

THE REIGN OF TIBERIUS POINTS TO THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

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The first three chapters of Luke give us the framework for understanding the chronology of the life of Jesus. The first chapter tells us that Jesus was born during the reign of Herod the Great. It also tells us that he was conceived in the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy and she conceived after Zacharias, her husband, served in the temple in the Course of Abijah. The second chapter of Luke gives us the framework of the Census that was decreed by Augustus and finished by Cyrenius. It was this census that drew Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem where Jesus was born. The third chapter of Luke gives us the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius as the time when Jesus was baptized when he began to be about 30 years of age. The life of Jesus fits perfectly between the reign of Herod and that of Tiberius. The others that Luke mentions in these scriptures also fit in with the chronology.

Luk 3:1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of (1) TIBERIUS CAESAR, (2) PONTIUS PILATE being governor of Judaea, and (3) HEROD being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother (4) PHILIP tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and (5) LYSANIAS the tetrarch of Abilene,

Luk 3:2 (6) ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

Luk 3:3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

Luk 3:21 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

Luk 3:23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was [the son] of Heli,

(1) THE REIGNS OF AUGUSTUS AND TIBERIUS CAESAR

Augustus is considered the first emperor of the Roman Empire, which he ruled alone from 27 BC until his death in 14 AD. He had only one child, a daughter Julia. He adopted Lucius and Gaius Caesar who were his two grandsons by his daughter and her husband Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa. They would have been his heirs, but Lucius died in 2 AD and Gaius was killed in 4 AD in Armenia. So Augustus adopted Tiberius, son of his wife, Livia, by her first husband, Tiberius Claudius Neroas, and made him full son and heir. Along with his adoption, Tiberius received 'tribunician power'. This meant that his person was said to be sacred and inviolable. He could annul any decree of the senate and interfere with acts of other magistrates. Any one could appeal to him from courts of justice.

He could convoke the senate and put to vote any proposal he thought proper to make. He also received a share of Augustus's 'maius imperium' meaning that he was more powerful than all others. Then in 12 AD the powers held by Tiberius were made equal, rather than second, to Augustus. He was a 'co-princeps' or 'co-regent' with Augustus. Augustus died in 14 AD and Tiberius Julius Caesar was confirmed as his sole surviving heir. Tiberius was Roman Emperor from 14 AD to 37 AD when he died.

That Tiberius became co-princeps with Augustus in 12 AD is confirmed by

Suetonius: De Vita Caesarum--Tiberius

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/suet-tiberius-rolfe.html>

“XX. After two years he returned to the city from Germania [12 A.D.] and celebrated the triumph which he had postponed, accompanied also by his generals, for whom he had obtained the triumphal regalia. ...

XXI. 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; ...”

That Augustus died in 14 AD 16 months after he made a will is confirmed by:

Seutonius; De Vita Caesarum: Augustus:

“CI. He had made a will in the consulship of Lucius Plancus and Gaius Silius on the third day before the Nones of April [April 3, 13 A.D.], a year and four months before he died, in two note-books, written in part in his own hand and in part in that of his freedmen Polybius and Hilarion.”

As you see in the following chart, the reign of Tiberius is counted according to Luke to include the co-regent years with Augustus, and his 15th year matches perfectly with Jesus' baptism at about age 30 in 26 AD.

The chart again, shows that the reign of Tiberius is counted according to Josephus to NOT include the co-regent years with Augustus and his 20th year matches up with the year Philip, (brother of Herod Archelaus and son of Herod the Great) died in 33 AD after reigning 37 years.

Jos Ant 18:4:6 “About this time it was that Philip, Herod's ' brother, departed this life, in the twentieth year of the reign of Tiberius, after he had been tetrarch of Trachonitis and Gaulanitis, and of the nation of the Bataneans also, thirty-seven years.”

