

From the Death of Alexander and Aristobulus to the Banishment of Archelaus

by Flavius Josephus

The sermon explores the complex relationships and power struggles within Herod's family, highlighting Antipater's ambition and the influence of the Pharisees.

Scripture: Psalm 37:12, Proverbs 11:2, Proverbs 15:25, Proverbs 16:5, Proverbs 16:18-19, Proverbs 18:12, Proverbs 21:24, Proverbs 29:23, Ecclesiastes 8:11

Topics: "Divine Judgment", "Biblical Tyranny"

Description

Flavius Josephus recounts the tumultuous final days of King Herod, who, afflicted with a severe and painful illness as a divine judgment for his sins, becomes increasingly tyrannical and cruel. Amidst a sedition raised by the Jews due to his sacrilegious acts, Herod orders the execution of those who defied him, including the high priest Matthias. Despite his deteriorating health, Herod remains vengeful and paranoid, summoning all Jewish leaders to Jericho and planning their imprisonment as he nears death.

Transcript

BOOK XVII.

CONTAINING THE INTERVAL OF FOURTEEN YEARS.

FROM THE DEATH OF ALEXANDER AND ARISTOBULUS TO THE BANISHMENT OF ARCHELAUS.

CHAPTER 1.

HOW ANTIPATER WAS HATED BY ALL THE NATION [OF THE JEWS] FOR THE SLAUGHTER OF HIS BRETHREN; AND HOW, FOR THAT REASON HE GOT INTO PECULIAR FAVOR WITH HIS FRIENDS AT ROME, BY GIVING THEM MANY PRESENTS; AS HE DID ALSO WITH SATURNINUS, THE PRESIDENT OF SYRIA AND THE GOVERNORS WHO WERE UNDER HIM; AND CONCERNING HEROD'S WIVES AND CHILDREN.

1. WHEN Antipater had thus taken off his brethren, and had brought his father into the highest degree of impiety, till he was haunted with furies for what he had done, his hopes did not succeed to his mind, as to the rest of his life; for although he was delivered from the fear of his brethren being his rivals as to the government, yet did he find it a very hard thing, and almost impracticable, to come at the kingdom,

because the hatred of the nation against him on that account was become very great; and besides this very disagreeable circumstance, the affair of the soldiery grieved him still more, who were alienated from him, from which yet these kings derived all the safety which they had, whenever they found the nation desirous of innovation: and all this danger was drawn upon him by his destruction of his brethren.

However, he governed the nation jointly with his father, being indeed no other than a king already; and he was for that very reason trusted, and the more firmly depended on, for the which he ought himself to have been put to death, as appearing to have betrayed his brethren out of his concern for the preservation of Herod, and not rather out of his ill-will to them, and, before them, to his father himself: and this was the accursed state he was in. Now all Antipater's contrivances tended to make his way to take off Herod, that he might have nobody to accuse him in the vile practices he was devising: and that Herod might have no refuge, nor any to afford him their assistance, since they must thereby have Antipater for their open enemy; insomuch that the very plots he had laid against his brethren were occasioned by the hatred he bore his father.

But at this time he was more than ever set upon the execution of his attempts against Herod, because if he were once dead, the government would now be firmly secured to him; but if he were suffered to live any longer, he should be in danger, upon a discovery of that wickedness of which he had been the contriver, and his father would of necessity then become his enemy. And on this account it was that he became very bountiful to his father's friends, and bestowed great sums on several of them, in order to surprise men with his good deeds, and take off their hatred against him.

And he sent great presents to his friends at Rome particularly, to gain their good-will; and above all to Saturninus, the president of Syria. He also hoped to gain the favor of Saturninus's brother with the large presents he bestowed on him; as also he used the same art to [Salome] the king's sister, who had married one of Herod's chief friends. And when he counterfeited friendship to those with whom he conversed, he was very subtle in gaining their belief, and very cunning to hide his hatred against any that he really did hate.

But he could not impose upon his aunt, who understood him of a long time, and was a woman not easily to be deluded, especially while she had already used all possible caution in preventing his pernicious designs. Although Antipater's uncle by the mother's side was married to her daughter, and this by his own connivance and management, while she had before been married to Aristobulus, and while Salome's other daughter by that husband was married to the son of Calleas; yet that marriage was no obstacle to her, who knew how wicked he was, in her discovering his designs, as her former kindred to him could not prevent her hatred of him.

Now Herod had compelled Salome, while she was in love with Sylleus the Arabian, and had taken a fondness for him, to marry Alexas; which match was by her submitted to at the instance of Julia, who persuaded Salome not to refuse it, lest she should herself be their open enemy, since Herod had sworn that he would never be friends with Salome, if she would not accept of Alexas for her husband; so she submitted to Julia as being Caesar's wife; and besides that, she advised her to nothing but what was very much for her own advantage.

At this time also it was that Herod sent back king Archelaus's daughter, who had been Alexander's wife, to her father, returning the portion he had with her out of his own estate, that there might be no dispute between them about it.

2. Now Herod brought up his sons' children with great care; for Alexander had two sons by Glaphyra; and Aristobulus had three sons by Bernice, Salome's daughter, and two daughters; and as his friends were once with him, he presented the children before them; and deploring the hard fortune of his own sons, he prayed that no such ill fortune would befall these who were their children, but that they might improve in virtue, and obtain what they justly deserved, and might make him amends for his care of their education. He also caused them to be betrothed against they should come to the proper age of marriage; the elder of Alexander's sons to Pheroras's daughter, and Antipater's daughter to Aristobulus's eldest son. He also allotted one of Aristobulus's daughters to Antipater's son, and Aristobulus's other daughter to Herod, a son of his own, who was born to him by the high priest's daughter; for it is the ancient practice among us to have many wives at the same time. Now the king made these espousals for the children, out of commiseration of them now they were fatherless, as endeavoring to render Antipater kind to them by these intermarriages. But Antipater did not fail to bear the same temper of mind to his brothers' children which he had borne to his brothers themselves; and his father's concern about them provoked his indignation against them upon this supposal, that they would become greater than ever his brothers had been; while Archclaus, a king, would support his daughter's sons, and Pheroras, a tetrarch, would accept of one of the daughters as a wife to his son. What provoked him also was this, that all the multitude would so commiserate these fatherless children, and so hate him [for making them fatherless], that all would come out, since they were no strangers to his vile disposition towards his brethren. He contrived, therefore, to overturn his father's settlements, as thinking it a terrible thing that they should be so related to him, and be so powerful withal. So Herod yielded to him, and changed his resolution at his entreaty; and the determination now was, that Antipater himself should marry Aristobulus's daughter, and Antipater's son should marry Pheroras's daughter. So the espousals for the marriages were changed after this manner, even without the king's real approbation.

