# ROMAN RULE IN ISRAEL



0. ROMAN RULE IN ISRAEL - Story Preface

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

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

When Julia <u>died</u>, in 54 BC, there was no mitigating force between the two men and Civil War eventually <u>ended</u> the <u>Roman Republic</u>. 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, <u>General Pompey</u> and his Roman legions conquered Jerusalem in 63 BC. (Pompey, a non-Jew, had initially been asked to help resolve an internal Jewish <u>dispute</u> about high-priest appointments, but he greatly overstayed and expanded his welcome.)

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

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 <a href="Idumea">Idumea</a> 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 - Herold could never be a Jewish priest. His <u>loyalty</u> was to <u>Rome</u>, even though he <u>built</u> many projects in Judea and reconstructed the Jewish temple (sometimes referred to as the <u>Second Temple</u>) in Jerusalem in 19 BC.

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

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

Although Roman rulers (called <u>Procurators</u>) 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 <u>message</u> of <u>love</u> and forgiveness. In the third year of his public ministry, a Roman procurator named Pontius Pilate - appointed in 26 AD and whose <u>power</u> 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

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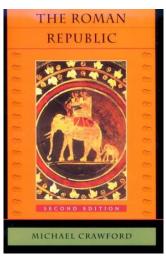
# Media Stream



<u>General Pompey</u> Image online, courtesy the <u>University of Chicago</u> website. View this asset at: <a href="http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/General-Pompey">http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/General-Pompey</a>



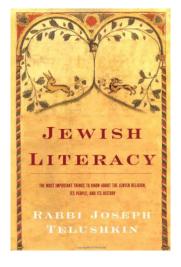
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#### The Roman Republic - by Michael Crawford

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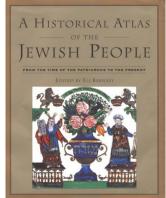
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## Jewish Literacy - by Rabbi Joseph Telushkin

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## Historical Atlas of the Jewish People - Edited by Levi Barnavi

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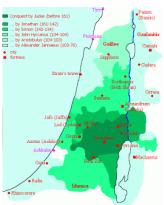
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# <u>Judea - Map Locator</u>

Image online, courtesy <u>livius.org</u> website.

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### <u>Idumea - Map Locator</u>

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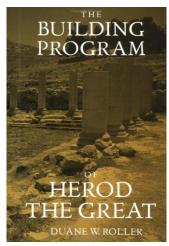
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#### King Herod the Great, Servant of Rome

Image online, courtesy <u>bible-history.com</u> website.

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

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#### Harbor at Caesarea

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#### Caesar Augustus

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### Jerusalem - Second Temple, Herod the Great

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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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