

King Agrippa II: The "Almost" King

INTRODUCTION.

- A. King Agrippa II was king of Chalcis from 48 - 70 A.D. Let us first look at the family background of King Agrippa II.
1. Herod the Great -- Herod the Great was king of Judea from 37 B.C. to 4 B.C. Herod built the great temple of Jerusalem as well as murdered innocent children towards the last years of his life.
 2. Herod, the Tetrarch of Galilee (Herod Antipas) -- Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great and his wife, Malthace. Herod served as Tetrarch of Galilee from 4 B.C. to 39 A.D. Herod Antipas was the one who:
 - a. married his brother's wife, Herodias.
 - b. had John the Baptist beheaded. (Mark 6:14-30)
 - c. Jesus referred to as the "fox." (Luke 13:31-33)
 - d. put a robe on Jesus and mocked Him. (Luke 23:6-12)
 3. Herod Agrippa I -- Was the son of Aristobulus, the son of Herod the Great and his wife Mariamne I. Herod Agrippa ruled from about 41 A.D. to 44 A.D. Herod Agrippa I. . .
 - a. had James, the brother of John, killed with the sword. (Acts 12:1-2)
 - b. was eaten by worms and died because he did not give God the glory. (Acts 12:20-25)
 4. King Agrippa II -- was the son of Herod Agrippa I. King Agrippa II reigned from 48-70 A.D.
 - a. When Agrippa I died, his son was only 17 years old, which was deemed to young of an age to rule. Six years later, in A.D. 50, Herod Agrippa was placed over the kingdom of Chalcis. In A.D. 53, Herod Agrippa was given the territory of Philip the tetrarch and Lysanias along with a territory on the west side of Galilee. This addition came with the title of King. As a result, Herold Agrippa became know King Agrippa II.
 - b. When Fetus was appointed as procurator of Judea, King Agrippa II and his wife/sister Bernice went to Caesarea to pay their respects. It was at this time period when King Agrippa II had the conversation with Paul. (Acts 25:23-26:32)
 - c. According to historians, King Agrippa II sided with Rome when the Jews revolted against Rome. This revolt resulted in the destruction

of Agrippa's nation.

- d. After the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, Agrippa retired with Bernice to Rome. He is said to have died in Rome in A.D. 100.
- B. It is the purpose of this lesson to see what lessons we can learn from King Agrippa II.

I. AGRIPPA CAME FROM A SINFUL FAMILY.

- A. As has already been shown in the introduction, we understand that Agrippa was not reared or trained by the most holy of people.
- B. This is not to say that Agrippa could not have helped his eventual rejection of the gospel. Considering Agrippa's family's past helps us to at least understand the importance of raising our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
1. "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6, KJV)
 2. Consider also Deuteronomy 6:1-9 and Ephesians 6:1-4.
- C. Let us, as parents, work to provide our children with a holy and righteous family.

II. AGRIPPA HEARD THE TRUTH.

- A. We do not know how much exposure King Agrippa had to the Truth. Paul indicated that King Agrippa may have had some knowledge of the Old Law and the customs of the Jews. (Acts 26:3,26-27) Let's take a few minutes and examine Paul's discourse as he spoke to King Agrippa.
1. Paul told Agrippa about the promise of deliverance and salvation made by God. Paul said, "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers." (Acts 26:6)
 2. Paul said, "Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews." (Acts 26:7)
 3. Paul refers to the fulfillment of the promise in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul said, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:8)
 4. Paul explains his starting point which strengthens his argument because of his conversion. (Acts 26:9-18)
 - a. Paul worked against Christ. (vs 9)
 - b. Paul threw saints into prison. (vs 10)
 - c. Paul voted to have Christians put to death. (vs 10)

- d. Paul compelled Christians to blaspheme. (vs 11)
 - e. Paul was enraged against the Christians. (vs 11)
5. Paul recounts the resurrected Jesus calling him to preach to the Jews and Gentiles.
- a. Paul told Agrippa that Jesus had instructed him to teach the Jews and the Gentiles to turn from darkness to light. Paul said, "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." (Acts 26:18)
 - b. Paul told Agrippa that he taught others to repent and to turn to God. Paul said, "But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." (Acts 26:20)
 - c. Paul referred Agrippa to the sayings of the prophets and Moses in regards to the coming of Christ. Paul said, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: 23 That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." (Acts 26:22-23) One such example is found in Deuteronomy 18:15,18 where Moses wrote, "I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth,..." (Deut. 18:15,18, NKJV)
- B. Paul presents the choice to Agrippa. (Acts 26:26-29)
- C. King Agrippa heard enough to have made the decision to ask the question, "Sir, what must I do to be saved." However, this was not his response.

III. KING AGRIPPA'S CHOICE AND RESPONSE.

- A. King Agrippa made a choice when presented with the opportunity to obey the Gospel's call. Agrippa's response was simple, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." (Acts 26:28) This passage of text is handled differently by different translators.
1. Direct Translation -- "In a little thou persuadest me a Christian to become." (Interlinear Greek-English New Testament, Baker)
 2. American Standard -- "With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian."

3. New American Standard -- "In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian."
 4. Revised Standard -- "In a short time you think to make me a Christian!"
 5. New International -- "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?"
 6. King James -- "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."
 7. New King James -- "You almost persuade me to become a Christian."
- B. It is difficult to determine Agrippa's true thoughts at this point.
1. Was Agrippa telling Paul that Paul had almost persuaded him to become a Christian?
 2. Was Agrippa asking Paul if Paul really expected to convert Agrippa with the short speech that he had presented?
- C. From the text we know for certain that Agrippa's response was not a confession of a belief in Jesus Christ and his choice was not to obey the gospel's call.

CONCLUSION.

- A. What will be your choice?
1. It may be that your family did not set the right example for you to follow.
 2. Regardless of your past and your family, you can make the choice that was not made by Agrippa.
 3. I leave you with the question that Paul asked Agrippa. Do you believe the words of the prophets and the apostles? If you believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God and that He died for your sins, then you can make the choice to obey the Gospel's call.
- B. For those who are Christians, I will leave you with this question: Are you continuing in a life of obedience unto Jesus and His word? If not, then repent and make the necessary changes today. Do not walk in the path of King Agrippa II.