

From the Finishing of the Temple by Herod to the Death of Alexander and Aristobulus

by Flavius Josephus

Herod's law and its impact on Jewish customs and traditions are examined, along with the significant events surrounding Agrippa's visit to Judea and the Jewish request for privileges.

Scripture: Psalm 146:3, Proverbs 15:33, Proverbs 16:18, Proverbs 22:1, Matthew 23:12, Romans 12:18, Galatians 6:7, Philippians 2:3, James 3:16, 1 Peter 5:5

Topics: "Jewish History", "King Herod"

Description

Flavius Josephus preaches about King Herod's zealous administration, enactment of severe laws, and controversial punishments, leading to hatred and accusations within his family. Despite his magnificence in building cities, temples, and sponsoring grand festivals, Herod's harshness towards his sons and subjects reveals a complex nature driven by ambition and a desire for honor. The sermon also highlights the embassages sent to Caesar concerning the mistreatment of Jews in Asia and Libya by the Greeks, showcasing the struggles faced by the Jewish community in foreign lands.

Transcript

BOOK XVI.

CONTAINING THE INTERVAL OF TWELVE YEARS.

FROM THE FINISHING OF THE TEMPLE BY HEROD TO THE DEATH OF ALEXANDER AND ARISTOBULUS.

CHAPTER 1.

A LAW OF HEROD'S ABOUT, THIEVES. SALOME AND PHERORAS CALUMNIATE ALEXANDER AND ARISTOBULUS, UPON THEIR RETURN FROM ROME FOR WHOM YET HEROD PROVIDES WIVES.

1. AS king Herod was very zealous in the administration of his entire government, and desirous to put a stop to particular acts of injustice which were done by criminals about the city and country, he made a law, no way like our original laws, and which he enacted of himself, to expose house-breakers to be ejected out of his kingdom; which punishment was not only grievous to be borne by the offenders, but contained in it a dissolution of the customs of our forefathers; for this slavery to foreigners, and such as did not live after

the manner of Jews, and this necessity that they were under to do whatsoever such men should command, was an offense against our religious settlement, rather than a punishment to such as were found to have offended, such a punishment being avoided in our original laws; for those laws ordain, that the thief shall restore fourfold; and that if he have not so much, he shall be sold indeed, but not to foreigners, nor so that he be under perpetual slavery, for he must have been released after six years. But this law, thus enacted, in order to introduce a severe and illegal punishment, seemed to be a piece of insolence of Herod, when he did not act as a king, but as a tyrant, and thus contemptuously, and without any regard to his subjects, did he venture to introduce such a punishment. Now this penalty, thus brought into practice, was like Herod's other actions, and became a part of his accusation, and an occasion of the hatred he lay under.

2. Now at this time it was that he sailed to Italy, as very desirous to meet with Caesar, and to see his sons who lived at Rome; and Caesar was not only very obliging to him in other respects, but delivered him his sons again, that he might take them home with him, as having already completed themselves in the sciences; but as soon as the young men were come from Italy, the multitude were very desirous to see them, and they became conspicuous among them all, as adorned with great blessings of fortune, and having the countenances of persons of royal dignity. So they soon appeared to be the objects of envy to Salome, the king's sister, and to such as had raised calumnies against Mariamne; for they were suspicious, that when these came to the government, they should be punished for the wickedness they had been guilty of against their mother; so they made this very fear of theirs a motive to raise calumnies against them also. They gave it out that they were not pleased with their father's company, because he had put their mother to death, as if it were not agreeable to piety to appear to converse with their mother's murderer. Now, by carrying these stories; that had indeed a true foundation [in the fact], but were only built on probabilities as to the present accusation, they were able to do them mischief, and to make Herod take away that kindness from his sons which he had before borne to them; for they did not say these things to him openly, but scattered abroad such words, among the rest of the multitude; from which words, when carried to Herod, he was induced [at last] to hate them, and which natural affection itself, even in length of time, was not able to overcome; yet was the king at that time in a condition to prefer the natural affection of a father before all the suspicions and calumnies his sons lay under. So he respected them as he ought to do, and married them to wives, now they were of an age suitable thereto. To Aristobulus he gave for a wife Bernice, Salome's daughter; and to Alexander, Glaphyra, the daughter of Archelaus, king of Cappadocia.

CHAPTER 2.

HOW HEROD TWICE SAILED TO AGRIPPA; AND HOW UPON THE COMPLAINT IN IONIA AGAINST THE GREEKS AGRIPPA CONFIRMED THE LAWS TO THEM.

1. WHEN Herod had despatched these affairs, and he understood that Marcus Agrippa had sailed again out of Italy into Asia, he made haste to him, and besought him to come to him into his kingdom, and to partake of what he might justly expect from one that had been his guest, and was his friend. This request he greatly pressed, and to it Agrippa agreed, and came into Judea; whereupon Herod omitted nothing that might please him. He entertained him in his new-built cities, and showed him the edifices he had built, and provided all sorts of the best and most costly dainties for him and his friends, and that at Sebaste and Cesarea, about that port that he had built, and at the fortresses which he had erected at great expenses, Alexandrium, and Herodium, and Hyrcania. He also conducted him to the city Jerusalem, where all the people met him in their festival garments, and received him with acclamations. Agrippa also offered a hecatomb of sacrifices to God; and feasted the people, without omitting any of the greatest dainties that

could be gotten. He also took so much pleasure there, that he abode many days with them, and would willingly have staid longer, but that the season of the year made him make haste away; for as winter was coming on, he thought it not safe to go to sea later, and yet he was of necessity to return again to Ionia.