3. Now Herod the king had at this time nine wives; one of them Antipater's mother, and another the high priest's daughter, by whom he had a son of his own name. He had also one who was his brother's daughter, and another his sister's daughter; which two had no children. One of his wives also was of the Samaritan nation, whose sons were Antipas and Archelaus, and whose daughter was Olympias; which daughter was afterward married to Joseph, the king's brother's son; but Archelaus and Antipas were brought up with a certain private man at Rome. Herod had also to wife Cleopatra of Jerusalem, and by her he had his sons Herod and Philip; which last was also brought up at Rome. Pallas also was one of his wives, which bare him his son Phasaelus. And besides these, he had for his wives Phedra and E1pis, by whom he had his daughters Roxana and Salome. As for his elder daughters by the same mother with Alexander and Aristobulus, and whom Pheroras neglected to marry, he gave the one in marriage to Antipater, the king's sister's son, and the other to Phasaelus, his brother's son. And this was the posterity of Herod.

CHAPTER 2.

CONCERNING ZAMARIS, THE BABYLONIAN JEW; CONCERNING THE PLOTS LAID BY ANTIPATER AGAINST HIS FATHER; AND SOMEWHAT ABOUT THE PHARISEES.

1. AND now it was that Herod, being desirous of securing himself on the side of the Trachonites, resolved to build a village as large as a city for the Jews, in the middle of that country, which might make his own country difficult to be assaulted, and whence he might be at hand to make sallies upon them, and do them a mischief. Accordingly, when he understood that there was a man that was a Jew come out of Babylon, with five hundred horsemen, all of whom could shoot their arrows as they rode on horde-back, and, with a

hundred of his relations, had passed over Euphrates, and now abode at Antioch by Daphne of Syria, where Saturninus, who was then president, had given them a place for habitation, called Valatha, he sent for this man, with the multitude that followed him, and promised to give him land in the toparchy called Batanea, which country is bounded with Trachonitis, as desirous to make that his habitation a guard to himself. He also engaged to let him hold the country free from tribute, and that they should dwell entirely without paying such customs as used to be paid, and gave it him tax-free.

2. The Babylonian was reduced by these offers to come hither; so he took possession of the land, and built in it fortresses and a village, and named it Bathyra. Whereby this man became a safeguard to the inhabitants against the Trachonites, and preserved those Jews who came out of Babylon, to offer their sacrifices at Jerusalem, from being hurt by the Trachonite robbers; so that a great number came to him from all those parts where the ancient Jewish laws were observed, and the country became full of people, by reason of their universal freedom from taxes. This continued during the life of Herod; but when Philip, who was [tetrarch] after him, took the government, he made them pay some small taxes, and that for a little while only; and Agrippa the Great, and his son of the same name, although they harassed them greatly, yet would they not take their liberty away. From whom, when the Romans have now taken the government into their own hands, they still gave them the privilege of their freedom, but oppress them entirely with the imposition of taxes. Of which matter I shall treat more accurately in the progress of this history. (2)

3. At length Zamaris the Babylonian, to whom Herod had given that country for a possession, died, having lived virtuously, and left children of a good character behind him; one of whom was Jacim, who was famous for his valor, and taught his Babylonians how to ride their horses; and a troop of them were guards to the forementioned kings. And when Jacim was dead in his old age, he left a son, whose name was Philip, one of great strength in his hands, and in other respects also more eminent for his valor than any of his contemporaries; on which account there was a confidence and firm friendship between him and king Agrippa. He had also an army which he maintained as great as that of a king, which he exercised and led wheresoever he had occasion to march.

4. When the affairs of Herod were in the condition I have described, all the public affairs depended upon Antipater; and his power was such, that he could do good turns to as many as he pleased, and this by his father's concession, in hopes of his good-will and fidelity to him; and this till he ventured to use his power still further, because his wicked designs were concealed from his father, and he made him believe every thing he said. He was also formidable to all, not so much on account of the power and authority he had, as for the shrewdness of his vile attempts beforehand; but he who principally cultivated a friendship with him was Pheroras, who received the like marks of his friendship; while Antipater had cunningly encompassed him about by a company of women, whom he placed as guards about him; for Pheroras was greatly enslaved to his wife, and to her mother, and to her sister; and this notwithstanding the hatred he bare them for the indignities they had offered to his virgin daughters.

Yet did he bear them, and nothing was to be done without the women, who had got this man into their circle, and continued still to assist each other in all things, insomuch that Antipater was entirely addicted to them, both by himself and by his mother; for these four women, (3) said all one and the same thing; but the opinions of Pheroras and Antipater were different in some points of no consequence. But the king's sister [Salome] was their antagonist, who for a good while had looked about all their affairs, and was apprized that this their friendship was made in order to do Herod some mischief, and was disposed to inform the king of it.

And since these people knew that their friendship was very disagreeable to Herod, as tending to do him a mischief, they contrived that their meetings should not be discovered; so they pretended to hate one another, and to abuse one another when time served, and especially when Herod was present, or when any one was there that would tell him: but still their intimacy was firmer than ever, when they were private. And this was the course they took. But they could not conceal from Salome neither their first contrivance, when they set about these their intentions, nor when they had made some progress in them; but she searched out every thing; and, aggravating the relations to her brother, declared to him, as well their secret assemblies and computations, as their counsels taken in a clandestine manner, which if they were not in order to destroy him, they might well enough have been open and public.

But to appearance they are at variance, and speak about one another as if they intended one another a mischief, but agree so well together when they are out of the sight of the multitude; for when they are alone by themselves, they act in concert, and profess that they will never leave off their friendship, but will fight against those from whom they conceal their designs. And thus did she search out these things, and get a perfect knowledge of them, and then told her brother of them, who understood also of himself a great deal of what she said, but still durst not depend upon it, because of the suspicions he had of his sister's calumnies.

For there was a certain sect of men that were Jews, who valued themselves highly upon the exact skill they had in the law of their fathers, and made men believe they were highly favored by God, by whom this set of women were inveigled. These are those that are called the sect of the Pharisees, who were in a capacity of greatly opposing kings. A cunning sect they were, and soon elevated to a pitch of open fighting and doing mischief. Accordingly, when all the people of the Jews gave assurance of their good-will to Caesar, and to the king's government, these very men did not swear, being above six thousand; and when the king imposed a fine upon them, Pheroras's wife paid their fine for them.

