" or "Kaiaphas". His name is of Aramaic origin and means "as comely". Caiaphas was "A high priest of the Jews appointed to that office by Valerius Gratus, governor of Judaea, after removal of Simon, son of Camith, A.D. 18, and was removed A.D. 36 by Vitellius, governor of Syria, who appointed Jonathan, son of Ananus (Annas, father-in-law of Caiaphas), his successor." (Strong's Concordance of the Bible). Caiaphas would have been the Nasi or High Priest at the time of John the Baptist's ministry. It is probable that Annas served as Av Beit Din during his time as Nasi.
- 45 - **high priests** – The phrase "high priests" is translated from a single Greek word, "ἀρχιερεύς" or "archiereus". The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints defines a High Priest as, "An office of the Melchizedek Priesthood. A high priest has the right to officiate in the Church. Stake presidents, mission presidents, high councilors, bishops and their counselors, and other leaders of the Church are ordained as high priests." The presiding High Priest of the church is the prophet. At the time of Jesus, the position of High Priest had been corrupted and altered. Strong's dictionary defines the High Priest as, "The high priests, these comprise in addition to one holding the high priestly office, both those who had previously discharged it and although disposed, continued to have great power in the State, as well as the members of the families from which high priest were created, provided that they had much influence in public affairs." (Strong's Concordance of the Bible). Clearly the office of High Priest, at the time of Christ, was more of a political office. It was one that was appointed by government officials rather than called of God. The High Priest over saw taxations and helped run the local politics.
- 46 - **the word** – The word "word" is translated is translated from the Greek word "ῥῆμα" or "rhēma". It is used for that which is or has been uttered by the living voice, a thing spoken, or a word.

The Hebrew for "word" is;

דבר

ר - Head of Man, first, top, beginning

ב - Tent, family, house, in

ד - Door, move, hang, entrance

The Paleo Hebrew would consequently carry the idea that it is by the word, that we "enter into God's presence or house". This is fascinating since one of the names for Jesus is the word.

47 - God – The word "God" is translated from the Greek word "θεός" or "theos". It is a general name for deity. It is often used in relation to the only true and living god.

48 - Zacharias – The name "Zacharias" is translated from the Greek word "Ζαχαρίας" or "Zacharias". The name literally means, "remembered of Jehovah". Zacharias was the literal mortal father of John the Baptist. Zacharias was a direct descendant of Aaron, as was his wife Elisabeth. This gave their son John the legal qualification necessary to hold the priesthood. Only those with the appropriate pedigree had the right to the Priesthood. The mention of Zacharias is included in the ancient script to give validity to John's use of the Priesthood.