

**BOOK 15**  
**FROM THE DEATH OF**  
**ANTIGONUS TO THE**  
**FINISHING OF THE TEMPLE**  
**BY HEROD**

**Flavius Josephus**

## Chapter 1

### **Herod Slays the Principal of Antigonus's Friends**

1. How Sosius and Herod took Jerusalem by force; and besides that, how they took Antigonus captive, has been related by us in the foregoing book. We will now proceed in the narration. And since Herod had now the government of all Judea put into his hands, he promoted such of the private men in the city as had been of his party, but never left off avenging and punishing every day those that had chosen to be of the party of his enemies. But Pollio the Pharisee, and Sameas, a disciple of his, were honored by him above all the rest; for when Jerusalem was besieged, they advised the citizens to receive Herod, for which advice they were well requited. But this Pollio, at the time when Herod was once upon his trial of life and death, foretold, in way of reproach, to Hyrcanus and the other judges, how this Herod, whom they suffered now to escape, would afterward inflict punishment on them all; which had its completion in time, while God fulfilled the words he had spoken.

2. At this time Herod, now he had got Jerusalem under his power, carried off all the royal ornaments, and spoiled the wealthy men of what they had gotten; and when, by these means, he had heaped together a great quantity of silver and gold, he gave it all to Antony, and his friends that were about him. He also slew forty-five of the principal men of Antigonus's party, and set guards at the gates of the city, that nothing might be carried out together with their dead bodies. They also searched the dead, and whatsoever was found, either of silver or gold, or other treasure, it was carried to the king; nor was there any end of the miseries he brought upon them; and this distress was in part occasioned by the covetousness of the prince regent, who was still in want of more, and in part by the Sabbatic year, which was still going on, and forced the country to lie still uncultivated, since we are

forbidden to sow our land in that year. Now when Antony had received Antigonus as his captive, he determined to keep him against his triumph; but when he heard that the nation grew seditious, and that, out of their hatred to Herod, they continued to bear good-will to Antigonus, he resolved to behead him at Antioch, for otherwise the Jews could no way be brought to be quiet. And Strabo of Cappadocia attests to what I have said, when he thus speaks: "Antony ordered Antigonus the Jew to be brought to Antioch, and there to be beheaded. And this Antony seems to me to have been the very first man who beheaded a king, as supposing he could no other way bend the minds of the Jews so as to receive Herod, whom he had made king in his stead; for by no torments could they be forced to call him king, so great a fondness they had for their former king; so he thought that this dishonorable death would diminish the value they had for Antigonus's memory, and at the same time would diminish the hatred they bare to Herod." Thus far Strabo.

## Chapter 2

### **Ananelus Was Made High Priest**

1. Now after Herod was in possession of the kingdom, Hyrcanus the high priest, who was then a captive among the Parthians, came to him again, and was set free from his captivity, in the manner following: Barzapharnes and Pacorus, the generals of the Parthians, took Hyrcanus, who was first made high priest and afterward king, and Herod's brother, Phasaelus captives, and were them away into Parthis. Phasaelus indeed could not bear the reproach of being in bonds; and thinking that death with glory was better than any life whatsoever, he became his own executioner, as I have formerly related.

2. But when Hyrcanus was brought into Parthia the king Phraates treated him after a very gentle manner, as having already learned of what an illustrious family he was; on which account he set him free from his bonds, and gave him a habitation at Babylon, (1) where there were Jews in great numbers. These Jews honored Hyrcanus as their high priest and king, as did all the Jewish nation that dwelt as far as Euphrates; which respect was very much to his satisfaction. But when he was informed that Herod had received the kingdom, new hopes came upon him, as having been himself still of a kind disposition towards him, and expecting that Herod would bear in mind what favor he had received from him; and when he was upon his trial, and when he was in danger that a capital sentence would be pronounced against him, he delivered him from that danger, and from all punishment. Accordingly, he talked of that matter with the Jew that came often to him with great affection; but they endeavored to retain him among them, and desired that he would stay with them, putting him in mind of the kind offices and honors they did him, and that those honors they paid him were not at all inferior to what they could pay to either their high priests or their kings; and

what was a greater motive to determine him, they said, was this, that he could not have those dignities [in Judea] because of that maim in his body, which had been inflicted on him by Antigonus; and that kings do not use to requite men for those kindnesses which they received when they were private persons, the height of their fortune making usually no small changes in them.