In order to requite which kindness of hers, since they were believed to have the foreknowledge of things to come by Divine inspiration, they foretold how God had decreed that Herod's government should cease, and his posterity should be deprived of it; but that the kingdom should come to her and Pheroras, and to their children. These predictions were not concealed from Salome, but were told the king; as also how they had perverted some persons about the palace itself; so the king slew such of the Pharisees as were principally accused, and Bagoas the eunuch, and one Carus, who exceeded all men of that time in comeliness, and one that was his catamite.

He slew also all those of his own family who had consented to what the Pharisees foretold; and for Bagoas, he had been puffed up by them, as though he should be named the father and the benefactor of him who, by the prediction, was foretold to be their appointed king; for that this king would have all things in his power, and would enable Bagoas to marry, and to have children of his own body begotten.

CHAPTER 3.

CONCERNING THE ENMITY BETWEEN HEROD AND PHERORAS; HOW HEROD SENT ANTIPATER TO CAESAR; AND OF THE DEATH OF PHERORAS.

1. WHEN Herod had punished those Pharisees who had been convicted of the foregoing crimes, he gathered an assembly together of his friends, and accused Pheroras's wife; and ascribing the abuses of the virgins to the impudence of that woman, brought an accusation against her for the dishonor she had brought upon them: that she had studiously introduced a quarrel between him and his brother, and, by her

ill temper, had brought them into a state of war, both by her words and actions; that the fines which he had laid had not been paid, and the offenders had escaped punishment by her means; and that nothing which had of late been done had been done without her; "for which reason Pheroras would do well, if he would of his own accord, and by his own command, and not at my entreaty, or as following my opinion, put this his wife away, as one that will still be the occasion of war between thee and me. And now, Pheroras, if thou valuest thy relation to me, put this wife of thine away; for by this means thou wilt continue to be a brother to me, and wilt abide in thy love to me." Then said Pheroras, (although he was pressed hard by the former words,) that as he would not do so unjust a thing as to renounce his brotherly relation to him, so would he not leave off his affection for his wife; that he would rather choose to die than to live, and be deprived of a wife that was so dear unto him. Hereupon Herod put off his anger against Pheroras on these accounts, although he himself thereby underwent a very uneasy punishment. However, he forbade Antipater and his mother to have any conversation with Pheroras, and bid them to take care to avoid the assemblies of the women; which they promised to do, but still got together when occasion served, and both Pteroras and Antipater had their own merry meetings. The report went also, that Antipater had criminal conversation with Pheroras's wife, and that they were brought together by Antipater's mother.

2. But Antipater had now a suspicion of his father, and was afraid that the effects of his hatred to him might increase; so he wrote to his friends at Rome, and bid them to send to Herod, that he would immediately send Antipater to Caesar; which when it was done, Herod sent Antipater thither, and sent most noble presents along with him; as also his testament, wherein Antipater was appointed to be his successor; and that if Antipater should die first, his son [Herod Philip] by the high priest's daughter should succeed. And, together with Antipater, there went to Rome Sylleus the Arabian, although he had done nothing of all that Caesar had enjoined him. Antipater also accused him of the same crimes of which he had been formerly accused by Herod. Sylleus was also accused by Aretas, that without his consent he had slain many of the chief of the Arabians at Petra; and particularly Soemus, a man that deserved to be honored by all men; and that he had slain Fabatus, a servant of Caesar. These were the things of which Sylleus was accused, and that on the occasion following: There was one Corinthus, belonging to Herod, of the guards of the king's body, and one who was greatly trusted by him. Sylleus had persuaded this man with the offer of a great sum of money to kill Herod; and he had promised to do it. When Fabatus had been made acquainted with this, for Sylleus had himself told him of it, he informed the king of it; who caught Corinthus, and put him to the torture, and thereby got out of him the whole conspiracy. He also caught two other Arabians, who were discovered by Corinthus; the one the head of a tribe, and the other a friend to Sylleus, who both were by the king brought to the torture, and confessed that they were come to encourage Corinthus not to fail of doing what he had undertaken to do; and to assist him with their own hands in the murder, if need should require their assistance. So Saturninns, upon Herod's discovering the whole to him, sent them to Rome.

3. At this time Herod commanded Pheroras, that since he was so obstinate in his affection for his wife, he should retire into his own tetrarchy; which he did very willingly, and swore many oaths that he would not come again till he heard that Herod was dead. And indeed when, upon a sickness of the king, he was desired to come to him before he died, that he might intrust him with some of his injunctions, he had such a regard to his oath, that he would not come to him; yet did not Herod so retain his hatred to Pheroras, but remitted of his purpose [not to see him], which he before had, and that for such great causes as have been already mentioned: but as soon as he began to be ill, he came to him, and this without being sent for; and when he was dead, he took care of his funeral, and had his body brought to Jerusalem, and buried there, and appointed a solemn mourning for him. This [death of Pheroras] became the origin of

Antipater's misfortunes, although he were already sailed for Rome, God now being about to punish him for the murder of his brethren, I will explain the history of this matter very distinctly, that it may be for a warning to mankind, that they take care of conducting their whole lives by the rules of virtue.

CHAPTER 4.

PHERORAS'S WIFE IS ACCUSED BY HIS FREEDMEN, AS GUILTY OF POISONING HIM; AND HOW HEROD, UPON EXAMINING; OF THE MATTER BY TORTURE FOUND THE POISON; BUT SO THAT IT HAD BEEN PREPARED FOR HIMSELF BY HIS SON ANTIPATER; AND UPON AN INQUIRY BY TORTURE HE DISCOVERED THE DANGEROUS DESIGNS OF ANTIPATER.

