

## ~HEROD (33)

- The name of a family of political rulers over the Jews. They were Idumeans, Edomites. They were nominally Jews, for the Idumeans had had circumcision forced upon them by the Maccabean ruler John Hyrcanus I in about 125 B.C.E, according to Josephus.
- Aside from the Bible's brief mention of the Herod's, most of the information about them is contained in Josephus history. The progenitor of the Herod's was Antipater or Antipas I, whom Alexander Jannaeus the Hasmonaean or Maccabean king had made governor of Idumea.
- Antipater's son, also called Antipater or Antipas, was the father of Herod the Great. Josephus relates that the historian Nicholas of Damascus says Antipater (II) was of the stock of the principal Jews who came out of Babylon into the land of Judah. But Josephus says that Nicholas assertion was merely to gratify Herod, who was actually an Edomite on both his father's side and his mothers.
- Antipater II, a very rich man, was involved in politics and intrigue and had great ambitions for his sons. He supported John Hyrcanus II, the son of Alexander Jannaeus and Salome Alexandra, against Hyrcanus brother Aristobulus for the position of Jewish High Priest and king.
- Actually, though, Antipater was working ambitiously for himself and eventually received Roman citizenship and the governorship of Judea from Julius Caesar. Antipater appointed his first son Phasael as governor of Jerusalem and another son, Herod, governor of Galilee. His career ended when he was poisoned by an assassin.