2. So Agrippa went away, when Herod had bestowed on him, and on the principal of those that were with him, many presents; but king Herod, when he had passed the winter in his own dominions, made haste to get to him again in the spring, when he knew he designed to go to a campaign at the Bosporus. So when he had sailed by Rhodes and by Cos, he touched at Lesbos, as thinking he should have overtaken Agrippa there; but he was taken short here by a north wind, which hindered his ship from going to the shore; so he continued many days at Chius, and there he kindly treated a great many that came to him, and obliged them by giving them royal gifts.

And when he saw that the portico of the city was fallen down, which as it was overthrown in the Mithridatic war, and was very large and fine building, so was it not so easy to rebuild that as it was the rest, yet did he furnish a sum not only large enough for that purpose, but what was more than sufficient to finish the building; and ordered them not to overlook that portico, but to rebuild it quickly, that so the city might recover its proper ornaments. And when the high winds were laid, he sailed to Mytilene, and thence to Byzantium; and when he heard that Agrippa was sailed beyond the Cyanean rocks, he made all the haste possible to overtake him, and came up with him about Sinope, in Pontus.

He was seen sailing by the ship-men most unexpectedly, but appeared to their great joy; and many friendly salutations there were between them, insomuch that Agrippa thought he had received the greatest marks of the king's kindness and humanity towards him possible, since the king had come so long a voyage, and at a very proper season, for his assistance, and had left the government of his own dominions, and thought it more worth his while to come to him. Accordingly, Herod was all in all to Agrippa, in the management of the war, and a great assistant in civil affairs, and in giving him counsel as to particular matters.

He was also a pleasant companion for him when he relaxed himself, and a joint partaker with him in all things; ill troubles because of his kindness, and in prosperity because of the respect Agrippa had for him. Now as soon as those affairs of Pontus were finished, for whose sake Agrippa was sent thither, they did not think fit to return by sea, but passed through Paphlagonia and Cappadocia; they then traveled thence over great Phrygia, and came to Ephesus, and then they sailed from Ephesus to Samos.

And indeed the king bestowed a great many benefits on every city that he came to, according as they stood in need of them; for as for those that wanted either money or kind treatment, he was not wanting to them; but he supplied the former himself out of his own expenses: he also became an intercessor with Agrippa for all such as sought after his favor, and he brought things so about, that the petitioners failed in none of their suits to him, Agrippa being himself of a good disposition, and of great generosity, and ready to grant all such requests as might be advantageous to the petitioners, provided they were not to the detriment of others.

The inclination of the king was of great weight also, and still excited Agrippa, who was himself ready to do good; for he made a reconciliation between the people of Ilium, at whom he was angry, and paid what money the people of Chius owed Caesar's procurators, and discharged them of their tributes; and helped all others, according as their several necessities required.

3. But now, when Agrippa and Herod were in Ionia, a great multitude of Jews, who dwelt in their cities, came to them, and laying hold of the opportunity and the liberty now given them, laid before them the injuries which they suffered, while they were not permitted to use their own laws, but were compelled to prosecute their law-suits, by the ill usage of the judges, upon their holy days, and were deprived of the money they used to lay up at Jerusalem, and were forced into the army, and upon such other offices as obliged them to spend their sacred money; from which burdens they always used to be freed by the Romans, who had still permitted them to live according to their own laws.

When this clamor was made, the king desired of Agrippa that he would hear their cause, and assigned Nicolaus, one of his friends, to plead for those their privileges. Accordingly, when Agrippa had called the principal of the Romans, and such of the kings and rulers as were there, to be his assessors, Nicolaus stood up, and pleaded for the Jews, as follows: "It is of necessity incumbent on such as are in distress to have recourse to those that have it in their power to free them from those injuries they lie under; and for those that now are complainants, they approach you with great assurance; for as they have formerly often obtained your favor, so far as they have even wished to have it, they now only entreat that you, who have been the donors, will take care that those favors you have already granted them may not be taken away from them.

We have received these favors from you, who alone have power to grant them, but have them taken from us by such as are no greater than ourselves, and by such as we know are as much subjects as we are; and certainly, if we have been vouchsafed great favors, it is to our commendation who have obtained them, as having been found deserving of such great favors; and if those favors be but small ones, it would be barbarous for the donors not to confirm them to us. And for those that are the hinderance of the Jews, and use them reproachfully, it is evident that they affront both the receivers, while they will not allow those to be worthy men to whom their excellent rulers themselves have borne their testimony, and the donors, while they desire those favors already granted may be abrogated.

Now if any one should ask these Gentiles themselves, which of the two things they would choose to part with, their lives, or the customs of their forefathers, their solemnities, their sacrifices, their festivals, which they celebrated in honor of those they suppose to be gods? I know very well that they would choose to suffer any thing whatsoever rather than a dissolution of any of the customs of their forefathers; for a great many of them have rather chosen to go to war on that account, as very solicitous not to transgress in those matters.