1. AS soon as Pheroras was dead, and his funeral was over, two of Pheroras's freed-men, who were much esteemed by him, came to Herod, and entreated him not to leave the murder of his brother without avenging it, but to examine into such an unreasonable and unhappy death. When he was moved with these words, for they seemed to him to be true, they said that Pheroras supped with his wife the day before he fell sick, and that a certain potion was brought him in such a sort of food as he was not used to eat; but that when he had eaten, he died of it: that this potion was brought out of Arabia by a woman, under pretense indeed as a love-potion, for that was its name, but in reality to kill Pheroras; for that the Arabian women are skillful in making such poisons: and the woman to whom they ascribe this was confessedly a most intimate friend of one of Sylleus's mistresses; and that both the mother and the sister of Pheroras's wife had been at the places where she lived, and had persuaded her to sell them this potion, and had come back and brought it with them the day before that his supper. Hereupon the king was provoked, and put the women slaves to the torture, and some that were free with them; and as the fact did not yet appear, because none of them would confess it, at length one of them, under the utmost agonies, said no more but this, that she prayed that God would send the like agonies upon Antipater's mother, who had been the occasion of these miseries to all of them. This prayer induced Herod to increase the women's tortures, till thereby all was discovered; their merry meetings, their secret assemblies, and the disclosing of what he had said to his son alone unto Pheroras's (4) women. (Now what Herod had charged Antipater to conceal, was the gift of a hundred talents to him not to have any conversation with Pheroras.) And what hatred he bore to his father; and that he complained to his mother how very long his father lived; and that he was himself almost an old man, insomuch that if the kingdom should come to him, it would not afford him any great pleasure; and that there were a great many of his brothers, or brothers' children, bringing up, that might have hopes of the kingdom as well as himself, all which made his own hopes of it uncertain; for that even now, if he should himself not live, Herod had ordained that the government should be conferred, not on his son, but rather on a brother. He also had accused the king of great barbarity, and of the slaughter of his sons; and that it was out of the fear he was under, lest he should do the like to him, that made him contrive this his journey to Rome, and Pheroras contrive to go to his own tetrarchy. (5)

2. These confessions agreed with what his sister had told him, and tended greatly to corroborate her testimony, and to free her from the suspicion of her unfaithfulness to him. So the king having satisfied himself of the spite which Doris, Antipater's mother, as well as himself, bore to him, took away from her all her fine ornaments, which were worth many talents, and then sent her away, and entered into friendship with Pheroras's women. But he who most of all irritated the king against his son was one Antipater, the procurator of Antipater the king's son, who, when he was tortured, among other things, said that Antipater had prepared a deadly potion, and given it to Pheroras, with his desire that he would give it to his father during his absence, and when he was too remote to have the least suspicion cast upon him thereto relating; that Antiphilus, one of Antipater's friends, brought that potion out of Egypt; and that it was sent to

Pheroras by Thendion, the brother of the mother of Antipater, the king's son, and by that means came to Pheroras's wife, her husband having given it her to keep.

And when the king asked her about it, she confessed it; and as she was running to fetch it, she threw herself down from the house-top; yet did she not kill herself, because she fell upon her feet; by which means, when the king had comforted her, and had promised her and her domestics pardon, upon condition of their concealing nothing of the truth from him, but had threatened her with the utmost miseries if she proved ungrateful [and concealed any thing]: so she promised, and swore that she would speak out every thing, and tell after what manner every thing was done; and said what many took to be entirely true, that the potion was brought out of Egypt by Antipater; and that his brother, who was a physician, had procured it; and that" when Thendion brought it us, she kept it upon Pheroras's committing it to her; and that it was prepared by Antipater for thee.

When, therefore, Pheroras was fallen sick, and thou camest to him and tookest care of him, and when he saw the kindness thou hadst for him, his mind was overborne thereby. So he called me to him, and said to me, 'O woman! Antipater hath circumvented me in this affair of his father and my brother, by persuading me to have a murderous intention to him, and procuring a potion to be subservient thereto; do thou, therefore, go and fetch my potion, (since my brother appears to have still the same virtuous disposition towards me which he had formerly, and I do not expect to live long myself, and that I may not defile my forefathers by the murder of a brother,) and burn it before my face:' that accordingly she immediately brought it, and did as her husband bade her; and that she burnt the greatest part of the potion; but that a little of it was left, that if the king, after Pheroras's death, should treat her ill, she might poison herself, and thereby get clear of her miseries."

Upon her saying thus, she brought out the potion, and the box in which it was, before them all. Nay, there was another brother of Antipater, and his mother also, who, by the extremity of pain and torture, confessed the same things, and owned the box [to be that which had been brought out of Egypt]. The high priest's daughter also, who was the king's wife, was accused to have been conscious of all this, and had resolved to conceal it; for which reason Herod divorced her, and blotted her son out of his testament, wherein he had been mentioned as one that was to reign after him; and he took the high priesthood away from his father-in-law, Simeon the son of Boethus, and appointed Matthias the son of Theophilus, who was born at Jerusalem, to be high priest in his room.

3. While this was doing, Bathyllus also, Antipater's freed-man, came from Rome, and, upon the torture, was found to have brought another potion, to give it into the hands of Antipater's mother, and of Pheroras, that if the former potion did not operate upon the king, this at least might carry him off. There came also letters from Herod's friends at Rome, by the approbation and at the suggestion of Antipater, to accuse Archelaus and Philip, as if they calumniated their father on account of the slaughter of Alexander and Aristobulus, and as if they commiserated their deaths, and as if, because they were sent for home, (for their father had already recalled them,) they concluded they were themselves also to be destroyed. These letters had been procured by great rewards by Antipater's friends; but Antipater himself wrote to his father about them, and laid the heaviest things to their charge; yet did he entirely excuse them of any guilt, and said they were but young men, and so imputed their words to their youth. But he said that he had himself been very busy in the affair relating to Sylleus, and in getting interest among the great men; and on that account had bought splendid ornaments to present them withal, which cost him two hundred talents. Now one may wonder how it came about, that while so many accusations were laid against him in Judea during seven months before this time, he was not made acquainted with any of them. The causes of which were,

that the roads were exactly guarded, and that men hated Antipater; for there was nobody who would run any hazard himself to gain him any advantages.

CHAPTER 5.

ANTIPATER'S NAVIGATION FROM ROME TO HIS FATHER; AND HOW HE WAS ACCUSED BY NICOLAUS OF DAMASCUS AND CONDEMNED TO DIE BY HIS FATHER, AND BY QUINTILIUS VARUS, WHO WAS THEN PRESIDENT OF SYRIA; AND HOW HE WAS THEN BOUND TILL CAESAR SHOULD BE INFORMED OF HIS CAUSE.

