

## HEROD AGRIPPA, I vs. THE WORD OF GOD

Text: Acts 12:1-3

INTRO: The Herod of our text is known in history as Herod Agrippa, I. He is the grandson of the king who killed the infants at the time of Christ's birth, the nephew of the king who killed John B., & the father of the King Agrippa mentioned in Acts 25 & 26.

We are told that he stretched out his hand to harass some from the church--but of course, his fight was not a personal one against James & Peter, nor yet was his fight really against the church. Herod's warfare was against God & His word. Acts (;4; Matt. 25:40.

We especially want to take note of 3 things we learn from this context: (1) the progressive nature of sin, (2) you can't fight against God & win, and (3) God & His word can be our greatest friends--or our worst enemies, depending on our own attitude toward them.

### I. WE LEARN THE PROGRESSIVE NATURE OF SIN, vs 3.

#### A. Herod sinned by murdering James, son of Zebedee.

1. Then he proceeded further in sin, by his attempt on the life of Simon Peter, vs. 3-4.

2. After the Lord's angel miraculously freed Peter from Herod's prison, Herod tried to cover up the Divine testimony by putting to death the 16 guards who had been commissioned to guard him, vs19.

3. Finally, having rebelled against God's appointed apostles & the truth they preached, he reached the point where he allowed himself to be revered as only God should be, vs 21-23.

#### B. Other Bible examples of the progressiveness of sin are numerous: Cain, King David, etc.

1. Cain, Gen. 4: unbelief, envy, hate, murder, lie...

2. David: covetousness, adultery, drunkenness, murder...

Then David penitently confessed to Nathan,  
"I have sinned against the Lord" (2 Sam 12:13)

#### C. Make no mistake about it, sin is progressive in its nature.

There is no stopping place short of repentance.

II. ANOTHER IMPORTANT LESSON FOR US IS THAT NO PERSON CAN FIGHT AGAINST GOD AND WIN.

A. As Herod fought against the church, he was fighting against God and His word, vs. 1-3.

B. As Herod withstood the truth that Peter's escape was miraculous in its nature, & put to death the guards as tho they had conspired to release him, Herod was fighting against God & His word, vs 19.

C. As Herod, a Jew by religion, heard the crowd honor him as tho he were a god, by not setting them strait & insisting that they worship God only, again, he was fighting against God. He learned--the hard way--that you can't fight against God and win, vs 23.

1. The chief priests & elders of the Jews had persecuted the church, but their persecution only served to enlarge the borders of Christ's kingdom, Acts 8:1-4.

2. Internal problems arose from time to time, but they were met & faced & settled in accordance with the revelation of God, & again the result was a net gain for the cause of Christ.

3. Now, when King Herod Agrippa, I set himself against God & His truth, we see once more the utter futility of attempting to successfully fight against God. No one can do so without fighting against his own best interests & ultimately destroying himself in the process. And whatever you or I may do, the word of God will live on, MT 24:35; 1 Pet 1:23-25; Rev 14:6.

III. FINALLY, WE NOTE THAT GOD'S WORD & THOSE WHO TEACH IT CAN BE OUR BEST FRIENDS OR OUR WORSE ENEMIES, DEPENDING ON OUR ATTITUDE

## TOWARD THEM.

- A. The church of the Lord could have been a great blessing to Herod, as it already had been to thousands of others--if only he had chosen to have it so. James & Peter could have helped him find the salvation of his soul & peace of mind--but Herod refused to benefit from their ministry & made himself an enemy of the truth they taught, vs. 1-4.
  
- B. An angel even came to Herod, just as an angel had come to Peter in the prison cell. But the angel was a blessing to Peter & a curse to Herod, because of Herod's attitude toward God's truth.
  - 1. The angel struck Peter & spared his life, vs 7.
  - 2. But when the angel struck Herod, it sealed his doom, vs. 22-23.

CONCLUSION: As it was with Herod, so it is with us. God's word & those who teach it can be our best friends or our worst enemies, depending on our own attitude toward God's truth.

Illustrate: The wise old man & the mean boy with a bird in his hand. "It is as you will my son."

La Porte, TX, April 29, 1979

Bible camp, Sabinal, TX, June 14, 1979

Highway 29, Liberty Hill, TX, August 14, 1980 (meeting)

Shively, Louisville, KY, December 3, 1985 (meeting)

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, June 9, 1987 (meeting)

Eastside, Indianapolis, IN, April 26, 1990 (meeting)

Exton, PA, August 5, 1990

Tri-State, Ashland, KY, June, 26, 1991 (meeting)

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, August 23, 1998

Fairfield, PA, August 30, 1998