

## Herod the Great

What we know about this visionary leader >

- Born in 73 BCE (Idumea) & died (Jericho) in 4 BCE (70 yrs)
- A descendant of Esau (and not Jacob (aka "Israel"))
- His father, Antipater the Idumaean, was well networked with Caesar and Hyrcanus II, the High Priest.
- Herod was appointed Governor of Galilee at 25 and two years later was elected "King of the Jews" by a Roman court. Three years later, he and the Romans captured Jerusalem ushering in the Herodian Dynasty.
- As an Idumite, Herod took on the practices of Judaism and elements of other religions, too. Since he was not a descendent of Israel (Jacob), there was always tension between his authority and the Jewish High Council.
- His lifestyle was marked with lavish decadence and strong authority.
- It is believed he had his first wife and several sons executed because he claimed they were not loyal.
- He rebuilt the Temple in Jerusalem and today, the retaining walls of that temple still stand.
- Responsible for the development of water supplies to Jerusalem and the fortresses of Masada and Herodium.
- His Biblical prominence is related to visit of the Magi who were looking for the "King of the Jews" - which was Herod's Roman-given title.
- His fear of an uprising resulted in the killing of innocent children throughout the Bethlehem region.
- Fearing that no one would mourn his death, he ordered the execution of a large group of distinguished men so that there would be great grief throughout the land. Thankfully, this did not take place.
- Modern scholars agree that he suffered throughout his life with depression and paranoia.
- His tomb was discovered at the base of the Herodium fortress in 2007.
- His kingdom was divided to 3 of his sons including Herod Antipas (was is referred to in Joseph's return from Egypt and who was later responsible for the beheading of John the Baptist. (Matt. 14:1-12)



### "MONOPOLY: Building A Kingdom" | 12.16.12

"When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. He sent (the Magi) to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." ."  
Matthew 2:3,8 (NIV84)

What is the goal of the game Monopoly?

Look on the back for a brief summary of **Herod's life**. What stands out to you as the focus of his life?

**Herod** was preoccupied with power and wealth. **Jesus** was preoccupied with compassion and truth. Which message does our world follow today?

What lessons can I learn from observing Herod's life?



You can listen or share this sermon online!

# Digging Deeper

[Use these readings to prepare you for worship next week!]

**Monday:** 12.17.2012

**Prayer Focus:** TAKHOMABOX Distribution tonight

**Passage:** Matthew 2:13-23

**Insight:** We read this chapter last week in preparation for Sunday's message and I want to start the week with it, as well. Herod was one of the most powerful visionaries Israel ever had as King. He was a master builder and planner and yet with all his abilities, he had a significant flaw - he couldn't share.

Herod's hard heart kept him from experiencing the Christ-child and his legacy now lays in ruins because of it. What keeps you from experiencing the Christ-child today?

**Tuesday:** 12.18.2012

**Prayer Focus:** Our Church Leadership

**Passage:** Matthew 14:1-12

**Insight:** The Herod in this story is the son of Herod the Great, Herod Antipas. Believed to be slightly less evil than his father, he certainly lacked a moral backbone and continued his father's legacy of selfish leadership. When we live our life a particular way, we are passing that behavior down to the next generation. Herod was showing Antipas how to lead by fear instead of leading with humility.

What are you teaching the next generation with your life?

**Wednesday:** 12.19.2012

**Prayer Focus:** The Ministry of Upward Basketball

**Passage:** John 1:1-18

**Insight:** John begins his Gospel with an abbreviated account of Christ's arrival. "The Word became flesh" is a strange phrase but describes the pre-birth understanding of God. Any other religion would reject a God who would humble himself to our human level, but honestly, that's what makes our faith so wonderful!

What comfort can you find in knowing that God was willing to send YOU His own Son?

**Thursday:** 12.20.2012

**Prayer Focus:** Our Fusion Student Ministry (7-12 grade)

**Passage:** Micah 5

**Insight:** This chapter contains the prophesy that points to Bethlehem as the birth place of the Messiah. It is written in a way that speaks of the new king as a conqueror of Assyria and the deliverer of peace. Jesus came to drive pride and deception from the hearts of man and bring true peace - but much of the world is missing it.

If Herod had been taught enough of the scriptures to know that the new King would bring ultimate peace, how could he want to stop that? We often "know better" and yet make decisions that make life more challenging and complicated. How can we get back to the simple trust in God's way?

**Friday:** 12.21.2012

**Prayer Focus:** Our Children's Ministry (baby - 6th gr)

**Passage:**

**Insight:** Today the world ends. Well, according to the Mayan calendar. If you are reading this, you have a lot to be thankful for. Life for one.

I have no reading for today planned so that you can take a moment and pray a prayer of thanksgiving. Tell the Lord how thankful you are that he has given you life and given you a new start at the life through his grace. Thank Him for sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to come to our broken world as the Light we need to find our way back to Him.



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