3. Now although they suggested these arguments to him for his own advantage, yet did Hyrcanus still desire to depart. Herod also wrote to him, and persuaded him to desire of Phraates, and the Jews that were there, that they should not grudge him the royal authority, which he should have jointly with himself, for that now was the proper time for himself to make him amends for the favors he had received from him, as having been brought up by him, and saved by him also, as well as for Hyrcanus to receive it. And as he wrote thus to Hyrcanus, so did he send also Saramallas, his ambassador, to Phraates, and many presents with him, and desired him in the most obliging way that he would be no hinderance to his gratitude towards his benefactor. But this zeal of Herod's did not flow from that principle, but because he had been made governor of that country without having any just claim to it, he was afraid, and that upon reasons good enough, of a change in his condition, and so made what haste he could to get Hyrcanus into his power, or indeed to put him quite out of the way; which last thing he compassed afterward.

4. Accordingly, when Hyrcanus came, full of assurance, by the permission of the king of Parthia, and at the expense of the Jews, who supplied him with money, Herod received him with all possible respect, and gave him the upper place at public meetings, and set him above all the rest at feasts, and thereby deceived him. He called him his father, and endeavored, by all the ways possible, that he might have no suspicion of any treacherous design against him. He also did other things, in order to secure his government, which yet occasioned a sedition in his own family; for being

cautious how he made any illustrious person the high priest of God, (2) he sent for an obscure priest out of Babylon, whose name was Ananelus, and bestowed the high priesthood upon him.

5. However, Alexandra, the daughter of Hyrcanus, and wife of Alexander, the son of Aristobulus the king, who had also brought Alexander [two] children, could not bear this indignity. Now this son was one of the greatest comeliness, and was called Aristobulus; and the daughter, Mariamne, was married to Herod, and eminent for her beauty also. This Alexandra was much disturbed, and took this indignity offered to her son exceeding ill, that while he was alive, any one else should be sent for to have the dignity of the high priesthood conferred upon him. Accordingly, she wrote to Cleopatra (a musician assisting her in taking care to have her letters carried) to desire her intercession with Antony, in order to gain the high priesthood for her son.

6. But as Antony was slow in granting this request, his friend Dellius (3) came into Judea upon some affairs; and when he saw Aristobulus, he stood in admiration at the tallness and handsomeness of the child, and no less at Mariarune, the king's wife, and was open in his commendations of Alexandra, as the mother of most beautiful children. And when she came to discourse with him, he persuaded her to get pictures drawn of them both, and to send them to Antony, for that when he saw them, he would deny her nothing that she should ask. Accordingly, Alexandra was elevated with these words of his, and sent the pictures to Antony. Dellius also talked extravagantly, and said that these children seemed not derived from men, but from some god or other. His design in doing so was to entice Antony into lewd pleasures with them, who was ashamed to send for the damsel, as being the wife of Herod, and avoided it, because of the reproaches he should have from Cleopatra on that account; but he sent, in the most decent manner he could, for the young man; but added this withal, unless he thought it hard

upon him so to do. When this letter was brought to Herod, he did not think it safe for him to send one so handsome as was Aristobulus, in the prime of his life, for he was sixteen years of age, and of so noble a family, and particularly not to Antony, the principal man among the Romans, and one that would abuse him in his amours, and besides, one that openly indulged himself in such pleasures as his power allowed him without control. He therefore wrote back to him, that if this boy should only go out of the country, all would be in a state of war and uproar, because the Jews were in hopes of a change in the government, and to have another king over them.