1. NOW Herod, upon Antipater's writing to him, that having done all that he was to do, and this in the manner he was to do it, he would suddenly come to him, concealed his anger against him, and wrote back to him, and bid him not delay his journey, lest any harm should befall himself in his absence. At the same time also he made some little complaint about his mother, but promised that he would lay those complaints aside when he should return. He withal expressed his entire affection for him, as fearing lest he should have some suspicion of him, and defer his journey to him; and lest, while he lived at Rome, he should lay plots for the kingdom, and, moreover, do somewhat against himself. This letter Antipater met with in Cilicia; but had received an account of Pheroras's death before at Tarentum. This last news affected him deeply; not out of any affection for Pheroras, but because he was dead without having murdered his father, which he had promised him to do. And when he was at Celenderis in Cilicia, he began to deliberate with himself about his sailing home, as being much grieved with the ejection of his mother. Now some of his friends advised him that he should tarry a while some where, in expectation of further information. But others advised him to sail home without delay; for that if he were once come thither, he would soon put an end to all accusations, and that nothing afforded any weight to his accusers at present but his absence. He was persuaded by these last, and sailed on, and landed at the haven called Sebastus, which Herod had built at vast expenses in honor of Caesar, and called Sebastus. And now was Antipater evidently in a miserable condition, while nobody came to him nor saluted him, as they did at his going away, with good wishes of joyful acclamations; nor was there now any thing to hinder them from entertaining him, on the contrary, with bitter curses, while they supposed he was come to receive his punishment for the murder of his brethren.

2. Now Quintilius Varus was at this time at Jerusalem, being sent to succeed Saturninus as president of Syria, and was come as an assessor to Herod, who had desired his advice in his present affairs; and as they were sitting together, Antipater came upon them, without knowing any thing of the matter; so he came into the palace clothed in purple. The porters indeed received him in, but excluded his friends. And now he was in great disorder, and presently understood the condition he was in, while, upon his going to salute his father, he was repulsed by him, who called him a murderer of his brethren, and a plotter of destruction against himself, and told him that Varus should be his auditor and his judge the very next day; so he found that what misfortunes he now heard of were already upon him, with the greatness of which he went away in confusion; upon which his mother and his wife met him, (which wife was the daughter of Antigonus, who was king of the Jews before Herod,) from whom he learned all circumstances which concerned him, and then prepared himself for his trial.

3. On the next day Varus and the king sat together in judgment, and both their friends were also called in, as also the king's relations, with his sister Salome, and as many as could discover any thing, and such as had been tortured; and besides these, some slaves of Antipater's mother, who were taken up a little before Antipater's coming, and brought with them a written letter, the sum of which was this: That he

should not come back, because all was come to his father's knowledge; and that Caesar was the only refuge he had left to prevent both his and her delivery into his father's hands. Then did Antipater fall down at his father's feet, and besought him not to prejudge his cause, but that he might be first heard by his father, and that his father would keep himself unprejudiced. So Herod ordered him to be brought into the midst, and then lamented himself about his children, from whom he had suffered such great misfortunes; and because Antipater fell upon him in his old age. He also reckoned up what maintenance and what education he had given them; and what seasonable supplies of wealth he had afforded them, according to their own desires; none of which favors had hindered them from contriving against him, and from bringing his very life into danger, in order to gain his kingdom, after an impious manner, by taking away his life before the course of nature, their father's wishes, or justice required that that kingdom should come to them; and that he wondered what hopes could elevate Antipater to such a pass as to be hardy enough to attempt such things; that he had by his testament in writing declared him his successor in the government; and while he was alive, he was in no respect inferior to him, either in his illustrious dignity, or in power and authority, he having no less than fifty talents for his yearly income, and had received for his journey to Rome no fewer than thirty talents. He also objected to him the case of his brethren whom he had accused; and if they were guilty, he had imitated their example; and if not, he had brought him groundless accusations against his near relations; for that he had been acquainted with all those things by him, and by nobody else, and had done what was done by his approbation, and whom he now absolved from all that was criminal, by becoming the inheritor of the guilt of such their parricide.

4. When Herod had thus spoken, he fell a weeping, and was not able to say any more; but at his desire Nicolaus of Damascus, being the king's friend, and always conversant with him, and acquainted with whatsoever he did, and with the circumstances of his affairs, proceeded to what remained, and explained all that concerned the demonstrations and evidences of the facts. Upon which Antipater, in order to make his legal defense, turned himself to his father, and enlarged upon the many indications he had given of his good-will to him; and instanced in the honors that had been done him, which yet had not been done, had he not deserved them by his virtuous concern about him; for that he had made provision for every thing that was fit to be foreseen beforehand, as to giving him his wisest advice; and whenever there was occasion for the labor of his own hands, he had not grudged any such pains for him. And that it was almost impossible that he, who had delivered his father from so many treacherous contrivances laid against him, should be himself in a plot against him, and so lose all the reputation he had gained for his virtue, by his wickedness which succeeded it; and this while he had nothing to prohibit him, who was already appointed his successor, to enjoy the royal honor with his father also at present; and that there was no likelihood that a person who had the one half of that authority without any danger, and with a good character, should hunt after the whole with infamy and danger, and this when it was doubtful whether he could obtain it or not; and when he saw the sad example of his brethren before him, and was both the informer and the accuser against them, at a time when they might not otherwise have been discovered; nay, was the author of the punishment inflicted upon them, when it appeared evidently that they were guilty of a wicked attempt against their father; and that even the contentions there were in the king's family were indications that he had ever managed affairs out of the sincerest affection to his father. And as to what he had done at Rome, Caesar was a witness thereto, who yet was no more to be imposed upon than God himself; of whose opinions his letters sent hither are sufficient evidence; and that it was not reasonable to prefer the calumnies of such as proposed to raise disturbances before those letters; the greatest part of which calumnies had been raised during his absence, which gave scope to his enemies to forge them, which they had not been able to do if he had been there. Moreover he showed the weakness of the evidence obtained by torture, which was commonly false, because the distress men are in under

such tortures naturally obliges them to say many things in order to please those that govern them. He also offered himself to the torture.

5. Hereupon there was a change observed in the assembly, while they greatly pitied Antipater, who by weeping and putting on a countenance suitable to his sad case made them commiserate the same, insomuch that his very enemies were moved to compassion; and it appeared plainly that Herod himself was affected in his own mind, although he was not willing it should be taken notice of. Then did Nicolaus begin to prosecute what the king had begun, and that with great bitterness; and summed up all the evidence which arose from the tortures, or from the testimonies.

He principally and largely cried up the king's virtues, which he had exhibited in the maintenance and education of his sons; while he never could gain any advantage thereby, but still fell from one misfortune to another. Although he owned that he was not so much surprised with that thoughtless behavior of his former sons, who were but young, and were besides corrupted by wicked counselors, who were the occasion of their wiping out of their minds the righteous dictates of nature, and this out of a desire of coming to the government sooner than they ought to do; yet that he could not but justly stand amazed at the horrid wickedness of Antipater, who, although he had not only had great benefits bestowed on him by his father, enough to tame his reason, yet could not be more tamed than the most envenomed serpents; whereas even those creatures admit of some mitigation, and will not bite their benefactors, while Antipater hath not let the misfortunes of his brethren be any hinderance to him, but he hath gone on to imitate their barbarity notwithstanding.

