

~HEROD 3 (237)

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• Herod Agrippa I

• Grandson of Herod the Great. He was a son of Aristobulus, who, in turn, was a son of Herod the Great by Mariamne I, granddaughter of High Priest Hyrcanus II.

• Aristobulus had been put to death by Herod the Great. Agrippa was the last of the Herod's to become king of all Palestine, as his grandfather had been.

• His Early Life

• Agrippa's position as Herod the king was attained by a number of maneuvers and the help of his friends in Rome.

• About that particular time Herod the king applied his hands to mistreating some of those of the congregation. (Acts of Apostles 12:1)

• Educated in Rome along with Emperor Tiberius son Drusus and his nephew Claudius, he became a familiar figure in important circles there. He was extremely extravagant and reckless.

• Greatly in debt, even owing money to the Roman treasury, he left Rome and fled to Idumea. Eventually, with the help of his sister Herodias and his wife Cypros, daughter of Herod the Great's nephew, whose wife was Herod's daughter, he found residence for a while at Tiberias.

• A quarrel developed between him and Antipas, causing him to leave. He finally got back to Rome and into the good graces of Tiberius Caesar.

• However, an injudicious statement got Agrippa into trouble with Emperor Tiberius. In an unguarded moment he expressed the wish to

Gaius or Caligula, with whom he had cultivated a friendship, that he, Gaius, might soon be emperor.

- Overheard by Agrippa's servant, his remarks came to the ears of Tiberius, who cast Agrippa into prison. His life was in the balance for several months, but some months later Tiberius died and Caligula became emperor.
- He released Agrippa and elevated him to the position of king over the territories that his late uncle Philip had governed.

• Favored By Roman Emperors

- **Herodias**, envious of her brothers position as king, persuaded her husband Herod Antipas, who was only a tetrarch, to make an appeal to the new emperor in Rome for a crown. But Agrippa outmaneuvered Antipas in the matter.
- Before Tiberius the emperor, he charged that Antipas had made alliances with Sejanus the conspirator against Tiberius and with the Parthians, charges that Antipas could not deny.
- It led to Antipas banishment. Antipas territories of Galilee and Perea were added to Agrippa's kingdom. In one passage Josephus says that Caligula gave these dominions to Agrippa, and in two others that Claudius did so. Likely Caligula made the promise, and Claudius confirmed it.
- On the occasion of the assassination of Caligula, dated by scholars as **41 C.E.**, Agrippa was in Rome. He was able to act as liaison, or negotiator, between the Senate and his friend, the new emperor Claudius.
- Claudius expressed his appreciation by awarding him the territory of Judea and Samaria as well as the kingdom of Lysanias. Agrippa now became ruler of about the same dominion that his grandfather **Herod** the Great had held.
- At this time Agrippa asked for and received the kingdom of Chalcis from Claudius, for his brother Herod. This Herod receives mention in history only as king of Chalcis, a small territory on the West slope of the Anti-Lebanon mountains.

• Curries Jew's Favor, Persecutes Christians

- **Agrippa curried favor with the Jews, claiming to be a devoted adherent to Judaism. Caligula, claiming he was a god, had decided to erect a statue of himself in the temple at Jerusalem, but Agrippa adroitly persuaded him not to do it.**
- **Agrippa later began building a wall about the North suburb of Jerusalem. To Claudius this appeared to be a possible fortifying of the city against any Roman attack that might be made in the future. Consequently, Claudius ordered Agrippa to desist.**
- **Agrippa belied his claim of being a worshiper of God by supporting and arranging gladiatorial games and other pagan shows in the theater.**
- **Agrippa was acceptable to the Jews because of his Hasmonaean descent on his grandmother Mariamne's side of the family.**
- **While championing the cause of the Jews under the Roman yoke, he also built up an unenviable record for persecution of Christians, who were generally hated by the unbelieving Jews. He did away with James the brother of John by the sword.**
- **About that particular time **Herod** the king applied his hands to mistreating some of those of the congregation. (**Acts of Apostles 12:1**)**
- **He did away with James the brother of John by the sword. (**Acts of Apostles 12:2**)**
- **Seeing that this pleased the Jews, he arrested and imprisoned Peter. An angels intervention, bringing about Peter's release, caused a great stir among Agrippa's soldiers and resulted in the punishment of Peter's guards.**
- **As he saw it was pleasing to the Jews, he went on to arrest Peter also. As it was, those were days of the unfermented cakes. (**Acts of Apostles 12:3**)**
- **And laying hold of him, he put him in prison, turning him over to four shifts of four soldiers each to guard him, as he intended to produce him for the people after the Passover. (**Acts of Apostles 12:4**)**