And indeed we take an estimate of that happiness which all mankind do now enjoy by your means from this very thing, that we are allowed every one to worship as our own institutions require, and yet to live [in peace]; and although they would not be thus treated themselves, yet do they endeavor to compel others to comply with them, as if it were not as great an instance of impiety profanely to dissolve the religious solemnities of any others, as to be negligent in the observation of their own towards their gods.

And let us now consider the one of these practices. Is there any people, or city, or community of men, to whom your government and the Roman power does not appear to be the greatest blessing '. Is there any one that can desire to make void the favors they have granted? No one is certainly so mad; for there are no men but such as have been partakers of their favors, both public and private; and indeed those that take away what you have granted, can have no assurance but every one of their own grants made them by you may be taken from them also; which grants of yours can yet never be sufficiently valued; for if they consider the old governments under kings, together with your present government, besides the great

number of benefits which this government hath bestowed on them, in order to their happiness, this is instead of all the rest, that they appear to be no longer in a state of slavery, but of freedom.

Now the privileges we desire, even when we are in the best circumstances, are not such as deserve to be envied, for we are indeed in a prosperous state by your means, but this is only in common with others; and it is no more than this which we desire, to preserve our religion without any prohibition; which as it appears not in itself a privilege to be envied us, so it is for the advantage of those that grant it to us; for if the Divinity delights in being honored, it must delight in those that permit them to be honored.

And there are none of our customs which are inhuman, but all tending to piety, and devoted to the preservation of justice; nor do we conceal those injunctions of ours by which we govern our lives, they being memorials of piety, and of a friendly conversation among men. And the seventh day we set apart from labor; it is dedicated to the learning of our customs and laws, (1) we thinking it proper to reflect on them, as well as on any [good] thing else, in order to our avoiding of sin.

If any one therefore examine into our observances, he will find they are good in themselves, and that they are ancient also, though some think otherwise, insomuch that those who have received them cannot easily be brought to depart from them, out of that honor they pay to the length of time they have religiously enjoyed them and observed them. Now our adversaries take these our privileges away in the way of injustice; they violently seize upon that money of ours which is owed to God, and called sacred money, and this openly, after a sacrilegious manner; and they impose tributes upon us, and bring us before tribunals on holy days, and then require other like debts of us, not because the contracts require it, and for their own advantage, but because they would put an affront on our religion, of which they are conscious as well as we, and have indulged themselves in an unjust, and to them involuntary, hatred; for your government over all is one, tending to the establishing of benevolence, and abolishing of ill-will among such as are disposed to it.

This is therefore what we implore from thee, most excellent Agrippa, that we may not be ill-treated; that we may not be abused; that we may not be hindered from making use of our own customs, nor be despoiled of our goods, nor be forced by these men to do what we ourselves force nobody to do; for these privileges of ours are not only according to justice, but have formerly been granted us by you. And we are able to read to you many decrees of the senate, and the tables that contain them, which are still extant in the capitol, concerning these things, which it is evident were granted after you had experience of our fidelity towards you, which ought to be valued, though no such fidelity had been; for you have hitherto preserved what people were in possession of, not to us only, but almost to all men, and have added greater advantages than they could have hoped for, and thereby your government is become a great advantage to them.

And if any one were able to enumerate the prosperity you have conferred on every nation, which they possess by your means, he could never put an end to his discourse; but that we may demonstrate that we are not unworthy of all those advantages we have obtained, it will be sufficient for us, to say nothing of other things, but to speak freely of this king who now governs us, and is now one of thy assessors; and indeed in what instance of good-will, as to your house, hath he been deficient?

What mark of fidelity to it hath he omitted? What token of honor hath he not devised? What occasion for his assistance of you hath he not regarded at the very first? What hindereth; therefore, but that your kindnesses may be as numerous as his so great benefits to you have been? It may also perhaps be fit not

here to pass over in silence the valor of his father Antipater, who, when Caesar made an expedition into Egypt, assisted him with two thousand armed men, and proved inferior to none, neither in the battles on land, nor in the management of the navy; and what need I say any thing of how great weight those soldiers were at that juncture? or how many and how great presents they were vouchsafed by Caesar?

And truly I ought before now to have mentioned the epistles which Caesar wrote to the senate; and how Antipater had honors, and the freedom of the city of Rome, bestowed upon him; for these are demonstrations both that we have received these favors by our own deserts, and do on that account petition thee for thy confirmation of them, from whom we had reason to hope for them, though they had not been given us before, both out of regard to our king's disposition towards you, and your disposition towards him.

And further, we have been informed by those Jews that were there with what kindness thou camest into our country, and how thou offeredst the most perfect sacrifices to God, and honoredst him with remarkable vows, and how thou gavest the people a feast, and acceptedst of their own hospitable presents to thee. We ought to esteem all these kind entertainments made both by our nation and to our city, to a man who is the ruler and manager of so much of the public affairs, as indications of that friendship which thou hast returned to the Jewish nation, and which hath been procured them by the family of Herod.

So we put thee in mind of these things in the presence of the king, now sitting by thee, and make our request for no more but this, that what you have given us yourselves you will not see taken away by others from us."

