

Tetrarch

Question:

Matthew's gospel refers to Herod Antipas as a "tetrarch" (Mt. 14:1; see also: Lk. 9:7). What is a tetrarch?

Our Answer:

A "tetrarch" is a subordinate ruler of a fourth part of a country or a province. This title applied to any petty ruler in the Roman Empire. His authority was similar, but not equal in power, to that of a king, and that title (king) was, on occasion, given to him (Mt. 14:9; Mk. 6:14, 26). Herod and Phasael, the sons of Antipater, were the first tetrarchs in Palestine.