

Herodians

YOUNG PEOPLE'S DICTIONARY OF SCRIPTURAL & RELIGIOUS TERMS

The word *Herodians* is found only 3 times in the Bible—all in the book of Matthew. *Herodians* were Jews who formed one of the three major classes of Jewish leaders during the time when our Lord Jesus walked on this earth.

The *Pharisees* were the most strict, religiously correct, and most zealous in keeping the Mosaic law and traditions they had learned from the 'fathers'. We might say that they were the 'legal' element of Judaism. Outwardly, they appeared to be very holy, but inwardly God saw their hearts as being dead through unbelief in Him.

The *Sadducees* were also a *religious sect*, but one which we might term 'agnostic' in their beliefs. They believed and taught a very wicked, very false, doctrine—that heterodox (false) doctrine was that there is no resurrection from the dead. We might say that they were the morally 'loose' element of Judaism.

The *Herodians* were not really a 'religious sect' of Jews. Though Jews, they supported and followed the Roman rulers over Jerusalem, the Herod's. *Herod* was a title given to a class of Roman rulers that ruled specially over the lands where Jews lived. The name is similar to the Egyptian name *Pharaoh*. We might say that they were the 'atheistic' element among the Jews.

These Jews were not '*religious*' leaders or followers of any *religious sect*. Their group was motivated by '*political correctness*' and the belief that things were better for Jews, if the Roman Empire controlled their land.

These three classes of Jews made up the group of Jews referred to as 'leaders', and were all held specially responsible before God for they took the place of teaching all Jews, their wrong doctrines and practices. *All* of these three classes hated the Lord Jesus, refusing to believe He was their Messiah. *All* of these three classes were specially responsible for stirring up the multitude of common Jews, against our Lord when He was condemned to the death of the cross.