4. When Nicolaus had made this speech, there was no opposition made to it by the Greeks, for this was not an inquiry made, as in a court of justice, but an intercession to prevent violence to be offered to the Jews any longer; nor did the Greeks make any defense of themselves, or deny what it was supposed they had done. Their pretense was no more than this, that while the Jews inhabited in their country, they were entirely unjust to them [in not joining in their worship] but they demonstrated their generosity in this, that though they worshipped according to their institutions, they did nothing that ought to grieve them. So when Agrippa perceived that they had been oppressed by violence, he made this answer: That, on account of Herod's good-will and friendship, he was ready to grant the Jews whatsoever they should ask him, and that their requests seemed to him in themselves just; and that if they requested any thing further, he should not scruple to grant it them, provided they were no way to the detriment of the Roman government; but that while their request was no more than this, that what privileges they had already given them might not be abrogated, he confirmed this to them, that they might continue in the observation of their own customs, without any one offering them the least injury. And when he had said thus, he dissolved the assembly; upon which Herod stood up and saluted him, and gave him thanks for the kind disposition he showed to them. Agrippa also took this in a very obliging manner, and saluted him again, and embraced him in his arms; after which he went away from Lesbos; but the king determined to sail from Samos to his own country; and when he had taken his leave of Agrippa, he pursued his voyage, and landed at Cesarea in a few days' time, as having favorable winds; from whence he went to Jerusalem, and there gathered all the people together to an assembly, not a few being there out of the country also. So he came to them, and gave them a particular account of all his journey, and of the affairs of all the Jews in Asia, how by his means they would live without injurious treatment for the time to come. He also told them of the entire good fortune he had met with and how he had administered the government, and had not neglected any thing which was for their advantage; and as he was very joyful, he now remitted to them the fourth part of their taxes for the last year. Accordingly, they were so pleased with his favor and speech to them, that they

went their ways with great gladness, and wished the king all manner of happiness.

CHAPTER 3

HOW GREAT DISTURBANCES AROSE IN HERODS FAMILY ON HIS PREFERRING ANTIPATER HIS ELDEST SON BEFORE THE REST, TILL ALEXANDER TOOK THAT INJURY VERY HEINOUSLY.

1. BUT now the affairs in Herod's family were in more and more disorder, and became more severe upon him, by the hatred of Salome to the young men [Alexander and Aristobulus], which descended as it were by inheritance [from their mother Mariamne]; and as she had fully succeeded against their mother, so she proceeded to that degree of madness and insolence, as to endeavor that none of her posterity might be left alive, who might have it in their power to revenge her death. The young men had also somewhat of a bold and uneasy disposition towards their father occasioned by the remembrance of what their mother had unjustly suffered, and by their own affectation of dominion. The old grudge was also renewed; and they east reproaches on Salome and Pheroras, who requited the young men with malicious designs, and actually laid treacherous snares for them. Now as for this hatred, it was equal on both sides, but the manner of exerting that hatred was different; for as for the young men, they were rash, reproaching and affronting the others openly, and were inexperienced enough to think it the most generous to declare their minds in that undaunted manner; but the others did not take that method, but made use of calumnies after a subtle and a spiteful manner, still provoking the young men, and imagining that their boldness might in time turn to the offering violence to their father; for inasmuch as they were not ashamed of the pretended crimes of their mother, nor thought she suffered justly, these supposed that might at length exceed all bounds, and induce them to think they ought to be avenged on their father, though it were by despatching him with their own hands. At length it came to this, that the whole city was full of their discourses, and, as is usual in such contests, the unskilfulness of the young men was pitied; but the contrivance of Salome was too hard for them, and what imputations she laid upon them came to be believed, by means of their own conduct; for they who were so deeply affected with the death of their mother, that while they said both she and themselves were in a miserable case, they vehemently complained of her pitiable end, which indeed was truly such, and said that they were themselves in a pitiable case also, because they were forced to live with those that had been her murderers, and to be partakers with them.

2. These disorders increased greatly, and the king's absence abroad had afforded a fit opportunity for that increase; but as soon as Herod was returned, and had made the forementioned speech to the multitude, Pheroras and Salome let fill words immediately as if he were in great danger, and as if the young men openly threatened that they would not spare him any longer, but revenge their mother's death upon him. They also added another circumstance, that their hopes were fixed on Archclaus, the king of Cappadocia, that they should be able by his means to come to Caesar, and accuse their father. Upon hearing such things, Herod was immediately disturbed; and indeed was the more astonished, because the same things were related to him by some others also. He then called to mind his former calamity, and considered that the disorders in his family had hindered him from enjoying any comfort from those that were dearest to him or from his wife whom he loved so well; and suspecting that his future troubles would soon be heavier and greater than those that were past, he was in great confusion of mind; for Divine Providence had in reality conferred upon him a great many outward advantages for his happiness, even beyond his hopes; but the troubles he had at home were such as he never expected to have met with, and rendered him unfortunate; nay, both sorts came upon him to such a degree as no one could imagine, and made it a doubtful question, whether, upon the comparison of both, he ought to have exchanged so great a success of outward good things for so great misfortunes at home, or whether he ought not to have chosen to avoid

the calamities relating to his family, though he had, for a compensation, never been possessed of the admired grandeur of a kingdom.

3. As he was thus disturbed and afflicted, in order to depress these young men, he brought to court another of his sons, that was born to him when he was a private man; his name was Antipater; yet did he not then indulge him as he did afterwards, when he was quite overcome by him, and let him do every thing as he pleased, but rather with a design of depressing the insolence of the sons of Mariamne, and managing this elevation of his so, that it might be for a warning to them; for this bold behavior of theirs [he thought] would not be so great, if they were once persuaded that the succession to the kingdom did not appertain to them alone, or must of necessity come to them.