- Consequently Peter was being kept in the prison, but prayer to God for him was being carried on intensely by the congregation. **(Acts of Apostles 12:5)**
- Now when **Herod** was about to produce him, that night Peter was sleeping bound with two chains between two soldiers, and guards before the door were keeping the prison. **(Acts of Apostles 12:6)**
- But, look! Yehowah's angel stood by, and a light shone in the prison cell. Striking Peter on the side, he roused him, saying; Rise quickly! And his chains fell off his hands. **(Acts of Apostles 12:7)**
- The angel said to him; Gird yourself and bind your sandals on. He did so. Finally he said to him; Put your outer garment on and keep following me. **(Acts of Apostles 12:8)**
- And he went out and kept following him, but he did not know that what was happening through the angel was real. In fact, he supposed he was seeing a vision. **(Acts of Apostles 12:9)**
- Going through the first sentinel guard and the second they got to the iron gate leading into the city, and this opened to them of its own accord. And after they went out they advanced down one street, and immediately the angel departed from him. **(Acts of Apostles 12:10)**
- And Peter, coming to himself, said; Now I actually know that Yehowah sent his angel forth and delivered me out of **Herod's** hand and from all that the people of the Jews were expecting. **(Acts of Apostles 12:11)**
- And after he considered it, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John who was surnamed Mark, where quite a few were gathered together and praying. **(Acts of Apostles 12:12)**
- When he knocked at the door of the gateway, a servant girl named Rhoda came to attend to the call. **(Acts of Apostles 12:13)**
- And, upon recognizing the voice of Peter, out of joy she did not open the gate, but ran inside and reported that Peter was standing before the gateway. **(Acts of Apostles 12:14)**

- They said to her; You are mad. But she kept on strongly asserting it was so. They began to say; It is his angel. (**Acts of Apostles 12:15**)
- But Peter remained there knocking. When they opened, they saw him and were astonished. (**Acts of Apostles 12:16**)
- But he motioned to them with his hand to be silent and told them in detail how Yehowah brought him out of the prison, and he said; Report these things to James and the brothers. With that he went out and journeyed to another place. (**Acts of Apostles 12:17**)
- Well, when it became day, there was no little stir among the soldiers over what really had become of Peter. (**Acts of Apostles 12:18**)
- **Herod** made diligent search for him and, when not finding him, he examined the guards and commanded them to be led off to punishment, and he went down from Judea to Caesarea and spent some time there. (**Acts of Apostles 12:19**)

• Executed By God's Angel

- Agrippa's rule came abruptly to an end. At Caesarea, during a festival in honor of Caesar, he robed himself in a magnificent royal garment and began giving a public address to an assembled audience of people from Tyre and Sidon, who were suing for peace with him. The audience responded by shouting;
- Now he was in a fighting mood against the people of Tyre and of Sidon. So with one accord they came to him and, after persuading Blastus, who was in charge of the bedchamber of the king, they began suing for peace, because their country was supplied with food from that of the king. (**Acts of Apostles 12:20**)
- But on a set day **Herod** clothed himself with royal raiment and sat down upon the judgment seat and began giving them a public address. (**Acts of Apostles 12:21**)
- In turn the assembled people began shouting; A god's voice, and not a man's! (**Acts of Apostles 12:22**)
- Instantly the angel of Yehowah struck him, because he did not

give the glory to God, and he became eaten up with worms and expired. ([Acts of Apostles 12:23](#))

- Chronologers place the death of King **Herod** Agrippa I in **44 C.E.**, at the age of 54 and after he had reigned three years over all Judea. He was survived by his son Herod Agrippa II and his daughters Bernice
- Now when some days had passed, Agrippa the king and Bernice arrived in Caesarea for a visit of courtesy to Festus. ([Acts of Apostles 25:13](#))
- Drusilla the wife of Governor Felix, and Mariamne III.
- Some days later Felix arrived with Drusilla his wife, who was a Jewess, and he sent for Paul and listened to him on the belief in Christ Jesus. ([Acts of Apostles 24:24](#))