7. When Herod had thus excused himself to Antony, he resolved that he would not entirely permit the child or Alexandra to be treated dishonorably; but his wife Mariamne lay vehemently at him to restore the high priesthood to her brother; and he judged it was for his advantage so to do, because if he once had that dignity, he could not go out of the country. So he called his friends together, and told them that Alexandra privately conspired against his royal authority, and endeavored, by the means of Cleopatra, so to bring it about, that he might be deprived of the government, and that by Antony's means this youth might have the management of public affairs in his stead; and that this procedure of hers was unjust, since she would at the same time deprive her daughter of the dignity she now had, and would bring disturbances upon the kingdom, for which he had taken a great deal of pains, and had gotten it with extraordinary hazards; that yet, while he well remembered her wicked practices, he would not leave off doing what was right himself, but would even now give the youth the high priesthood; and that he formerly set up Ananelus, because Aristobulus was then so very young a child. Now when he had said this, not at random, but as he thought with the best discretion he had, in order to deceive the women, and those friends whom he had taken to consult withal, Alexandra, out of the great joy she had at this unexpected promise, and out of fear from the suspicions she lay under, fell a weeping; and made the following apology for herself; and said, that as to the [high] priesthood, she was very much concerned for the

disgrace her son was under, and so did her utmost endeavors to procure it for him; but that as to the kingdom, she had made no attempts, and that if it were offered her [for her son], she would not accept it; and that now she would be satisfied with her son's dignity, while he himself held the civil government, and she had thereby the security that arose from his peculiar ability in governing to all the remainder of her family; that she was now overcome by his benefits, and thankfully accepted of this honor showed by him to her son, and that she would hereafter be entirely obedient. And she desired him to excuse her, if the nobility of her family, and that freedom of acting which she thought that allowed her, had made her act too precipitately and imprudently in this matter. So when they had spoken thus to one another, they came to an agreement, and all suspicions, so far as appeared, were vanished away.

### **Footnotes:**

1. The city here called "Babylon" by Josephus, seems to be one which was built by some of the Seleucidae upon the Tigris, which long after the utter desolation of old Babylon was commonly so called, and I suppose not far from Seleueia; just as the latter adjoining city Bagdat has been and is often called by the same old name of Babylon till this very day.
2. Here we have an eminent example of Herod's worldly and profane politics, when by the abuse of his unlawful and usurped power, to make whom he pleased high priest, in the person of Ananelus, he occasioned such disturbances in his kingdom, and in his own family, as suffered him to enjoy no lasting peace or tranquillity ever afterward; and such is frequently the effect of profane court politics about matters of religion in other ages and nations. The Old Testament is full of the miseries of the people of the Jews derived from such court politics, especially in and after the days of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, "who made Israel to sin;" who gave the most pernicious example of it; who brought on the grossest corruption of religion by it; and the punishment of whose family for it was most remarkable. The case is too well known to stand



in need of particular citations.

3. Of this wicked Dellius, see the note on the War, B. I. ch. 15. sect. 3.

## Chapter 3

### **Herod Upon his Making Aristobulus High Priest**

1. So king Herod immediately took the high priesthood away from Ananelus, who, as we said before, was not of this country, but one of those Jews that had been carried captive beyond Euphrates; for there were not a few ten thousands of this people that had been carried captives, and dwelt about Babylonia, whence Ananelus came. He was one of the stock of the high priests (1) and had been of old a particular friend of Herod; and when he was first made king, he conferred that dignity upon him, and now put him out of it again, in order to quiet the troubles in his family, though what he did was plainly unlawful, for at no other time [of old] was any one that had once been in that dignity deprived of it. It was Antiochus Epiphanes who first brake that law, and deprived Jesus, and made his brother Onias high priest in his stead. Aristobulus was the second that did so, and took that dignity from his brother [Hyrcanus]; and this Herod was the third, who took that high office away [from Arianflus], and gave it to this young man, Aristobulus, in his stead.