So he introduced Antipater as their antagonist, and imagined that he made a good provision for discouraging their pride, and that after this was done to the young men, there might be a proper season for expecting these to be of a better disposition; but the event proved otherwise than he intended, for the young men thought he did them a very great injury; and as Antipater was a shrewd man, when he had once obtained this degree of freedom, and began to expect greater things than he had before hoped for, he had but one single design in his head, and that was to distress his brethren, and not at all to yield to them the pre-eminence, but to keep close to his father, who was already alienated from them by the calumnies he had heard about them, and ready to be wrought upon in any way his zeal against them should advise him to pursue, that he might be continually more and more severe against them.

Accordingly, all the reports that were spread abroad came from him, while he avoided himself the suspicion as if those discoveries proceeded from him; but he rather chose to make use of those persons for his assistants that were unsuspected, and such as might be believed to speak truth by reason of the good-will they bore to the king; and indeed there were already not a few who cultivated a friendship with Antipater, in hopes of gaining somewhat by him, and these were the men who most of all persuaded Herod, because they appeared to speak thus out of their good-will to him: and with these joint accusations, which from various foundations supported one another's veracity, the young men themselves afforded further occasions to Antipater also; for they were observed to shed tears often, on account of the injury that was offered them, and had their mother in their mouths; and among their friends they ventured to reproach their father, as not acting justly by them; all which things were with an evil intention reserved in memory by Antipater against a proper opportunity; and when they were told to Herod, with aggravations, increased the disorder so much, that it brought a great tumult into the family; for while the king was very angry at imputations that were laid upon the sons of Mariamne, and was desirous to humble them, he still increased the honor that he had bestowed on Antipater, and was at last so overcome by his persuasions, that he brought his mother to court also.

He also wrote frequently to Caesar in favor of him, and more earnestly recommended him to his care particularly. And when Agrippa was returning to Rome, after he had finished his ten years' government in Asia. (2) Herod sailed from Judea; and when he met with him, he had none with him but Antipater, whom he delivered to Agrippa, that he might take him along with him, together with many presents, that so he might become Caesar's friend, insomuch that things already looked as if he had all his father's favor, and that the young men were already entirely rejected from any hopes of the kingdom.

CHAPTER 4.

HOW DURING ANTIPATER'S ABODE AT ROME, HEROD BROUGHT ALEXANDER AND ARISTOBULUS BEFORE CAESAR AND ACCUSED THEM. ALEXANDER'S DEFENSE OF HIMSELF BEFORE CAESAR AND RECONCILIATION TO HIS FATHER.

1. AND now what happened during Antipater's absence augmented the honor to which he had been promoted, and his apparent eminence above his brethren; for he had made a great figure in Rome, because Herod had sent recommendations of him to all his friends there; only he was grieved that he was not at home, nor had proper opportunities of perpetually calumniating his brethren; and his chief fear was, lest his father should alter his mind, and entertain a more favorable opinion of the sons of Mariamne; and as he had this in his mind, he did not desist from his purpose, but continually sent from Rome any such stories as he hoped might grieve and irritate his father against his brethren, under pretense indeed of a deep concern for his preservation, but in truth such as his malicious mind dictated, in order to purchase a greater hope of the succession, which yet was already great in itself: and thus he did till he had excited such a degree of anger in Herod, that he was already become very ill-disposed towards the young men; but still while he delayed to exercise so violent a disgust against them, and that he might not either be too remiss or too rash, and so offend, he thought it best to sail to Rome, and there accuse his sons before Caesar, and not indulge himself in any such crime as might be heinous enough to be suspected of impiety.

But as he was going up to Rome, it happened that he made such haste as to meet with Caesar at the city Aquilei (3) so when he came to the speech of Caesar, he asked for a time for hearing this great cause, wherein he thought himself very miserable, and presented his sons there, and accused them of their mad actions, and of their attempts against him: That they were enemies to him; and by all the means they were able, did their endeavors to show their hatred to their own father, and would take away his life, and so obtain his kingdom, after the most barbarous manner: that he had power from Caesar to dispose of it, not by necessity, but by choice, to him who shall exercise the greatest piety towards him; while these my sons are not so desirous of ruling, as they are, upon a disappointment

thereof, to expose their own life, if so be they may but deprive their father of his life; so wild and polluted is their mind by time become, out of their hatred to him: that whereas he had a long time borne this his misfortune, he was now compelled to lay it before Caesar, and to pollute his ears with such language, while he himself wants to know what severity they have ever suffered from him, or what hardships he hath ever laid upon them to make them complain of him; and how they can think it just that he should not be lord of that kingdom which he in a long time, and with great danger, had gained, and not allow him to keep it and dispose of it to him who should deserve best; and this, with other advantages, he proposes as a reward for the piety of such a one as will hereafter imitate

the care he hath taken of it, and that such a one may gain so great a requital as that is: and that it is an impious thing for them to pretend to meddle with it beforehand; for he who hath ever the kingdom in his view, at the same time reckons upon procuring the death of his father, because otherwise he cannot come at the government: that as for himself, he had hitherto given them all that he was able, and what was agreeable to such as are subject to the royal authority, and the sons of a king; what ornaments they wanted, with servants and delicate fare, and had married them into the most illustrious families, the one [Aristobulus] to his sister's daughter, but Alexander to the daughter of king Archelaus; and, what was the greatest favor of all, when their crimes were so very bad, and he

had authority to punish them, yet had he not made use of it against them, but had brought them before Caesar, their common benefactor, and had not used the severity which, either as a father who had been impiously abused, or as a king who had been assaulted treacherously, he might have done, but made them stand upon a level with him in judgment: that, however, it was necessary that all this should not be passed over without punishment, nor himself live in the greatest fears; nay, that it was not for their own advantage to see the light of the sun after what they have done, although they should escape at this time, since they had done the vilest things, and would certainly suffer the greatest punishments that ever were known among mankind.

