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Events depicted in the film, *Passion of the Christ*, take place in the areas of Israel known as Judea (Judaea) and Galilee. This map depicts the location of both.

In the century before Jesus was born, the Roman Republic was in the midst of a power struggle. The two most powerful foes (Pompey and Julius Caesar) were initially allies, linked by family ties since Pompey was married to Julia, Caesar's only child.

When Julia died, in 54 BC, there was no mitigating force between the two men and Civil War eventually ended the Roman Republic. Julius Caesar (famous for his words "I came, I saw, I conquered") was the undisputed ruler.

While he was still controlling a powerful military force, General Pompey and his Roman legions conquered Jerusalem in 63 BC. (Pompey, a non-Jew, had initially been asked to help resolve an internal Jewish dispute about high-priest appointments, but he greatly overstayed and expanded his welcome.)

With Pompey's victory, Rome began its domination of the Jews and their country (then called Judea) which lasted nearly 400 years (63 BC - 313 AD).

At first, the Jewish people still had their own rulers (referred to as the Hasmoneans) and their country was a Roman protectorate. But in 37 BC, Jewish leaders were replaced with friends of Rome. The first - and still notorious - was Herod (later called "Herod the Great"), an Arab from Edom (the area known today as the Negev and referred to as Idumea in Greek).

Rome appointed Herod King of Judea in 40 BC. It was his only path to power because as a converted Jew - he and his family were Edomites - Herod could never be a Jewish priest. His loyalty was to Rome, even though he built many projects in Judea and reconstructed the Jewish temple (sometimes referred to as the Second Temple) in Jerusalem in 19 BC.

He built a famous city on the Mediterranean - with an impressive artificial harbor - and named it Caesarea in honor of his ally Caesar Augustus, the Roman ruler. Despite all the buildings he initiated, Herod was deeply unpopular with the Jewish people.

When Herod died, in 4 BC - his long-sought tomb was finally located in May of 2007 - Roman oppression of the Jews worsened dramatically. By 6 AD, Judea was a Roman province where the tax burden imposed on the Jews became nearly unbearable.

Although Roman rulers (called Procurators) ran the country, Judea was one province Rome could not totally tame absent a very heavy hand.

With rebellion seething under the surface of first-century Jewish life, Jesus of Nazareth spread a message of love and forgiveness. In the third year of his public ministry, a Roman procurator named Pontius Pilate - appointed in 26 AD and whose power was second only to the emperor - imposed a death sentence on Jesus.

The method of death - which is the root of the English word "excruciating" - would be the cruelest of all forms of Roman torture: Crucifixion.

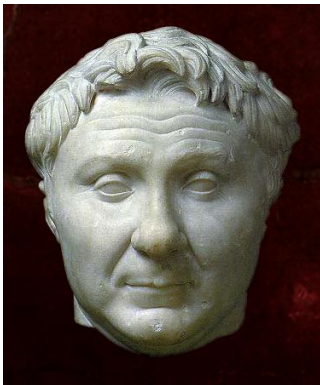
See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/ROMAN-RULE-IN-ISRAEL-Passion-of-the-Christ>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

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Media Stream



General Pompey

Image online, courtesy the [University of Chicago](#) website.

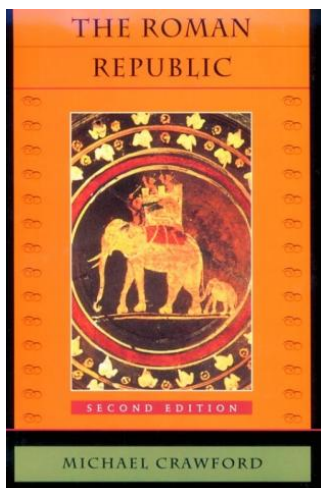
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Julius Caesar

Image online, courtesy [romanemperors.com](#) website.

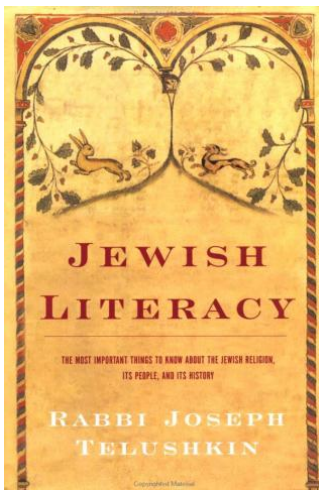
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The Roman Republic - by Michael Crawford

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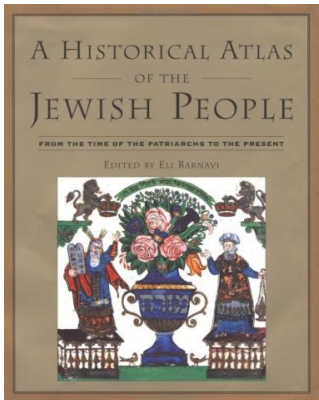
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Jewish Literacy - by Rabbi Joseph Telushkin

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Historical Atlas of the Jewish People - Edited by Levi Barnavi

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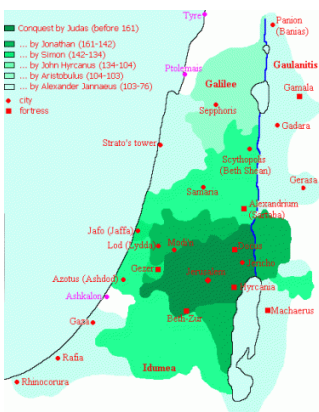
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Judea - Map Locator

Image online, courtesy livius.org website.

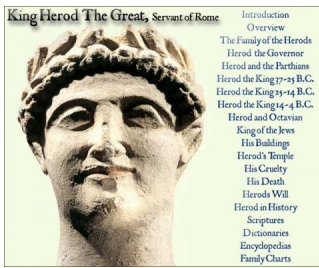
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Idumea - Map Locator

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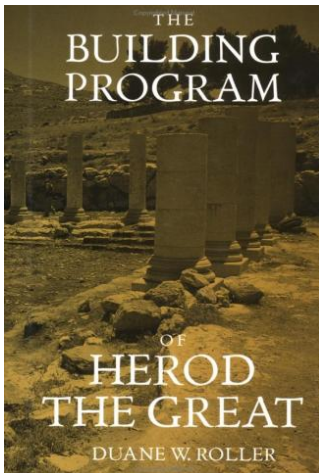
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King Herod the Great, Servant of Rome

Image online, courtesy [bible-history.com](http://www.bible-history.com) website.

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The Building Program of Herod the Great - by Duane W. Roller

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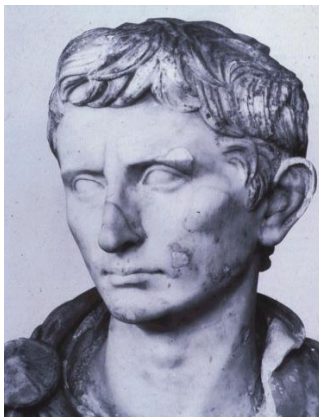
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Harbor at Caesarea

This photo was taken by Joe Freeman in 2005. Online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons. License: CC BY-SA 2.5.

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Caesar Augustus

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Jerusalem - Second Temple, Herod the Great

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Tomb of Herod the Great Located at Herodium

Clip announcing that archaeologists had located the long-sought tomb of Herod the Great. Online, courtesy NatGeo Channel at YouTube.

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