2. And now Herod seemed to have healed the divisions in his family; yet was he not without suspicion, as is frequently the case, of people seeming to be reconciled to one another, but thought that, as Alexandra had already made attempts tending to innovations, so did he fear that she would go on therein, if she found a fit opportunity for so doing; so he gave a command that she should dwell in the palace, and meddle with no public affairs. Her guards also were so careful, that nothing she did in private life every day was concealed. All these hardships put her out of patience, by little and little and she began to hate Herod; for as she had the pride of a woman to the utmost degree, she had great indignation at this suspicious guard that was about her, as desirous rather to undergo any thing that could befall her, than to be

deprived of her liberty of speech, and, under the notion of an honorary guard, to live in a state of slavery and terror. She therefore sent to Cleopatra, and made a long complaint of the circumstances she was in, and entreated her to do her utmost for her assistance. Cleopatra hereupon advised her to take her son with her, and come away immediately to her into Egypt. This advice pleased her; and she had this contrivance for getting away: She got two coffins made, as if they were to carry away two dead bodies and put herself into one, and her son into the other and gave orders to such of her servants as knew of her intentions to carry them away in the night time. Now their road was to be thence to the sea-side and there was a ship ready to carry them into Egypt. Now Aesop, one of her servants, happened to fall upon Sabion, one of her friends, and spake of this matter to him, as thinking he had known of it before. When Sabion knew this, (who had formerly been an enemy of Herod, and been esteemed one of those that laid snares for and gave the poison to [his father] Antipater,) he expected that this discovery would change Herod's hatred into kindness; so he told the king of this private stratagem of Alexandra: whereupon he suffered her to proceed to the execution of her project, and caught her in the very fact; but still he passed by her offense; and though he had a great mind to do it, he durst not inflict any thing that was severe upon her, for he knew that Cleopatra would not bear that he should have her accused, on account of her hatred to him; but made a show as if it were rather the generosity of his soul, and his great moderation, that made him forgive them. However, he fully proposed to himself to put this young man out of the way, by one means or other; but he thought he might in probability be better concealed in doing it, if he did it not presently, nor immediately after what had lately happened.

3. And now, upon the approach of the feast of tabernacles, which is a festival very much observed among us, he let those days pass over, and both he and the rest of the people were therein very merry; yet did the envy which at this time arose in him cause him to make haste to do what he was about, and provoke him to it; for when this youth Aristobulus, who was now in the

seventeenth year of his age, went up to the altar, according to the law, to offer the sacrifices, and this with the ornaments of his high priesthood, and when he performed the sacred offices, (2) he seemed to be exceedingly comely, and taller than men usually were at that age, and to exhibit in his countenance a great deal of that high family he was sprung from, - a warm zeal and affection towards him appeared among the people, and the memory of the actions of his grandfather Aristobulus was fresh in their minds; and their affections got so far the mastery of them, that they could not forbear to show their inclinations to him. They at once rejoiced and were confounded, and mingled with good wishes their joyful acclamations which they made to him, till the good-will of the multitude was made too evident; and they more rashly proclaimed the happiness they had received from his family than was fit under a monarchy to have done. Upon all this, Herod resolved to complete what he had intended against the young man. When therefore the festival was over, and he was feasting at Jericho (3) with Alexandra, who entertained them there, he was then very pleasant with the young man, and drew him into a lonely place, and at the same time played with him in a juvenile and ludicrous manner. Now the nature of that place was hotter than ordinary; so they went out in a body, and of a sudden, and in a vein of madness; and as they stood by the fish-ponds, of which there were large ones about the house, they went to cool themselves [by bathing], because it was in the midst of a hot day. At first they were only spectators of Herod's servants and acquaintance as they were swimming; but after a while, the young man, at the instigation of Herod, went into the water among them, while such of Herod's acquaintance, as he had appointed to do it, dipped him as he was swimming, and plunged him under water, in the dark of the evening, as if it had been done in sport only; nor did they desist till he was entirely suffocated. And thus was Aristobulus murdered, having lived no more in all than eighteen years, (4) and kept the high priesthood one year only; which high priesthood Ananelus now recovered again.

