

2020-2021 Bible Study

#11

12/1/20

Acts 12

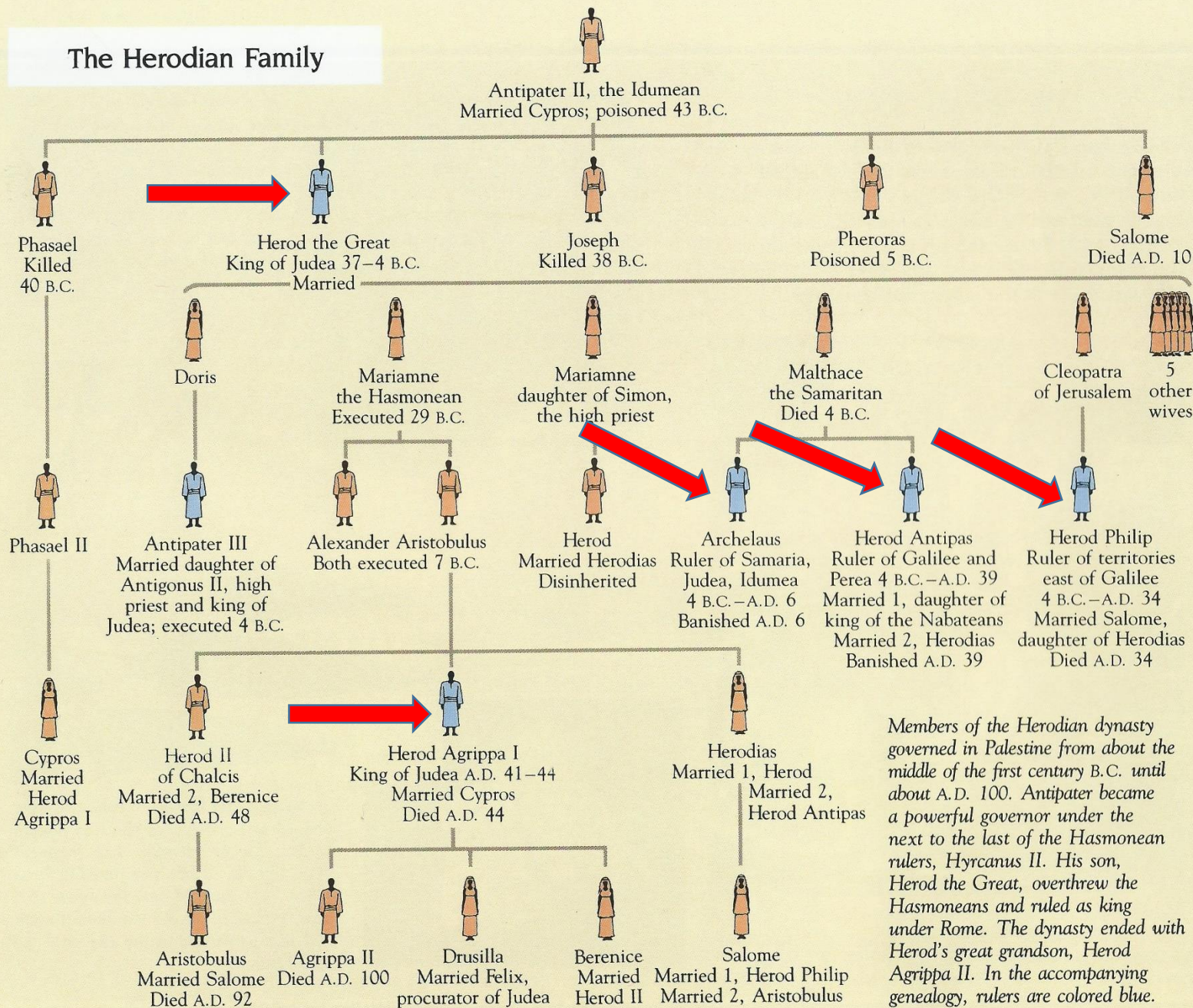
Review of Last Week

- Last class, we saw the Church for the first time opening up to the Gentile world
- We learned of the Roman Centurion, a God-fearer who in a dream sent for Peter
- We heard about Peter's threefold dream of clean and unclean animals and how it related to his going to the house of Cornelius
- We saw the descent of the Holy Spirit on Cornelius and his family resulting in Peter (along with six Jewish brothers) deciding to baptize them marking the first time non Jews were baptized into the Church
- Then, we were exposed to the beginning of the rift in the early Church between the Circumcised Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians

Acts 12

- **Acts 12:1-3** *“About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. He killed James the brother of John with the sword...This was during the days of unleavened break”*
 - This James (the older brother of John) was the first martyr among the Apostles
 - He was not the James who served as the first bishop of Jerusalem
 - Father pointed out that there were several men named James in the New Testament causing a great deal of speculation as to who each one was

The Herodian Family



Members of the Herodian dynasty governed in Palestine from about the middle of the first century B.C. until about A.D. 100. Antipater became a powerful governor under the next to the last of the Hasmonean rulers, Hyrcanus II. His son, Herod the Great, overthrew the Hasmoneans and ruled as king under Rome. The dynasty ended with Herod's great grandson, Herod Agrippa II. In the accompanying genealogy, rulers are colored blue.

