

Herod, King of the Jews, Compared to the King of Kings

We have seen in our study the rise of the Idumean and Arabian man named Herod, son of Antipater, to the position of “King of the Jews.” In our previous studies, I have mentioned that some new evidence seems to indicate that King Herod. Jesus was born in the fall of 4 BC and Herod died shortly after (3 BC).

- 73 BC Herod is born in Petra, Idumea (Idumea is (the Greek word for Edom).
- 67 Judea’s Queen Alexandra Salome dies. Her son, Hyrcanus II becomes king and High Priest.
- 66 Aristobulus II, the younger brother of Hyrcanus, fights to become king. Hyrcanus II flees to Petra.
- 65 Pompey (Romans) invade Syria and bring an end to the Seleucid kingdom
- 64 Syria becomes Roman province. Roman General Pompei establishes headquarters in Damascus.
- 63 Aristobulus II and Hyrcanus II both appeal to Pompei for help. Pompey captures Jerusalem and sides with Hyrcanus II and makes him High Priest and ethnarch (ruler or “vassal king”).
- 63 Herod comes to Jerusalem as a ten-year-old boy with his father. He grows up at the Temple.
- 62 Aristobulus II and his sons arrive in Rome as prisoners of Pompei.
- 60 First Triumvirate established to rule Rome – **Caesar, Pompey, Crassus**
- 57 Aristobulus II escapes and leads a revolts against Rome in Judea, but it’s put down.
- 55 Antipater helps Roman General Gabinius in Egypt and is appointed procurator of Judea by Rome
- 54 Crassus becomes governor of Syria. He is killed by Parthians (the new Persian empire) in battle.
- 49 The Triumvirate is just Caesar and Pompey. Caesar crosses the Rubicon and Civil War erupts.
- 48 Pompey is assassinated in Alexandria, Egypt by King Ptolemy.
- 47 Julius Caesar travels to Egypt and seeks to make Cleopatra VII as Egypt’s queen. King Ptolemy places Julius Caesar under house arrest. Antipater sends reinforcements to rescue Caesar.
- 47 In appreciation for Antipater, Caesar gives Antipater Roman citizenship and more power. Herod is appointed military prefect for Rome in Galilee. Herod marries Doris.
- 46 Rome appoints Herod governor of Coele-Syria (Phoenicia, and coast)
- 45 Caesar adopts Octavian (his great nephew) as his son.
- 44 Julius Caesar is assassinated on the Ides of March (15th).
- 43 Antipater is poisoned by Malcus. The second triumvirate rules Rome: Antony, Octavian, Lepidus
- 42 Herod marries Mariamme I (a Hasmonean) Octavian and Mark Antony defeat Brutus and Cassius
- 41 Herod meets with Antony in Bithynia. Herod and Phasael appointed joint tetrarchs
- 40 Antigonus (Hasmonean, son of Aristobulus II) named king of Parthians. Parthians invade Judea
- Jerusalem revolts against Herod and Phasael (Herod’s brother). Phasael commits suicide. The High Priest of the Jews, Hyrcanus II, is disfigured by Antigonus (his nephew). Herod escapes Jerusalem for Rome by way of Masada and then by ship to Rome. Antigonus becomes King.
- 40 In December, the Roman Senate appoints Herod “King of the Jews” and sends him back.
- 39 Herod puts down the Jewish revolt against the Romans in Galilee, Joppa, and Masada.
- 38 Herod attacks Jerusalem but retreats to Galilee where battles take place at the caves of Arbela.
- 37 Herod besieges Jerusalem. He takes control of Jerusalem in July and purges the Sanhedrin.
- Herod purges Sanhedrin
- Year of famine in Judea
- 36 Ananel, from Babylon, is appointed high priest, ending the Hasmonian reign of High Priests.
- 35 Mariamme’s brother, Aristobulus III, is drowned in Jericho. Ananel re-appointed high priest
- 34 Antony questions Herod in Laodicea concerning death of Aristobulus III. Cleopatra visits Jerusalem and gains Jericho and parts of costal plain, given her by her lover Marc Antony.
- 32 Octavian and Antony begin Civil War. Herod supports Antony
- 31 Octavian defeats Antony and Cleopatra in the Naval Battle of Actium.

- 30 Octavian confirms Herod as king of Judea in meeting at Rhodes. Herod entertains Octavian at Ptolemais. Herod supports Octavian's attack on Egypt. Antony and Cleopatra commit suicide. Herod accompanies Octavian from Egypt to Antioch.
- 30 The massive building programs across Judea are begun by King Herod.
- 29 King Herod executes Miramne, fearful the Jews will want her as Queen.
- 28 Other family members of Herod are executed. Roman games hosted in Jerusalem
- 27 The Roman Senate proclaims Octavian as Emperor Caesar Augustus
- 23 Herod sends his sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, to Rome for education. Archelaus, another son of Herod is born. Gadara rebels against Herod
- 20 Caesar Augustus visits Herod in Galilee, Samaria and Judea. Caesarea by the Sea is being built.
- 17 Herod takes 2nd trip to Rome, this time to get sons Alexander and Aristobulus
- 13 Herod makes his will and he names his son Antipater as his heir to the throne.
- 12 Herod expresses concern to Caesar over the loyalty of his sons Alexander and Aristobulus while in Rome (his 3rd trip). Herod presides over the Olympic Games. Caesarea Maritima opens.
- 10 Sons Alexander and Aristobulus are imprisoned by Herod
- 9 Herod invades Nabatea and is disciplined by Augustus. Herod loses the right to name his Successor and loses favor with Augustus
- 8 Herod visits Rome a 4th time and is reconciled to Augustus. Augustus gives Nabatea to Herod
- 7 Alexander and Aristobulus, sons of Herod, are strangled at Sebaste.
- 6 Herod separates from the Pharisees and rules that many of them should be executed.
- 5 Herod Antipater, son of Herod, is put to trial and executed for plotting to kill Herod.
- 4 Herod names sons Archelaus, Antipas and Philip as his heirs in his final will.
- 4 During the fall, **Jesus the Messiah, King of Kings**, is born in Bethlehem of Judea.
- 3 Herod dies in Jericho in March. He is buried at Herodium.

Herod the Great thought highly of his abilities and power and spared no effort to impress the world with his greatness. He was a schemer who feared the loss of his power and ruthlessly destroyed all potential rivals with incredible cruelty and no remorse. Jesus, the Messiah and King of the Universe, sought first to do the will of his Father in heaven; to please, honor, and glorify him. Jesus also came to bring people abundant life, which required him to lose his life and then be resurrected to return to heaven.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, while Herod was born in Edom. Jesus the Messiah was sinless; Herod was a cruel tyrant. Herod's earthly power was immense, but he stored no treasures in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus had none of the power the world could give, but his power in heaven is beyond comprehension.

Jesus gave his life and ministry as a sacrifice so that the world would know God, but Herod's life revolved around sacrificing others in order to bring glory and honor to himself. Jesus and Herod were opposites in every way; morally, culturally, spiritually, and especially in terms of their worldly status.

Ultimately, Herod's glory and strength were forgotten. Few people remember the accomplishments of this proud king. Rather, he is remembered as a paranoid tyrant the man who killed children in Bethlehem as an effort to save his power. Jesus legacy continues to impact millions of people throughout the world. Even non-Christians have heard about his life and death.

God uses people who appear weak to triumph over those who appear to be strong. No matter how overwhelming and powerful a person may seem, God's power is stronger. Most of all, what is done for God's Kingdom has lasting value, as opposed to fleeting earthly honors that we seek for ourselves.