4. When this sad accident was told the women, their joy was soon

changed to lamentation, at the sight of the dead body that lay before them, and their sorrow was immoderate. The city also [of Jerusalem], upon the spreading of this news, were in very great grief, every family looking on this calamity as if it had not belonged to another, but that one of themselves was slain. But Alexandra was more deeply affected, upon her knowledge that he had been destroyed [on purpose]. Her sorrow was greater than that of others, by her knowing how the murder was committed; but she was under the necessity of bearing up under it, out of her prospect of a greater mischief that might otherwise follow; and she oftentimes came to an inclination to kill herself with her own hand, but still she restrained herself, in hopes she might live long enough to revenge the unjust murder thus privately committed; nay, she further resolved to endeavor to live longer, and to give no occasion to think she suspected that her son was slain on purpose, and supposed that she might thereby be in a capacity of revenging it at a proper opportunity. Thus did she restrain herself, that she might not be noted for entertaining any such suspicion. However, Herod endeavored that none abroad should believe that the child's death was caused by any design of his; and for this purpose he did not only use the ordinary signs of sorrow, but fell into tears also, and exhibited a real confusion of soul; and perhaps his affections were overcome on this occasion, when he saw the child's countenance so young and so beautiful, although his death was supposed to tend to his own security. So far at least this grief served as to make some apology for him; and as for his funeral, that he took care should be very magnificent, by making great preparation for a sepulcher to lay his body in, and providing a great quantity of spices, and burying many ornaments together with him, till the very women, who were in such deep sorrow, were astonished at it, and received in this way some consolation.

5. However, no such things could overcome Alexandra's grief; but the remembrance of this miserable case made her sorrow, both deep and obstinate. Accordingly, she wrote an account of this treacherous scene to Cleopatra, and how her son was murdered; but Cleopatra, as she had

formerly been desirous to give her what satisfaction she could, and commiserating Alexandra's misfortunes, made the case her own, and would not let Antony be quiet, but excited him to punish the child's murder; for that it was an unworthy thing that Herod, who had been by him made king of a kingdom that no way belonged to him, should be guilty of such horrid crimes against those that were of the royal blood in reality. Antony was persuaded by these arguments; and when he came to Laodicea, he sent and commanded Herod to come and make his defense, as to what he had done to Aristobulus, for that such a treacherous design was not well done, if he had any hand in it. Herod was now in fear, both of the accusation, and of Cleopatra's ill-will to him, which was such that she was ever endeavoring to make Antony hate him. He therefore determined to obey his summons, for he had no possible way to avoid it. So he left his uncle Joseph procurator for his government, and for the public affairs, and gave him a private charge, that if Antony should kill him, he also should kill Mariamne immediately; for that he had a tender affection for this his wife, and was afraid of the injury that should be offered him, if, after his death, she, for her beauty, should be engaged to some other man: but his intimation was nothing but this at the bottom, that Antony had fallen in love with her, when he had formerly heard somewhat of her beauty. So when Herod had given Joseph this charge, and had indeed no sure hopes of escaping with his life, he went away to Antony.

6. But as Joseph was administering the public affairs of the kingdom, and for that reason was very frequently with Mariamne, both because his business required it, and because of the respects he ought to pay to the queen, he frequently let himself into discourses about Herod's kindness, and great affection towards her; and when the women, especially Alexandra, used to turn his discourses into feminine raillery, Joseph was so over-desirous to demonstrate the king's inclinations, that he proceeded so far as to mention the charge he had received, and thence drew his demonstration, that Herod was not able to live without her; and that if he should come to any ill end, he could not endure a separation from her, even after he was dead. Thus spake

Joseph. But the women, as was natural, did not take this to be an instance of Herod's strong affection for them, but of his severe usage of them, that they could not escape destruction, nor a tyrannical death, even when he was dead himself. And this saying [of Joseph] was a foundation for the women's severe suspicions about him afterwards.