Years BC AD	Reign of Augustus	Reign of Herod	Life of Jesus	Reign of Tiberius	Reign of Philip Herod's son	Reign of Antipas Herod's son	Reign of Archelaus Herod's son	Pontius Pilate	Caiaphas High Priest
40		1	Herod became King at Rome						
39		2							
38		3							
37		4	1	Herod became King of Judea					
36		5	2						
35		6	3						
34		7	4						
33		8	5						
32		9	6						
31		10	7	Battle of Actium & earthquake in Judea in 7 th year of Herod					
30		11	8						
29		12	9						
28		13	10						
27	1	14	11						
26	2	15	12						
25	3	16	13						
24	4	17	14						
23	5	18	15						
22	6	19	16						
21	7	20	17						
20	8	21	18						
19	9	22	19						
18	10	23	20						
17	11	24	21						
16	12	25	22						
15	13	26	23						

14	14	27 24							
13	15	28 25							
12	16	29 26							
11	17	30 27							
10	18	31 28							
9	19	32 29							
8	20	33 30							
7	21	34 31							
6	22	35 32							
5	23	36 33	0 Jesus born in fall of 5 BC						
4	24	37 34	1	Left row reign	1	1	1		
3	25	Herod and	2	of Tiberius	2	2	2		
2	26	Antipater III	3	Agrees with Luk	3	3	3		
1	27	co-regent	4	3:1 - Baptism of	4	4	4		
1	28	since 7 BC	5	Christ - Tiberius	5	5	5		
2	29	both died in	6	co-regent with	6	6	6		
3	30	spring 4 BC	7	Augustus from	7	7	7		
4	31		8	12 AD.	8	8	8		
5	32		9	Right row reign	9	9	9		
6	33		10	of Tiberius	10	10	10	10 deposed	
7	34		11	Agrees with Jos	11	11			
8	35		12	Ant 18:4:6 -	12	12			
9	36		13	Philip's reign -	13	13			
10	37		14	Not counting	14	14			
11	38		15	co-regent years	15	15			
12	39		16	1	16	16			
13	40		17	2	17	17			
14	41 died		18	3 1	18	18			
15			19	4 2	19	19			
16			20	5 3	20	20			

17			21	6	4	21	21			
18			22	7	5	22	22			1
19			23	8	6	23	23			2
20			24	9	7	24	24			3
21			25	10	8	25	25			4
22			26	11	9	26	26			5
23			27	12	10	27	27			6
24			28	13	11	28	28			7
25			29	14	12	29	29			8
26	Jesus baptized 15 th yr of Tiberius		30	15	13	30	30		1	9
27	fall of 26 AD age 30 - Luk		31	16	14	31	31		2	10
28	3:1,21		32	17	15	32	32		3	11
29			33	18	16	33	33		4	12
30	Death of Jesus		33 1/2	19	17	34	34		5	13
31	The Hebrew year 29 AD began in the fall			20	18	35	35		6	14
32	(Tishri) of 29 AD and ended in the fall			21	19	36	36		7	15
33	(Elul) of 30 AD. The Passover of Jesus'			22	20	37 died	37		8	16
34	. death, Wednesday, April 5, 30 AD, was			23	21		38		9	17
35	in the middle of this year			24	22		39		10	18
36				25	23		40		11	19
37				26 died	24		41			
38							42			
39							43 exiled			
40										

(2) PONTIUS PILATE

Pontius Pilate was the fifth Prefect of the Roman province of Judaea, from 26–36 AD. As you see in the chart, Pilate was Prefect when the baptism of Jesus took place in 26 AD just as Luke says that he was. He was also Prefect at the time of the death of Jesus in 30 AD. Matthew tells us that Pilate washed his hands at this time to illustrate that he was innocent of the blood of Jesus. (Mat 27:24)

Pilate is also confirmed by Josephus as having condemned Jesus to death.

Jos Ant 18:3:3 “Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, (9) those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day; (10) as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day. “

The sources for Pilate's life are the four gospels, the works of Philo, Josephus, Tacitus, and an inscription known as the Pilate Stone that establishes his title as prefect.