"Yet wast thou, O Antipater! (as thou hast thyself confessed,) the informer as to what wicked actions they had done, and the searcher out of the evidence against them, and the author of the punishment they underwent upon their detection. Nor do we say this as accusing thee for being so zealous in thy anger against them, but are astonished at thy endeavors to imitate their profligate behavior; and we discover thereby that thou didst not act thus for the safety of thy father, but for the destruction of thy brethren, that by such outside hatred of their impiety thou mightest be believed a lover of thy father, and mightest thereby get thee power enough to do mischief with the greatest impunity; which design thy actions indeed demonstrate.

It is true, thou tookest thy brethren off, because thou didst convict theft of their wicked designs; but thou didst not yield up to justice those who were their partners; and thereby didst make it evident to all men that thou madest a covenant with them against thy father, when thou chocest to be the accuser of thy brethren, as desirous to gain to thyself alone this advantage of laying plots to kill thy father, and so to enjoy double pleasure, which is truly worthy of thy evil disposition, which thou has openly showed against thy brethren; on which account thou didst rejoice, as having done a most famous exploit, nor was that behavior unworthy of thee.

But if thy intention were otherwise, thou art worse than they: while thou didst contrive to hide thy treachery against thy father, thou didst hate them, not as plotters against thy father, for in that case thou hadst not thyself fallen upon the like crime, but as successors of his dominions, and more worthy of that succession than thyself. Thou wouldst kill thy father after thy brethren, lest thy lies raised against them might be detected; and lest thou shouldst suffer what punishment thou hadst deserved, thou hadst a mind to exact that punishment of thy unhappy father, and didst devise such a sort of uncommon parricide as the world never yet saw.

For thou who art his son didst not only lay a treacherous design against thy father, and didst it while he loved thee, and had been thy benefactor, had made thee in reality his partner in the kingdom, and had openly declared thee his successor, while thou wast not forbidden to taste the sweetness of authority already, and hadst the firm hope of what was future by thy father's determination, and the security of a written testament; but, for certain, thou didst not measure these things according to thy father's various disposition, but according to thy own thoughts and inclinations; and was desirous to take the part that remained away from thy too indulgent father, and soughtest to destroy him with thy deeds, whom thou in words pretendedst to preserve.

Nor wast thou content to be wicked thyself, but thou filledst thy mother's head with thy devices, and raised disturbances among thy brethren, and hadst the boldness to call thy father a wild beast; while thou hadst thyself a mind more cruel than any serpent, whence thou sentest out that poison among thy nearest kindred and greatest benefactors, and invitedst them to assist thee and guard thee, and didst hedge thyself in on all sides, by the artifices of both men and women, against an old man, as though that mind of thine was not sufficient of itself to support so great a hatred as thou baredst to him.

And here thou appearest, after the tortures of free-men, of domestics, of men and women, which have been examined on thy account, and after the informations of thy fellow conspirators, as making haste to contradict the truth; and hast thought on ways not only how to take thy father out of the world, but to disannul that written law which is against thee, and the virtue of Varus, and the nature of justice; nay, such is that impudence of thine on which thou confidest, that thou desirest to be put to the torture thyself, while thou allegest that the tortures of those already examined thereby have made them tell lies; that those that have been the deliverers of thy father may not be allowed to have spoken the truth; but that thy tortures may be esteemed the discoverers of truth.

Wilt not thou, O Varus! deliver the king from the injuries of his kindred? Wilt not thou destroy this wicked wild beast, which hath pretended kindness to his father, in order to destroy his brethren; while yet he is himself alone ready to carry off the kingdom immediately, and appears to be the most bloody butcher to him of them all? for thou art sensible that parricide is a general injury both to nature and to common life, and that the intention of parricide is not inferior to its perpetration; and he who does not punish it is injurious to nature itself."

6. Nicolaus added further what belonged to Antipater's mother, and whatsoever she had prattled like a woman; as also about the predictions and the sacrifices relating to the king; and whatsoever Antipater had done lasciviously in his cups and his amours among Pheroras's women; the examination upon torture; and whatsoever concerned the testimonies of the witnesses, which were many, and of various kinds; some prepared beforehand, and others were sudden answers, which further declared and confirmed the foregoing evidence.

For those men who were not acquainted with Antipater's practices, but had concealed them out of fear, when they saw that he was exposed to the accusations of the former witnesses, and that his great good fortune, which had supported him hitherto, had now evidently betrayed him into the hands of his enemies, who were now insatiable in their hatred to him, told all they knew of him. And his ruin was now hastened, not so much by the enmity of those that were his accusers, as by his gross, and impudent, and wicked contrivances, and by his ill-will to his father and his brethren; while he had filled their house with disturbance, and caused them to murder one another; and was neither fair in his hatred, nor kind in his friendship, but just so far as served his own turn.

Now there were a great number who for a long time beforehand had seen all this, and especially such as were naturally disposed to judge of matters by the rules of virtue, because they were used to determine about affairs without passion, but had been restrained from making any open complaints before; these, upon the leave now given them, produced all that they knew before the public. The demonstrations also of these wicked facts could no way be disproved, because the many witnesses there were did neither speak out of favor to Herod, nor were they obliged to keep what they had to say silent, out of suspicion of any danger they were in; but they spake what they knew, because they thought such actions very wicked, and that Antipater deserved the greatest punishment; and indeed not so much for Herod's safety, as on account of the man's own wickedness.

Many things were also said, and those by a great number of persons, who were no way obliged to say them, insomuch that Antipater, who used generally to be very shrewd in his lies and impudence, was not able to say one word to the contrary. When Nicolaus had left off speaking, and had produced the evidence, Varus bid Antipater to betake himself to the making his defense, if he had prepared any thing whereby it might appear that he was not guilty of the crimes he was accused of; for that, as he was himself desirous, so did he know that his father was in like manner desirous also, to have him found entirely innocent.

But Antipater fell down on his face, and appealed to God and to all men for testimonials of his innocency, desiring that God would declare, by some evident signals, that he had not laid any plot against his father. This being the usual method of all men destitute of virtue, that when they set about any wicked undertakings, they fall to work according to their own inclinations, as if they believed that God was unconcerned in human affairs; but when once they are found out, and are in danger of undergoing the punishment due to their crimes, they endeavor to overthrow all the evidence against them by appealing to God; which was the very thing which Antipater now did; for whereas he had done everything as if there were no God in the world, when he was on all sides distressed by justice, and when he had no other advantage to expect from any legal proofs, by which he might disprove the accusations laid against him, he impudently abused the majesty of God, and ascribed it to his power that he had been preserved hitherto; and produced before them all what difficulties he had ever undergone in his bold acting for his father's preservation.

