



"Repentance: A Direct Approach"

Luke 3:1-3

Sept. 26, 2021

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- 30 years have passed since the birth of Jesus.
- Deaths: Zacharias and Elizabeth, Joseph, Simeon, and Anna.
- Mary is in her mid 40's.
- Jesus is in a small obscure village, Nazareth,
- John is a "desert man" living in the wilderness. Tough life. Cut off from much of the political and religious life going on. That's good.
- Another period of silence like 400 years – no prophet, no word from God, no Gabriel.

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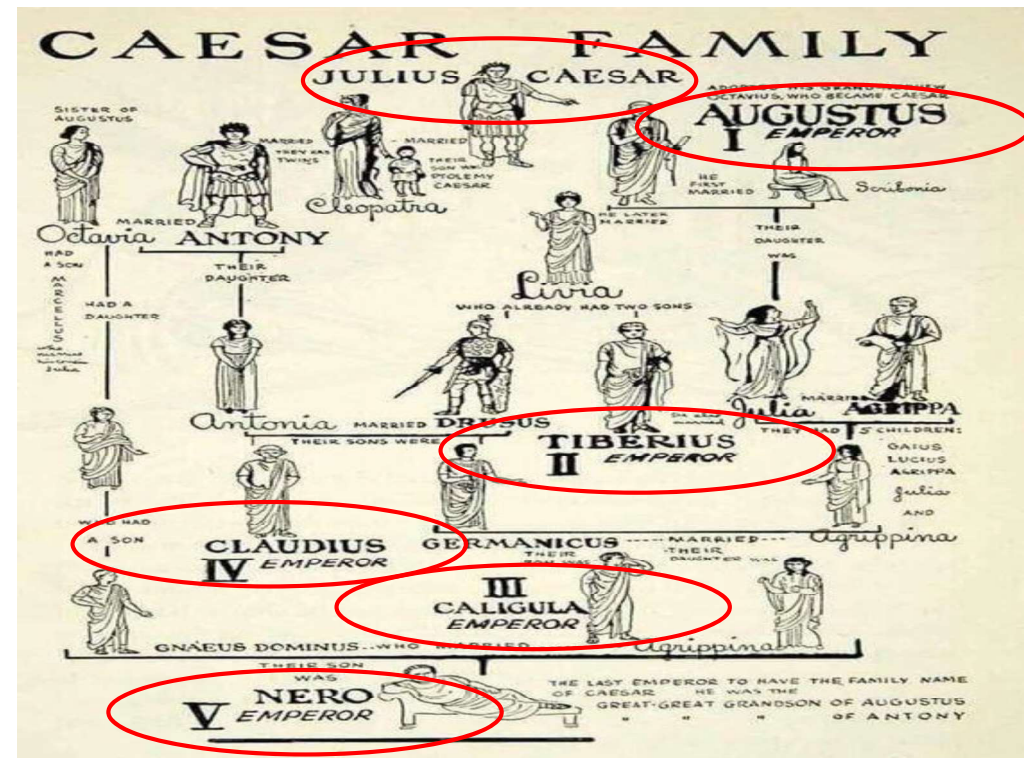
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 1. Establishing historical credibility.
 2. Revealing the wickedness of the time in which they lived.
- Let's look at who these people are.

5 political rulers: (all are Gentiles, powermongers, egomaniacs, idolators.)

1. **Tiberius** - emperor known for his cruelty, "reign of terror", persecuted the Jews.

If someone were to say to someone 500 years from now that Dick Johnson was born in southern Minnesota, came to Maple Grove, MN, started SNBF in the 4th year of the 2nd term of Barack Obama as president of the United States, and Mark Dayton was governor of Minnesota, and Betsy Hodges was mayor in Minneapolis, what year did SNBF start?