(3) HEROD TETRARCH OF GALILEE

This was Herod Antipas, youngest of three sons to whom Herod the Great divided his kingdom according to his last will just before his death in the spring of 4 BC. Because Judea was a Roman client kingdom, Herod's will had to be ratified by the Emperor Augustus. Herod's three heirs traveled to Rome to make their claims. The oldest son Archelaus argued that he ought to inherit the whole kingdom. Antipas and Philip argued that Herod's final will should be honored. Augustus confirmed the division of territory set forth in Herod's will except that Archelaus received the title of Ethnarch instead of King. Antipas was to rule Galilee and Peraea as Tetrarch.

Herod Antipas is the one who married his brother Philip's wife Herodias and had John the Baptist put to death. He ruled until 39 AD when he was accused by his nephew Agrippa I of conspiracy against the new Roman emperor Caligula, who sent him into exile in Gaul.

(4) PHILIP TETRARCH OF ITURAEA AND OF THE REGION OF TRACHONITIS

Philip inherited the northeast part of his father's kingdom, Ituraea and Trachonitis as Tetrarch in 4 BC. This was territory that Herod had received from Augustus east and north-east of the Lake of Galilee.

Josephus says of Philip:

Ant 18:4:6 “About this time it was that Philip, Herod's ' brother, departed this life, in the twentieth year of the reign of Tiberius, after he had been tetrarch of Trachonitis and Gaulanitis, and of the nation of the Bataneans also, thirty-seven years.”

As you see in the chart, Josephus calculates the years of Tiberius without the co-regent years. Thus, Philip's 37'th year coincides with Tiberius' 20th year.

(5) LYSANIUS, TETRARCH OF ABILENE

Abilene was so called from "Abila," its chief city, situated in Syria, northwest of Damascus and southeast of Mount Lebanon, and was adjacent to Galilee.

That Lysanius was Tetrarch of Abilene is evident from Josephus. The beginning of the government of Lysanius cannot be found, but he evidently continued as Tetrarch of Abilene until the Emperor Claudius took it from him and made a present of it to Agrippa in 42 AD.

Ant 19:5:1 “Now when Claudius had taken out of the way all those soldiers whom he suspected, which he did immediately, he published an edict, and therein confirmed that kingdom to Agrippa which Caius had given him, and therein commended the king highly. He also made all addition to it of all that country over which Herod, who was his grandfather, had reigned, that is, Judea and Samaria; and this he restored to him as due to his family. But for Abila of Lysanias, and all that lay at Mount Libanus, he bestowed them upon him, as out of his own territories.”

(6) ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS

In 18 AD, the Roman governor Valerius Gratus appointed Caiaphas as High Priest. The successor of Gratus, Pontius Pilate, retained Caiaphas in office.

Jos Ant 18:2:2 “This man (Valerius Gratus) deprived Ananus of the high priesthood, and appointed Ismael, the son of Phabi, to be High Priest. He also deprived him in a little time, and ordained Eleazar, the son of Ananus, who had been High Priest before, to be High Priest; which office, when he had held for a year, Gratus deprived him of it, and gave the high priesthood to Simon, the son of Camithus; and when he had possessed that dignity no longer than a year, Joseph Caiaphas was made his successor. When Gratus had done those things, he went back to Rome, after he had tarried in Judea eleven years, when Pontius Pilate came as his successor.”

In 36 AD the Roman procurator Vitellius removed Caiaphas from the high priesthood shortly after he took charge of affairs in Palestine.

Ant 18:4:3 “Besides which, he (Vitellius) also deprived Joseph, who was also called Caiaphas, of the high priesthood, and appointed Jonathan the son of Ananus, the former High Priest, to succeed him. After which, he took his journey back to Antioch.”

Luke 3:2 mentions ‘Annas AND Caiaphas the High Priests’. There was only one High Priest at a time and at this time Caiaphas was the High Priest. Annas had been High Priest from 6 to 15 AD. Because he was father-in-law of Caiaphas, he continued to exercise a controlling influence. He still had his former title and a great deal of his former authority. This is why they are mentioned together.

Jhn 18:13 And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the High Priest that same year.

Act 4:6 And Annas the High Priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the High Priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.