7. So when Varus, upon asking Antipater what he had to say for himself, found that he had nothing to say besides his appeal to God, and saw that there was no end of that, he bid them bring the potion before the court, that he might see what virtue still remained in it; and when it was brought, and one that was condemned to die had drank it by Varus's command, he died presently. Then Varus got up, and departed out of the court, and went away the day following to Antioch, where his usual residence was, because that was the palace of the Syrians; upon which Herod laid his son in bonds.

But what were Varus's discourses to Herod was not known to the generality, and upon what words it was that he went away; though it was also generally supposed that whatsoever Herod did afterward about his son was done with his approbation. But when Herod had bound his son, he sent letters to Rome to Caesar about him, and such messengers withal as should, by word of mouth, inform Caesar of Antipater's wickedness. Now at this very time there was seized a letter of Antipater, written to Antipater out of Egypt (for he lived there); and when it was opened by the king, it was found to contain what follows: "I have sent thee Acme's letter, and hazarded my own life; for thou knowest that I am in danger from two families, if I be discovered.

I wish thee good success in thy affair." These were the contents of this letter; but the king made inquiry about the other letter also, for it did not appear; and Antiphilus's slave, who brought that letter which had been read, denied that he had received the other. But while the king was in doubt about it, one of Herod's friends seeing a seam upon the inner coat of the slave, and a doubling of the cloth, (for he had two coats on,) he guessed that the letter might be within that doubling; which accordingly proved to be true.

So they took out the letter, and its contents were these: "Acme to Antipater. I have written such a letter to thy father as thou desiredst me. I have also taken a copy and sent it, as if it came from Salome, to my lady [Livia]; which, when thou readest, I know that Herod Will punish Salome, as plotting against him?' Now this pretended letter of Salome to her lady was composed by Antipater, in the name of Salome, as to its meaning, but in the words of Acme. The letter was this: "Acme to king Herod.

I have done my endeavor that nothing that is done against thee should be concealed from thee. So, upon my finding a letter of Salome written to my lady against thee, I have written out a copy, and sent it to thee; with hazard to myself, but for thy advantage. The reason why she wrote it was this, that she had a mind to be married to Sylleus. Do thou therefore tear this letter in pieces, that I may not come into danger of my life." Now Acme had written to Antipater himself, and informed him, that, in compliance with his command, she had both herself written to Herod, as if Salome had laid a sudden plot entirely against him, and had herself sent a copy of an epistle, as coming from Salome to her lady.

Now Acme was a Jew by birth, and a servant to Julia, Caesar's wife; and did this out of her friendship for Antipater, as having been corrupted by him with a large present of money, to assist in his pernicious designs against his father and his aunt.

8. Hereupon Herod was so amazed at the prodigious wickedness of Antipater, that he was ready to have ordered him to be slain immediately, as a turbulent person in the most important concerns, and as one that had laid a plot not only against himself, but against his sister also, and even corrupted Caesar's own domestics. Salome also provoked him to it, beating her breast, and bidding him kill her, if he could produce any credible testimony that she had acted in that manner. Herod also sent for his son, and asked him about this matter, and bid him contradict if he could, and not suppress any thing he had to say for himself; and when he had not one word to say, he asked him, since he was every way caught in his villainy, that he would make no further delay, but discover his associates in these his wicked designs. So he laid all upon Antiphilus, but discovered nobody else. Hereupon Herod was in such great grief, that he was ready to send his son to Rome to Caesar, there to give an account of these his wicked contrivances. But he soon became afraid, lest he might there, by the assistance of his friends, escape the danger he was in; so he kept him bound as before, and sent more ambassadors and letters [to Rome] to accuse his son, and an account of what assistance Acme had given him in his wicked designs, with copies of the epistles before mentioned.

CHAPTER 6.

CONCERNING THE DISEASE THAT HEROD FELL INTO AND THE SEDITION WHICH THE JEWS RAISED THEREUPON; WITH THE PUNISHMENT OF THE SEDITIOUS.

1. NOW Herod's ambassadors made haste to Rome; but sent, as instructed beforehand, what answers they were to make to the questions put to them. They also carried the epistles with them. But Herod now fell into a distemper, and made his will, and bequeathed his kingdom to [Antipas], his youngest son; and this out of that hatred to Archclaus and Philip, which the calumnies of Antipater had raised against them.

He also bequeathed .a thousand talents to Caesar, and five hundred to Julia, Caesar's wife, to Caesar's children, and friends and freed-men. He also distributed among his sons and their sons his money, his revenues, and his lands. He also made Salome his sister very rich, because she had continued faithful to him in all his circumstances, and was never so rash as to do him any harm; and as he despaired of recovering, for he was about the seventieth year of his age, he grew fierce, and indulged the bitterest anger upon all occasions; the cause whereof was this, that he thought himself despised, and that the nation was pleased with his misfortunes; besides which, he resented a sedition which some of the lower sort of men excited against him, the occasion of which was as follows.

2. There was one Judas, the son of Saripheus, and Mattbias, the son of Margalothus, two of the most eloquent men among the Jews, and the most celebrated interpreters of the Jewish laws, and men well beloved by the people, because of their education of their youth; for all those that were studious of virtue frequented their lectures every day. These men, when they found that the king's distemper was incurable, excited the young men that they would pull down all those works which the king had erected contrary to the law of their fathers, and thereby obtain the rewards which the law will confer on them for such actions of piety; for that it was truly on account of Herod's rashness in making such things as the law had forbidden, that his other misfortunes, and this distemper also, which was so unusual among mankind, and with which he was now afflicted, came upon him; for Herod had caused such things to be made which were contrary to the law, of which he was accused by Judas and Matthias; for the king had erected over the great gate of the temple a large golden eagle, of great value, and had dedicated it to the temple. Now the law forbids those that propose to live according to it, to erect images (6) or representations of any living creature. So these wise men persuaded [their scholars] to pull down the golden eagle; alleging, that although they should incur any danger, which might bring them to their deaths, the virtue of the action now proposed to them would appear much more advantageous to them than the pleasures of life; since they would die for the preservation and observation of the law of their fathers; since they would also acquire an everlasting fame and commendation; since they would be both commended by the present generation, and leave an example of life that would never be forgotten to posterity; since that common calamity of dying cannot be avoided by our living so as to escape any such dangers; that therefore it is a right thing for those who are in love with a virtuous conduct, to wait for that fatal hour by such behavior as may carry them out of the world with praise and honor; and that this will alleviate death to a great degree, thus to come at it by the performance of brave actions, which bring us into danger of it; and at the same time to leave that reputation behind them to their children, and to all their relations, whether they be men or women, which will be of great advantage to them afterward.