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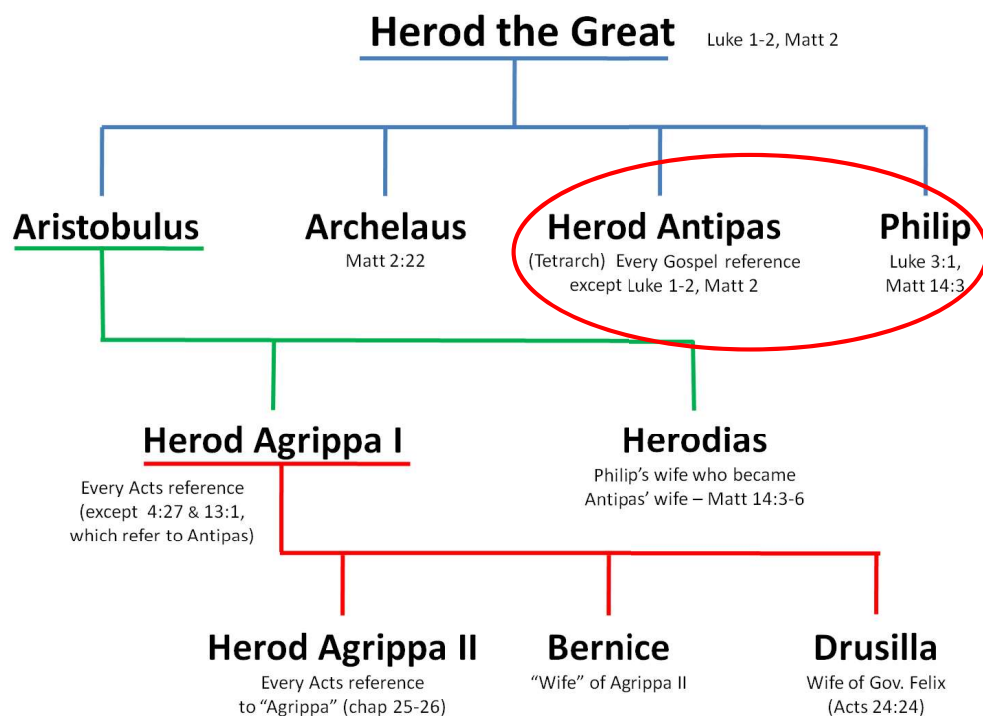
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2. **Pontius Pilate** - governor known for his brutality of the Jewish people in Judea, and his cruelty towards the Jews. One writer says "his rule was characterized by briberies, insults, robberies, outrageous acts, wanton injuries, frequent executions without trial, and endless savage ferocity."

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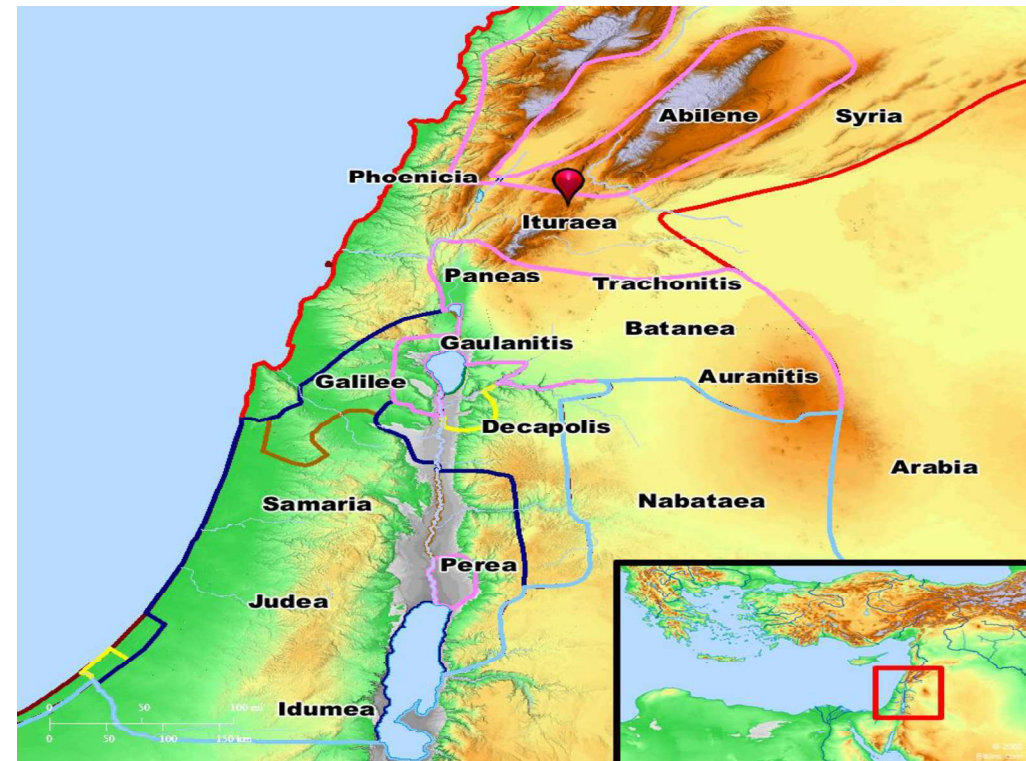
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5. **Lysanias** – unknown.

