He alleges John vii. 7), “Me the world  
hateth, because I testify of it that its  
deeds are evil;” and we can hardly conceive such testimony, in the years of gathering vigor and zeal, long withheld.  
The incident of ch, iv. 28, 29 can scarcely  
have arisen *only* from the anger of the  
moment.

**CHAP. III. 1—22.]** PREACHING AND BAPTISM OF JOHN. DIVINE TESTIMONY  
TO JESUS AT HIS BAPTISM. Matt. iii. 1—17. Mark i. 4—11.

**1.]** These  
dates are consistent with the *accurate  
tracing down* which St. Luke predicates  
of himself, ch. i. 3. In Matt. iii. 1 we have  
the same events indicated as to time by  
only “*In those days.*” The fifteenth  
year of the *sole principate* of Tiberius  
began Aug. 19, in the year of Rome 781,  
and reckoning backwards thirty years from  
that time (see ver. 23), we should have  
the birth of our Lord in 751, or about  
then; for “*about* thirty” will admit of  
some latitude. But Herod the Great died  
in the beginning of the year 750, and our  
Lord’s birth must be fixed *some months* *at  
least before* the death of Herod. If then  
it be placed in 749, He would have been  
at least thirty-two at the time of His  
baptism, seeing that it took some  
time after the beginning of John’s ministry. This difficulty has led to the supposition that this fifteenth year is not to be  
dated from the *sole*, but from the *associated*  
principate of Tiberius, which commenced  
most probably at the end of 764. According to this, the fifteenth of Tiberius will  
begin at the end of 779—and our Lord’s  
birth would be 749 or 750: which will  
agree with the death of Herod. This  
latter explanation has usually been adopted.  
Our present æra was fixed by Dionysius  
Exiguus, in the sixth century, and places  
the birth of our Lord in 754. It may be  
doubted, however, whether in all these  
reckonings more accuracy has not been  
sought than the Gospel narrative warrants  
any expectation of our finding. The “*about*  
thirty” is a wide expression, and might  
cover any age from thirty (see note on  
ver. 23) to thirty-two or thirty-three.

See on Matt. ii. 2, where it appears probable from astronomical considerations,  
that our Lord was born as early as U.C.  
747.

**Pontius Pilate... .]** Pilate was only *Procurator* of Judea: the word  
**governor** being used promiscuously of the  
leading officers of the Roman government.  
PONTIUS PILATE was the sixth procurator  
from the deposition of Archelaus, and came  
to Judæa about the year of Rome 779.  
He held the province ten years, and was  
sent to Rome to answer for his conduct  
by Vitellius, prefect of Syria, in 789, the  
year of the death of Tiberius. See chronological table in the Introduction to the  
Acts.

**Herod]** See note on Matt.  
xiv. 1. HEROD ANTIPAS became tetrarch  
of Galilee after the death of his father  
Herod, in the year of Rome 750, and continued till he was deposed in 792.

**Philip]** Son of Herod the Great by Cleopatra, a woman of Jerusalem. He was  
brought up at Rome, and after his  
father’s death in 750, was made tetrarch of  
Batanza, Gaulonitis, Trachonitis, Panias,  
Auranitis (Batanæa and Auranitis make  
up Ituræa), and continued till his death in  
786 or 787. He built Cæsarea Philippi.  
He was by far the best of Herod’s sons, and  
ruled his portion mildly and well. He must  
not be confounded with *his half-brother  
Philip*, whose wife Herodias Herod Antipas  
seduced. This latter was disinherited by his  
father, and lived in privacy. See note on  
Matt. xiv. 1.

**Lysanias the tetrarch  
of Abilene]** ABILENE, the district round  
Abila, a town eighteen miles north of  
Damascus, now, according to Pococke, Nebi  
Abel. It must not be confounded with  
Abila in Decapolis. Josephus mentions it  
as among the districts which Claudius gave  
to king Agrippa I. under the name of *Abila  
of Lysanias,* and in another place as *the  
Kingdom called that of Lysanias.* See  
farther in note in my Greek Testament.  
It seems to have been a district patrimonially in possession of rulers bearing this  
name.

**2.]** ANNAS (*Ananus*, Josephus)  
the high priest, was deposed by Valerius Gratus (in the year of Rome 779), and  
after several changes, Joseph or Caiaphas,  
his son-in-law (John xviii. 13), was made  
high priest. It would appear from this  
verse (and the use of the singular—see  
margin—renders the inference more stringent. Compare also St. Luke's own phrase,  
Acts iv. 6) that Annas, as *ex-high priest,*  
and possibly retaining in the view of the  
Jews the *legitimate high priesthood,* was