Acts 12 (Cont)

- **Acts 12:4-17** *“And when he had seized him, he put him in prison,...Then he departed and went to another place”*
 - Here we see Peter being arrested and then freed from prison by an angel
 - When he realized that he had escaped, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark
 - This man was not John the Evangelist or Apostle
 - He, like Saul/Paul of Tarsus, had a Jewish and Roman name
 - This Mark was most likely the Mark who initially accompanied Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey and the author of the Gospel of Mark
 - In this story, Peter goes to the house of Mary who was Mark’s mother

Acts 12 (Cont)

- When he was finally allowed to enter, he decides that he must flee Jerusalem due to the heavy persecution within the city for his own protection
- Jesus taught His disciples that “when you are in one town and they persecute you, flee to the next”
- They were advised not to wait around and risk being put to death
- Thus, Peter who obviously had more work to do, departed and went to another place
- We do not know exactly where he went
- Some speculate that he went to Rome, but that is unlikely as he will be in Jerusalem again very soon
- Many believed that he was somewhere in the regions, most likely Galilee

Acts 12 (Cont)

- **Acts 12: 18-25** *“Now when they came, there was no small stir among the soldiers over what had become of Peter...with them John whose other name was Mark”*
 - It looks like *Herod* was angry with the people of *Tyre* and *Sidon*
 - Later, we will hear about *Herod's* terrible death after which he was eaten by worms
 - This sounds similar to the death of *Antiochus Epiphanes* (**2nd Maccabees**)
 - At this point, *Barnabas* and *Saul* returned from *Antioch* to Jerusalem with *John Mark*

Acts 13

Acts 13

- **Acts 13:1-3** *“Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers,...Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off”*
 - Father said to notice that the Holy Spirit speaks in the first person
 - The Book of Acts contains the most information concerning the Holy Spirit (*Pneumatology*- our understanding of the spirit)
 - This means that the Holy Spirit is not some sort of impersonal force or something like “Star Wars” (which is the way the Jehovah’s Witness understand his role)
 - They see it as some sort of “God Juice” which flows out and does stuff (but they do not see Him as a person, which is contrary to what we see here in Acts)

Acts 13 (Cont)

- **Acts 13:4** *“So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, he went down to Seleucia; and from there they sailed to **Cyprus**”*
 - It was the Holy Spirit that sent Paul and Barnabas from Antioch to Cyprus on their first Missionary Journey
 - Cyprus was the first stop on this journey because Barnabas and Mark were from there as most likely their families had fled there during the diaspora
 - Then they traveled through *Presidia* in *Pamphylia* and then on to *Galatia* (Part of Asia Minor, in modern-day Turkey)
 - After leaving Cyprus, they stopped at Antioch (in Presidia)

Acts 13 (Cont)

- It is important to remember that there were two cities called Antioch
 - Antioch in Syria
 - Antioch in Presidia
- After this, they traveled to Iconium, Lystra and finally Derby
- Derby is right next to Tarsus (Saul's home town) but they decided not to go straight back to Antioch (in Syria), but to reverse the route and revisited each of their churches

Acts 13 (Cont)

- **Acts 13:5** *“When they arrived at **Salamis**, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them.”*
 - Whenever Paul and Barnabas arrived in a town, they waited until the Sabbath to visit the town’s Jewish Synagogue
 - Only the Jews were awaiting for the coming Messiah
 - Jews only attended Synagogue on Sabbath because for the rest of the week it was closed
 - The local Jewish men gathered on Sabbath to listen to the Torah, sing Psalms, hear preaching for someone in the congregation, and then go home
 - Paul and Barnabas would go to the synagogue every week until the synagogue official threw them out and then they would go to the market place and invite the Gentiles to come into the church

Acts 13 (Cont)

- **Acts 13:6** *“When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they came upon a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, named Bar-Jesus”*
 - This means *“son of Jesus”*
 - *“Joshua”* or *“Jesus”* was a common name in the first century
 - Father said to highlight the statement, *“Saul was also called Paul”*
 - After Paul rebuked the man, he was made blind
 - Father stated that we do not know for sure why Luke began to refer to Saul as Paul at this point in his gospel
 - One theory is that they meet the pro-council named *Sergius Paulus* at this point and this triggered his mind concerning Paul’s name

Acts 13 (Cont)

- As does John Mark have two names, so does Saul Paul
- John has a Jewish name *Yohanan* and a Latin Gentile name *Marcam*
- *Saul* was his Jewish name and *Paul* was his Gentile name
- These people lived in a bilingual region of the world
- Father pointed out that he has met many people in California who have a Hispanic name and an English name

Acts 13 (Cont)

- **Acts 13:13** *“Now Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos, and came to Perga in Pamphylia. And John left them and returned to Jerusalem”*
 - Father pointed out that we do not know why John Mark returned to Jerusalem at this time
 - He reminded us that the Holy Spirit had sent Paul and Barnabas apart for this journey, but did not mention Mark
 - Perhaps it was not His will that he be a part of the mission and for that reason he might have decided to bail out
 - But, whatever the reason, Paul was not happy about it

Acts 13 (Cont)

- **Acts 13:14-15** *“but they passed on from Perga and came to Antioch of Pisidia. And on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down... Brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it”*
 - Father said that this was one of the most classic passages that the 1st Day Adventist brings up when debating with a Catholic
 - It is all about what they did and where they went
 - They did not go in and sing Kumbaya, they preached the good news about Jesus
 - From this point until (**Acts 13:42**), we hear Paul speak the *Kerygma* to the Jews in the Synagogue

Acts 13 (Cont)

- **Acts 13:42-45** *“As they went out, the people begged that these things might be told them the next Sabbath...and contradicted what was spoken by Paul, and reviled him”*
 - The people did not ask to hear from Paul and Barnabas the next day because everyone had to go to work
 - The next time they could gather was on the following Sabbath
 - The Jews were jealous after the second gathering because almost the entire town seems to have wanted to join this new movement
 - It was also perceived as a threat to the Jews since most of those seeking to join had never indicated a desire to become a Jewish God-fearer or proselyte
 - It seemed obvious that Paul was separating his movement from the Jewish synagogue, so the Jewish leadership decided to kick him out of town