2. These were the accusations which Herod laid with great vehemency against his sons before Caesar. Now the young men, both while he was speaking, and chiefly at his concluding, wept, and were in confusion. Now as to themselves, they knew in their own conscience they were innocent; but because they were accused by their father, they were sensible, as the truth was, that it was hard for them to make their apology, since though they were at liberty to speak their minds freely as the occasion required, and might with force and earnestness refute the accusation, yet was it not now decent so to do. There was therefore a difficulty how they should be able to speak; and tears, and at length a deep groan, followed, while they were afraid, that if they said nothing, they should seem to be in this difficulty from a consciousness of guilt, - nor had they any defense ready, by reason of their youth, and the disorder they were under; yet was not Caesar unapprized, when he looked upon them in the confusion they were in, that their delay to make their defense did not arise from any consciousness of great enormities, but from their unskilfulness and modesty. They were also commiserated by those that were there in particular; and they moved their father's affections in earnest till he had much ado to conceal them.

3. But when they saw there was a kind disposition arisen both in him and in Caesar, and that every one of the rest did either shed tears, or at least did all grieve with them, the one of them, whose name was Alexander, called to his father, and attempted to answer his accusation, and said, "O father, the benevolence thou hast showed to us is evident, even in this very judicial procedure, for hadst thou had any pernicious intentions about us, thou hadst not produced us here before the common savior of all, for it was in thy power, both as a king and as a father, to punish the guilty; but by thus bringing us to Rome, and making Caesar himself a witness to what is done, thou intimatest that thou intendest to save us; for no one that hath a design to slay a man will bring him to the temples, and to the altars; yet are our circumstances still worse, for we cannot endure to live ourselves any longer, if it be believed that we have injured such a father; nay, perhaps it would be worse for us to live with this suspicion upon us, that we have injured him, than to die without such guilt.

And if our open defense may be taken to be true, we shall be happy, both in pacifying thee, and in escaping the danger we are in; but if this calumny so prevails, it is more than enough for us that we have seen the sun this day; which why should we see, if this suspicion be fixed upon us? Now it is easy to say of young men, that they desire to reign; and to say further, that this evil proceeds from the case of our unhappy mother. This is abundantly sufficient to produce our present misfortune out of the former; but consider well, whether such an accusation does not suit all such young men, and may not be said of them all promiscuously; for nothing can hinder him that reigns, if he have children, and their mother be dead, but the father may have a suspicion upon all his sons, as intending some treachery to him; but a suspicion is not sufficient to prove such an impious practice.

Now let any man say, whether we have actually and insolently attempted any such thing, whereby actions otherwise incredible use to be made credible? Can any body prove that poison hath been prepared? or

prove a conspiracy of our equals, or the corruption of servants, or letters written against thee? though indeed there are none of those things but have sometimes been pretended by way of calumny, when they were never done; for a royal family that is at variance with itself is a terrible thing; and that which thou callest a reward of piety often becomes, among very wicked men, such a foundation of hope, as makes them leave no sort of mischief untried.

Nor does any one lay any wicked practices to our charge; but as to calumnies by hearsay, how can he put an end to them, who will not hear what we have to say? Have we talked with too great freedom? Yes; but not against thee, for that would be unjust, but against those that never conceal any thing that is spoken to them. Hath either of us lamented our mother? Yes; but not because she is dead, but because she was evil spoken of by those that had no reason so to do. Are we desirous of that dominion which we know our father is possessed of?

For what reason can we do so? If we already have royal honors, as we have, should not we labor in vain? And if we have them not, yet are not we in hopes of them? Or supposing that we had killed thee, could we expect to obtain thy kingdom? while neither the earth would let us tread upon it, nor the sea let us sail upon it, after such an action as that; nay, the religion of all your subjects, and the piety of the whole nation, would have prohibited parricides from assuming the government, and from entering into that most holy temple which was built by thee (4) But suppose we had made light of other dangers, can any murderer go off unpunished while Caesar is alive?

We are thy sons, and not so impious or so thoughtless as that comes to, though perhaps more unfortunate than is convenient for thee. But in case thou neither findest any causes of complaint, nor any treacherous designs, what sufficient evidence hast thou to make such a wickedness of ours credible? Our mother is dead indeed, but then what befell her might be an instruction to us to caution, and not an incitement to wickedness. We are willing to make a larger apology for ourselves; but actions never done do not admit of discourse.

Nay, we will make this agreement with thee, and that before Caesar, the lord of all, who is now a mediator between us, If thou, O father, canst bring thyself, by the evidence of truth, to have a mind free from suspicion concerning us let us live, though even then we shall live in an unhappy way, for to be accused of great acts of wickedness, though falsely, is a terrible thing; but if thou hast any fear remaining, continue thou on in thy pious life, we will give this reason for our own conduct; our life is not so desirable to us as to desire to have it, if it tend to the harm of our father who gave it us."