3. And with such discourses as this did these men excite the young men to this action; and a report being come to them that the king was dead, this was an addition to the wise men's persuasions; so, in the very middle of the day, they got upon the place, they pulled down the eagle, and cut it into pieces with axes, while a great number of the people were in the temple. And now the king's captain, upon hearing what the undertaking was, and supposing it was a thing of a higher nature than it proved to be, came up thither, having a great band of soldiers with him, such as was sufficient to put a stop to the multitude of those who pulled down what was dedicated to God; so he fell upon them unexpectedly, and as they were upon this bold attempt, in a foolish presumption rather than a cautious circumspection, as is usual with the multitude, and while they were in disorder, and incautious of what was for their advantage; so he caught no fewer than forty of the young men, who had the courage to stay behind when the rest ran away, together with the authors of this bold attempt, Judas and Matthias, who thought it an ignominious thing to retire upon his approach, and led them to the king.

And when they were come to the king, and he asked them if they had been so bold as to pull down what he had dedicated to God, "Yes, (said they,) what was contrived we contrived, and what hath been performed we performed it, and that with such a virtuous courage as becomes men; for we have given our assistance to those things which were dedicated to the majesty of God, and we have provided for what we have learned by hearing the law; and it ought not to be wondered at, if we esteem those laws which Moses had suggested to him, and were taught him by God, and which he wrote and left behind him, more worthy of observation than thy commands.

Accordingly we will undergo death, and all sorts of punishments which thou canst inflict upon us, with pleasure, since we are conscious to ourselves that we shall die, not for any unrighteous actions, but for our love to religion." And thus they all said, and their courage was still equal to their profession, and equal to that with which they readily set about this undertaking. And when the king had ordered them to be bound, he sent them to Jericho, and called together the principal men among the Jews; and when they were come, he made them assemble in the theater, and because he could not himself stand, he lay upon a couch, and enumerated the many labors that he had long endured on their account, and his building of the temple, and what a vast charge that was to him; while the Asamoneans, during the hundred and twenty-five years of their government, had not been able to perform any so great a work for the honor of God as that was; that he had also adorned it with very valuable donations, on which account he hoped that he had left himself a memorial, and procured himself a reputation after his death.

He then cried out, that these men had not abstained from affronting him, even in his lifetime, but that in the very day time, and in the sight of the multitude, they had abused him to that degree, as to fall upon what he had dedicated, and in that way of abuse had pulled it down to the ground. They pretended, indeed, that they did it to affront him; but if any one consider the thing truly, they will find that they were guilty of sacrilege against God therein.

4. But the people, on account of Herod's barbarous temper, and for fear he should be so cruel and to inflict punishment on them, said what was done was done without their approbation, and that it seemed to them that the actors might well be punished for what they had done. But as for Herod, he dealt more mildly with others [of the assembly] but he deprived Matthias of the high priesthood, as in part an occasion of this action, and made Joazar, who was Matthias's wife's brother, high priest in his stead. Now it happened, that during the time of the high priesthood of this Matthias, there was another person made high priest for a single day, that very day which the Jews observed as a fast. The occasion was this: This Matthias the high priest, on the night before that day when the fast was to be celebrated, seemed, in a dream, (7) to have conversation with his wife; and because he could not officiate himself on that account, Joseph, the son of Ellemus, his kinsman, assisted him in that sacred office. But Herod deprived this Matthias of the high priesthood, and burnt the other Matthias, who had raised the sedition, with his companions, alive. And that very night there was an eclipse of the moon. (8)

5. But now Herod's distemper greatly increased upon him after a severe manner, and this by God's judgment upon him for his sins; for a fire glowed in him slowly, which did not so much appear to the touch outwardly, as it augmented his pains inwardly; for it brought upon him a vehement appetite to eating, which he could not avoid to supply with one sort of food or other. His entrails were also ex-ulcerated, and the chief violence of his pain lay on his colon; an aqueous and transparent liquor also had settled itself about his feet, and a like matter afflicted him at the bottom of his belly.

Nay, further, his privy-member was putrefied, and produced worms; and when he sat upright, he had a difficulty of breathing, which was very loathsome, on account of the stench of his breath, and the quickness of its returns; he had also convulsions in all parts of his body, which increased his strength to an insufferable degree. It was said by those who pretended to divine, and who were endued with wisdom to foretell such things, that God inflicted this punishment on the king on account of his great impiety; yet was he still in hopes of recovering, though his afflictions seemed greater than any one could bear.

He also sent for physicians, and did not refuse to follow what they prescribed for his assistance, and went beyond the river Jordan, and bathed himself in the warm baths that were at Callirrhoe, which, besides their other general virtues, were also fit to drink; which water runs into the lake called Asphaltiris. And when the physicians once thought fit to have him bathed in a vessel full of oil, it was supposed that he was just dying; but upon the lamentable cries of his domestics, he revived; and having no longer the least hopes of recovering, he gave order that every soldier should be paid fifty drachmae; and he also gave a great deal to their commanders, and to his friends, and came again to Jericho, where he grew so choleric, that it brought him to do all things like a madman; and though he were near his death, he contrived the following wicked designs.

He commanded that all the principal men of the entire Jewish nation, wheresoever they lived, should be called to him. Accordingly, they were a great number that came, because the whole nation was called, and all men heard of this call, and death was the penalty of such as should despise the epistles that were sent to call them. And now the king was in a wild rage against them all, the innocent as well as those that had afforded ground for accusations; and when they were come, he ordered them to be all shut up in the hyppodrome, (9) and sent for his sister Salome, and her husband Alexas, and spake thus to them: "I shall die in a little time, so great are my pains; which death ought to be cheerfully borne, and to be welcomed by all men; but what principally troubles me is this, that I shall die without being lamented, and without such mourning as men usually expect at a king's death.

For that he was not unacquainted with the temper of the Jews, that his death would be a thing very desirable, and exceedingly acceptable to them, because during his lifetime they were ready to revolt from him, and to abuse the donations he had dedicated to God that it th

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