

# Josephus-diplomat & rulers of Judea

## - Prepared to be a diplomat to Rome -

**Poppaea Sabina** - 2nd wife of Nero. Had also been wife of Otho. Josephus by actor **Aliturus**, a Jew by birth, much beloved by Nero, meets Poppaea. **Josephus** entreated Poppaea to secure priests freedom in Rome. Poppaea gifted Josephus many presents. Poppaea born 30AD in Pompeii, (Mt Vesuvius erupted 79AD). She died 65AD from possible kick of Nero when pregnant. Nero loved her & was heart broken. Nero castrated a young man named Sporus, who looked like her & married him. Nero drowned her son from 1st marriage on a fishing trip.

**Nero** - 37AD-68AD. Nero ruled 54AD-68AD. His father died when he was 2yo. He was adopted by emperor Claudius at 13yo. Nero, artist, singer, actor, athlete, eventually declared an enemy of Rome. Nero was popular with commoners & was resented by aristocracy. He killed his mother Agrippina, stepbrother, & wife Claudia. Nero possibly killed his wife Poppae. Nero was married as the bride to Pythagoras. Nero persecuted Christians, was condemned to death, fled, committed suicide 68AD.

**Felix - Marcus Antonius Felix - 4th Roman Procurator of Judea Providence 52-60AD.** Former royal slave, a Greek freed man. Married to Drusilla, a Jewess, daughter of Herod Agrippa I. He had alleged sympathy with the Jews. Known for cruelty, & bribery. During his rule was an increase of crime in Judaea which he put down with severity. He sent a number of Jewish priests to Rome for trial. Jonathan the High priest was critical of Felix. Jonathan stirred Jews against Felix & threatened to report him to Caesar. 58AD Felix hired robber assassins to murder Jonathan the High priest.

58AD **Paul** rescued of a Jewish plot of assassination, was sent to Felix at Caesarea. High priest Ananias arrived to accuse Paul. Hoping to receive a bribe, Felix held Paul 2 yrs as favor to Jews. Felix often conversed with Paul. **Felix & Drusilla heard Paul on faith in Christ & coming judgment.** Felix trembled & sent Paul away for another time. (Acts 24)

Felix was accused of using a dispute between Jews & Syrians of Caesarea to slay & plunder them. His brother Pallas influenced Nero so he escaped certain punishment. (Jewish Antiquities B 20, ch 8, 7)

Paul's defense before Roman/Jewish rulers. Paul is witness of Jesus, shares gospel, reasons about righteousness, self-control, & the judgment to come. Jews plot assassination. Paul appeals to Caesar. Acts 24-26

-4- Felix, 5- Festus, 6- Albinus, 7- Florus, then the Jewish War 66-70AD-

## **Drusilla -38AD-79AD**

Married to Gaius Julius Azizus, priest of Emesa, who had consented to be circumcised. She was reported very beautiful. **Felix** fell in love with her, convinced her to forsake her husband, **She married Felix at about 22.** She was **sister to Bernice & king Agrippa II.** Reportedly died with her son at Pompeii when Mt. Vesuvius erupted in 79AD.

## **Porcius Festus- 5th Roman Procurator of Judea Province, 60-62AD.**

Festus was successful in destroying a group of Jewish terrorizing bandits in land. Festus visited Jerusalem where chief priests & Jewish leaders reminded him that **Paul** was still in prison in Caesarea by order of Felix. Jews wanted Paul brought to Jerusalem for trial. Jewish priests planned to ambush & kill Paul. Festus invited Jews to come to Caesarea where he was returning to. Paul defended himself against Jews. Festus asked Paul to be tried in Jerusalem. **Paul appealed to Caesar.** (Acts 25:10)

**King Herod Agrippa II & sister Bernice** came to Caesarea to welcome Festus. Festus described **Paul's** case to them. The three heard Paul's defense. Paul shared gospel of Jesus Christ with them. (Acts 26) **Paul shared faith in Jesus, righteousness, self discipline & judgment to come with Felix** previously. (Acts 24:25)

## **King Herod Agrippa II (Marcus Julius Agrippa) - 27?AD-100?AD- Last Herodian ruler**

Son of Herod Agrippa I, and brother to Bernice, Mariamne & Drusilla (2nd wife to Felix). Agrippa, educated at court of Emperor Claudius. At Rome he voiced his support for Jews to Claudius, and against Samaritans & their procurator who caused disturbance.

Agrippa II beautified Jerusalem & other cities. He & Bernice tried desperately to avert war with Rome, & urged Jews to tolerate temporary injustices of Florus. Agrippa was overthrown by his Jewish subjects 66AD. Though Jew, Agrippa supported Romans, sending cavalry & archers to Vespasian. Agrippa accompanied **Titus** at some campaigns, & was wounded at Gamala. After destruction of Jerusalem Agrippa & Bernice went to Rome. **Agrippa a friend of Josephus**, wrote him 62 letters, 2 are in Life of Josephus.

## **Berenice II, Julia Berenice, Berenice of Cilicia, Bernice - 28AD - after 81?AD**

Berenice married 3x, divorced & lived with Agrippa II her brother. Berenice had a love affair with **Titus**, 11yrs her junior. Rome didn't approve of her so they didn't marry. **Bernice heard the gospel directly from Paul.** (Acts 26)