4. When Alexander had thus spoken, Caesar, who did not before believe so gross a calumny, was still more moved by it, and looked intently upon Herod, and perceived he was a little confounded: the persons there present were under an anxiety about the young men, and the fame that was spread abroad made the king hated, for the very incredibility of the calumny, and the commiseration of the flower of youth, the beauty of body, which were in the young men, pleaded for assistance, and the more so on this account, that Alexander had made their defense with dexterity and prudence; nay, they did not themselves any longer continue in their former countenances, which had been bedewed with tears, and cast downwards to the ground, but now there arose in them hope of the best; and the king himself appeared not to have had foundation enough to build such an accusation upon, he having no real evidence wherewith to correct them. Indeed he wanted some apology for making the accusation; but Caesar, after some delay, said, that although the young men were thoroughly innocent of that for which they were calumniated, yet had they been so far to blame, that they had not demeaned themselves towards their father so as to prevent that

suspicion which was spread abroad concerning them. He also exhorted Herod to lay all such suspicions aside, and to be reconciled to his sons; for that it was not just to give any credit to such reports concerning his own children; and that this repentance on both sides might still heal those breaches that had happened between them, and might improve that their good-will to one another, whereby those on both sides, excusing the rashness of their suspicions, might resolve to bear a greater degree of affection towards each other than they had before. After Caesar had given them this admonition, he beckoned to the young men. When therefore they were disposed to fall down to make intercession to their father, he took them up, and embraced them, as they were in tears, and took each of them distinctly in his arms, till not one of those that were present, whether free-man or slave, but was deeply affected with what they saw. (5)

5. Then did they return thanks to Caesar, and went away together; and with them went Antipater, with an hypocritical pretense that he rejoiced at this reconciliation. And in the last days they were with Caesar, Herod made him a present of three hundred talents, as he was then exhibiting shows and largesses to the people of Rome; and Caesar made him a present of half the revenue of the copper mines in Cyprus, and committed the care of the other half to him, and honored him with other gifts and incomes; and as to his own kingdom, he left it in his own power to appoint which of his sons he pleased for his successor, or to distribute it in parts to every one, that the dignity might thereby come to them all. And when Herod was disposed to make such a settlement immediately, Caesar said he would not give him leave to deprive himself, while he was alive, of the power over his kingdom, or over his sons.

6. After this, Herod returned to Judea again. But during his absence no small part of his dominion about Trachon had revolted, whom yet the commanders he left there had vanquished, and compelled to a submission again. Now as Herod was sailing with his sons, and was come over against Cilicia, to [the island] Eleusa, which hath now changed its name for Sebaste, he met with Archelaus, king of Cappadocia, who received him kindly, as rejoicing that he was reconciled to his sons, and that the accusation against Alexander, who had married his daughter, was at an end. They also made one another such presents as it became kings to make, From thence Herod came to Judea and to the temple, where he made a speech to the people concerning what had been done in this his journey. He also discoursed to them about Caesar's kindness to him, and about as many of the particulars he had done as he thought it for his advantage other people should be acquainted with. At last he turned his speech to the admonition of his sons; and exhorted those that lived at court, and the multitude, to concord; and informed them that his sons were to reign after him; Antipater first, and then Alexander and Aristobulus, the sons of Mariamne: but he desired that at present they should all have regard to himself, and esteem him king and lord of all, since he was not yet hindered by old age, but was in that period of life when he must be the most skillful in governing; and that he was not deficient in other arts of management that might enable him to govern the kingdom well, and to rule over his children also. He further told the rulers under him, and the soldiery, that in case they would look upon him alone, their life would be led in a peaceable manner, and they would make one another happy. And when he had said this, he dismissed the assembly. Which speech was acceptable to the greatest part of the audience, but not so to them all; for the contention among his sons, and the hopes he had given them, occasioned thoughts and desires of innovations among them.

CHAPTER 5.

HOW HEROD CELEBRATED THE GAMES THAT WERE TO RETURN EVERY FIFTH YEAR UPON THE BUILDING OF CESAREA; AND HOW HE BUILT AND ADORNED MANY OTHER PLACES AFTER A MAGNIFICENT MANNER; AND DID MANY OTHER ACTIONS GLORIOUSLY

1. ABOUT this time it was that Cesarea Sebaste, which he had built, was finished. The entire building being accomplished: in the tenth year, the solemnity of it fell into the twenty-eighth year of Herod's reign, and into the hundred and ninety-second olympiad. There was accordingly a great festival and most sumptuous preparations made presently, in order to its dedication; for he had appointed a contention in music, and games to be performed naked. He had also gotten ready a great number of those that fight single combats, and of beasts for the like purpose; horse races also, and the most chargeable of such sports and shows as used to be exhibited at Rome, and in other places. He consecrated this combat to Caesar, and ordered it to be celebrated every fifth year. He also sent all sorts of ornaments for it out of his own furniture, that it might want nothing to make it decent; nay, Julia, Caesar's wife, sent a great part of her most valuable furniture [from Rome], insomuch that he had no want of any thing. The sum of them all was estimated at five hundred talents. Now when a great multitude was come to that city to see the shows, as well as the ambassadors whom other people sent, on account of the benefits they had received from Herod, he entertained them all in the public inns, and at public tables, and with perpetual feasts; this solemnity having in the day time the diversions of the fights, and in the night time such merry meetings as cost vast sums of money, and publicly demonstrated the generosity of his soul; for in all his undertakings he was ambitious to exhibit what exceeded whatsoever had been done before of the same kind. And it is related that Caesar and Agrippa often said, that the dominions of Herod were too little for the greatness of his soul; for that he deserved to have both all the kingdom of Syria, and that of Egypt also.

