

Herod Discussion

Remember that these monologues are essentially historical fiction, based on the Scripture but filling in plausible subjective details, both emotional responses and motivations. Your first task is to decide if they are reasonable.

Can we learn from Biblical “bad guys,” people whose actions are recorded in Scripture?

What is the danger of dividing the world into “really bad people” and “all the rest of us”?

Herod was appointed governor of Galilee by his father, Antipater, who had a good relationship with Julius Caesar. Young Herod travelled to Rome to seek favor and was eventually named tetrarch by Mark Antony. When pleading with the Roman Senate for his brother, He was unexpectedly named “King of the Jews.” He kept the good will of Rome by collecting taxes and ridding the countryside of bandits. Can we imagine how and why the development of Herod’s character went the way it did?

Is it believable that he had a larger goal which might actually be noble in concept?

If Herod really believed that the future of the nation depended on him, how would that develop into the belief that he was justified killing rivals, including his own sons?

What other examples of this phenomenon have been seen in world history? (An apparently noble purpose leading to evil behavior.)

Is the proverb “power corrupts” a danger for ordinary people?

Can a Christian be sucked in by this sort of danger?

How might it happen?

What can prevent it?

Have we seen examples of it among Christian leaders?

How can this understanding inform how we pray for leaders, both secular officials and Christian leaders?

What were the thoughts behind Herod’s reaction to the message of the Magi?

What life-changing decision might he have made at that point?

What is required for a person to completely change the whole direction of his/her life?

What is necessary for a person to have the ability to make that sort of life altering decision – in other words, to repent?

Can you see a point in your own life where you made a life-altering decision, either for the right or for the wrong?

Are you able to make a right decision, even if it contradicts what you previously believed?