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2 Religious Rulers:

1. **Annas** – High Priest. Ran the Temple with greed and corruption. Power politics.
2. **Caiaphas** – High Priest. Son-in-Law of Annas. Ran the Temple with Annas.

So Israel is living under some wicked leadership . . .

How do we explain these wicked rulers?

1. GOD PUTS RULERS IN OFFICE.

Dan 2:21

He removes kings and establishes kings;

2. GOD SOVEREIGNLY DIRECTS THE HEARTS OF RULERS.

Prov 21:1

1 The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the Lord;

He turns it wherever He wishes.

3. GOD USES THE WICKED FOR HIS GLORY.

Prov 16:4

4 The Lord has made everything for its own purpose,

Even the wicked for the day of evil.

Note: Today is no different than past centuries, past cultures, past leaders and rulers. If we think so, we just don't know our history. Our reference point is our lifetime. Civilization has been through this hundreds of times.

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- And in the midst of all of it God comes to John.
- His word (ρημα – specific word) rest heavily upon him. επι – upon
- Which John? Son of Zacharias.

“in the wilderness” – John has no political or religious connections. Can't be bought off or bribed. No money, no power, no influence.

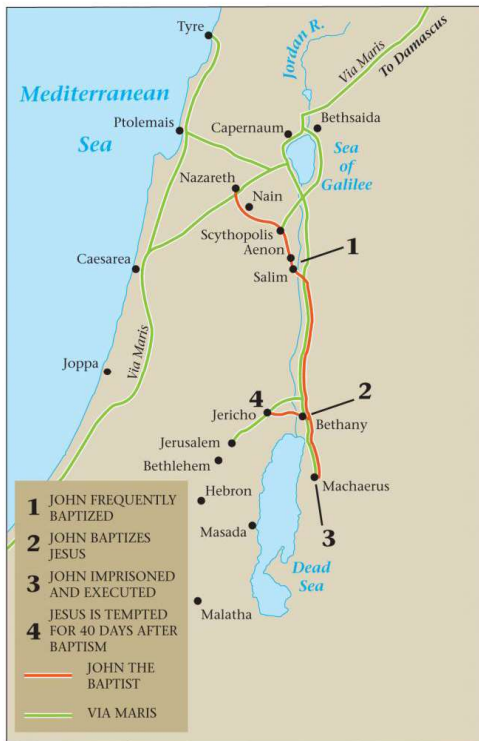
- This is where John was prepared for his ministry.

Luke 1:80

80 And the child continued to grow and to become strong in spirit, and he lived in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

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- Let's look at a map . . .



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- Let's look at the map . . .
- So this is John's place of ministry, his mission field.
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- John begins to preach. "preach" – to herald – κηρυσσω.
- **"repentance"** – μετανοεω – "to have an after thought. To think about things differently. To turn your life in the opposite direction.
- **Repentance** is the recognition of our need for forgiveness of sin because we are sinners and bankrupt to save ourselves.
- **Repentance** is not "feelings" but godly sorrow that leads to a desire to change.

2 Cor 7:9

9 I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance;

- Comes from the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

“Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, does with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.”

- Westminster Confession

Luke 15:7

7 "I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

Luke 1:17

17 "It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

2 Tim 2:25

25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth,

2 Chron 7:14

14 and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Is. 55:6-7

6 Seek the Lord while He may be found;

Call upon Him while He is near.

7 Let the wicked forsake his way

And the unrighteous man his thoughts;

And let him return to the Lord,

And He will have compassion on him,

And to our God,

For He will abundantly pardon.

Ezek 18:30-32

30 "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, each according to his conduct," declares the Lord God. "Repent and turn away from all your transgressions, so that iniquity may not become a stumbling block to you.

31 "Cast away from you all your transgressions which you have committed and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! For why will you die, O house of Israel?

32 "For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies," declares the Lord God. "Therefore, repent and live."

Baptism

“βαπτίζω” – to immerse. It is a demonstration that the cloth is identified with the dye.

- John’s baptism was a demonstration outwardly that the person had a change of heart and desired to be forgiven of their sin.

Rom 6:3-4

3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Acts 19:1-6

1 It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, and found some disciples.

2 He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

3 And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism."

4 Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus."

5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

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- John’s baptism was a demonstration outwardly that the person had a change of heart and desired to be forgiven of their sin.
- John’s baptism would be very offensive to the Jew.
- Baptism does not do anything. It is an external.
- A person can be baptized without a change of heart.
- We have millions of people around the world that have been baptized but have not had a change of heart. They are not saved.
- That is why infant baptism is meaningless.
- John was therefore confronting Israel, and anyone who would come, with their sin.