2. After this solemnity and these festivals were over, Herod erected another city in the plain called Capharsaba, where he chose out a fit place, both for plenty of water and goodness of soil, and proper for the production of what was there planted, where a river encompassed the city itself, and a grove of the best trees for magnitude was round about it: this he named Antipatris, from his father Antipater. He also built upon another spot of ground above Jericho, of the same name with his mother, a place of great security and very pleasant for habitation, and called it Cypros. He also dedicated the finest monuments to his brother Phasaelus, on account of the great natural affection there had been between them, by erecting a tower in the city itself, not less than the tower of Pharos, which he named Phasaelus, which was at once a part of the strong defenses of the city, and a memorial for him that was deceased, because it bare his name. He also built a city of the same name in the valley of Jericho, as you go from it northward, whereby he rendered the neighboring country more fruitful by the cultivation its inhabitants introduced; and this also he called Phasaelus.

3. But as for his other benefits, it is impossible to reckon them up, those which he bestowed on cities, both in Syria and in Greece, and in all the places he came to in his voyages; for he seems to have conferred, and that after a most plentiful manner, what would minister to many necessities, and the building of public works, and gave them the money that was necessary to such works as wanted it, to support them upon the failure of their other revenues: but what was the greatest and most illustrious of all his works, he erected Apollo's temple at Rhodes, at his own expenses, and gave them a great number of talents of silver for the repair of their fleet. He also built the greatest part of the public edifices for the inhabitants of Nicopolis, at Actium; (6) and for the Antiochins, the inhabitants of the principal city of Syria, where a broad street cuts through the place lengthways, he built cloisters along it on both sides, and laid the open road with polished stone, and was of very great advantage to the inhabitants. And as to the olympic games, which were in a very low condition, by reason of the failure of their revenues, he recovered their reputation, and appointed revenues for heir maintenance, and made that solemn meeting more venerable, as to the sacrifices and other ornaments; and by reason of this vast liberality, he was generally declared in their inscriptions to be one of the perpetual managers of those games.

4. Now some there are who stand amazed at the diversity of Herod's nature and purposes; for when we have respect to his magnificence, and the benefits which he bestowed on all mankind, there is no possibility for even those that had the least respect for him to deny, or not openly to confess, that he had a nature vastly beneficent; but when any one looks upon the punishments he inflicted, and the injuries he did, not only to his subjects, but to his nearest relations, and takes notice of his severe and unrelenting disposition there, he will be forced to allow that he was brutish, and a stranger to all humanity; insomuch that these men suppose his nature to be different, and sometimes at contradiction with itself; but I am myself of another opinion, and imagine that the occasion of both these sort of actions was one and the same; for being a man ambitious of honor, and quite overcome by that passion, he was induced to be magnificent, wherever there appeared any hopes of a future memorial, or of reputation at present; and as his expenses were beyond his abilities, he was necessitated to be harsh to his subjects; for the persons on whom he expended his money were so many, that they made him a very bad procurer of it; and because he was conscious that he was hated by those under him, for the injuries he did them, he thought it not an easy thing to amend his offenses, for that it was inconvenient for his revenue; he therefore strove on the other side to make their ill-will an occasion of his gains. As to his own court, therefore, if any one was not very obsequious to him in his language, and would not confess himself to be his slave, or but seemed to think of any innovation in his government, he was not able to contain himself, but prosecuted his very kindred and friends, and punished them as if they were enemies and this wickedness he undertook out of a desire that he might be himself alone honored. Now for this, my assertion about that passion of his, we have the greatest evidence, by what he did to honor Caesar and Agrippa, and his other friends; for with what honors he paid his respects to them who were his superiors, the same did he desire to be paid to himself; and what he thought the most excellent present he could make another, he discovered an inclination to have the like presented to himself. But now the Jewish nation is by their law a stranger to all such things, and accustomed to prefer righteousness to glory; for which reason that nation was not agreeable to him, because it was out of their power to flatter the king's ambition with statues or temples, or any other such performances; And this seems to me to have been at once the occasion of Herod's crimes as to his own courtiers and counselors, and of his benefactions as to foreigners and those that had no relation to him.

CHAPTER 6.

AN EMBASSAGE IN CYRENE AND ASIA TO CAESAR, CONCERNING THE COMPLAINTS THEY HAD TO MAKE AGAINST THE GREEKS; WITH COPIES OF THE EPISTLES WHICH CAESAR AND AGRIPPA WROTE TO THE CITIES FOR THEM.

1. Now the cities ill-treated the Jews in Asia, and all those also of the same nation which lived in Libya, which joins to Cyrene, while the former kings had given them equal privileges with the other citizens; but the Greeks affronted them at this time, and that so far as to take away their sacred money, and to do them mischief on other particular occasions. When therefore they were thus afflicted, and found no end of their barbarous treatment they met with among the Greeks, they sent ambassadors to Caesar on those a

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