

## How are Pilate and Herod described in the Bible?



Herod Antipater was a Greek, his date of birth is unknown but was before 20 BC. he died after 39 AD, and was known by the nickname Antipas, he was a 1st-century ruler of Galilee and Perea, who bore the title of tetrarch ("ruler of a quarter") and is referred to as both "Herod the Tetrarch" and "King Herod" in the New Testament, although he never held the title of king.

He is known for accounts in the New Testament of his role in events that led to the executions of John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth. Antipas was a son of Herod the Great, who had become king of Judea, and Malthace, who was from Samaria. Antipas, his full brother Archelaus and his half-brother Philip were educated in Rome.

Antipas faced more immediate problems in his own tetrarchy after John the Baptist – in 28/29 AD according to the Gospel of Luke (or 27 AD, if the co-regency of Augustus and Tiberius is included in



Luke's reckoning of time) – began a ministry of preaching and baptism by the Jordan River, which marked the western edge of Antipas' territory of Perea.

The New Testament Gospels state that John attacked the tetrarch's marriage as contrary to Jewish law (it was incestuous, as Herodias was also Antipas' niece, but also John criticized the fact that she was his brother's wife in Mark 6:18, lending credence to the belief that Antipas and Herodias married while Herod II was still alive).



John was imprisoned in Machaerus and executed. According to Matthew and Mark, Herod was reluctant to order John's death but was compelled by Herodias' daughter, to whom he had promised any reward she chose as a result of her dancing for guests at his birthday banquet.

**Matthew 14:6-11**

*6 But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.*

*7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.*

*8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.*

*9 And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.*

*10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.*

*11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother.*



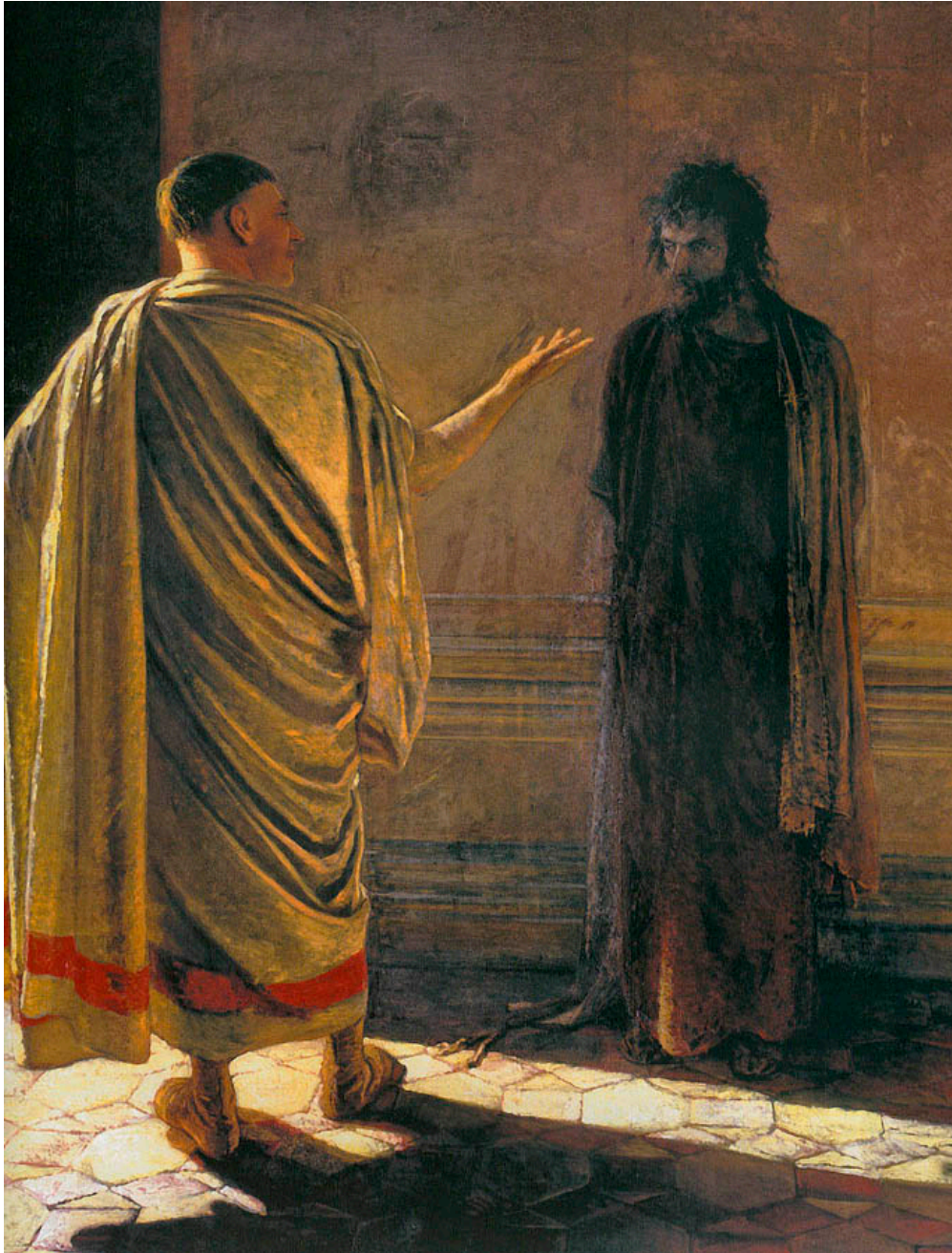
Among those baptized by John was Jesus of Nazareth, who began his own ministry in Galilee – causing Antipas, according to Matthew and Mark, to fear that the Baptist had been raised from the dead.

Luke states that a group of Pharisees warned Jesus that Antipas was plotting his death.

**Luke 13:31-33**

*31 The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee.*

32 *And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.*  
33 *Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.*



Luke also credits the tetrarch with a role in Jesus' trial. According to Luke, Pilate, on learning that Jesus was a Galilean and therefore under

Herod's jurisdiction, sent him to Antipas, who was also in Jerusalem at the time. Initially, Antipas was pleased to see Jesus, hoping to see him perform a miracle, but when Jesus remained silent in the face of questioning Antipas mocked him and sent him back to Pilate. Luke says that these events improved relations between Pilate and Herod despite their earlier enmity.

***Luke 23:5-12***

*5 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.*

*6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean.*

*7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.*

*8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.*

*9 Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.*

*10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.*

*11 And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.*

*12 And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.*





Pilate was not required to send Jesus to Antipas, he may have been making a show of courtesy to the tetrarch and trying to avoid the need to deal with the Jewish authorities himself. When Jesus was sent back, Pilate could still have represented Antipas' failure to convict as support for his own view (according to Luke) that Jesus was not guilty of a capital offense, thus allowing him to avoid responsibility for Jesus' crucifixion.

***Luke 23:13-16***

*13 And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people,*

*14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:*

*15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.*

*16 I will therefore chastise him, and release him.*

Pontius Pilate was a Greek and the fifth prefect of the Roman province of Judaea from AD 26–36. He served under Emperor Tiberius, and is best known today for the trial and crucifixion of Jesus.



Matthew 27:24-25

*24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.*

*25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.*

In all four gospel accounts, Pilate lobbies for Jesus to be spared his eventual fate of execution, and acquiesces only when the crowd refuses to relent. He then seeks to avoid personal responsibility for the death of Jesus. In the Gospel of Matthew, Pilate washes his hands to show that he is not responsible for the execution of Jesus and reluctantly sends him to his death.