7. At this time a report went about the city Jerusalem among Herod's enemies, that Antony had tortured Herod, and put him to death. This report, as is natural, disturbed those that were about the palace, but chiefly the women; upon which Alexandra endeavored to persuade Joseph to go out of the palace, and fly away with them to the ensigns of the Roman legion, which then lay encamped about the city, as a guard to the kingdom, under the command of Julius; for that by this means, if any disturbance should happen about the palace, they should be in greater security, as having the Romans favorable to them; and that besides, they hoped to obtain the highest authority, if Antony did but once see Mariamne, by whose means they should recover the kingdom, and want nothing which was reasonable for them to hope for, because of their royal extraction.

8. But as they were in the midst of these deliberations, letters were brought from Herod about all his affairs, and proved contrary to the report, and of what they before expected; for when he was come to Antony, he soon recovered his interest with him, by the presents he made him, which he had brought with him from Jerusalem; and he soon induced him, upon discoursing with him, to leave off his indignation at him, so that Cleopatra's persuasions had less force than the arguments and presents he brought to regain his friendship; for Antony said that it was not good to require an account of a king, as to the affairs of his government, for at this rate he could be no king at all, but that those who had given him that authority ought to permit him to make use of it. He also said the same things to Cleopatra, that it would be best for her not busily to meddle with the acts of the king's government. Herod wrote an account of these things, and enlarged upon the

other honors which he had received from Antony; how he sat by him at his hearing causes, and took his diet with him every day, and that he enjoyed those favors from him, notwithstanding the reproaches that Cleopatra so severely laid against him, who having a great desire of his country, and earnestly entreating Antony that the kingdom might be given to her, labored with her utmost diligence to have him out of the way; but that he still found Antony just to him, and had no longer any apprehensions of hard treatment from him; and that he was soon upon his return, with a firmer additional assurance of his favor to him, in his reigning and managing public affairs; and that there was no longer any hope for Cleopatra's covetous temper, since Antony had given her Celesyria instead of what she had desired; by which means he had at once pacified her, and got clear of the entreaties which she made him to have Judea bestowed upon her.

9. When these letters were brought, the women left off their attempt for flying to the Romans, which they thought of while Herod was supposed to be dead; yet was not that purpose of theirs a secret; but when the king had conducted Antony on his way against the Partnians, he returned to Judea, when both his sister Salome and his mother informed him of Alexandra's intentions. Salome also added somewhat further against Joseph, though it was no more than a calumny, that he had often had criminal conversation with Mariamne. The reason of her saying so was this, that she for a long time bare her ill-will; for when they had differences with one another, Mariamne took great freedoms, and reproached the rest for the meanness of their birth. But Herod, whose affection to Mariamne was always very warm, was presently disturbed at this, and could not bear the torments of jealousy, but was still restrained from doing any rash thing to her by the love he had for her; yet did his vehement affection and jealousy together make him ask Mariamne by herself about this matter of Joseph; but she denied it upon her oath, and said all that an innocent woman could possibly say in her own defense; so that by little and little the king was prevailed upon to drop the suspicion, and left off his anger at her; and being overcome with his passion



for his wife, he made an apology to her for having seemed to believe what he had heard about her, and returned her a great many acknowledgments of her modest behavior, and professed the extraordinary affection and kindness he had for her, till at last, as is usual between lovers, they both fell into tears, and embraced one another with a most tender affection. But as the king gave more and more assurances of his belief of her fidelity, and endeavored to draw her to a like confidence in him, Marianne said, Yet was not that command thou gavest, that if any harm came to thee from Antony, I, who had been no occasion of it, should perish with thee, a sign of thy love to me?" When these words were fallen from her, the king was shocked at them, and presently let her go out of his arms, and cried out, and tore his hair with his own hands, and said, that "now he had an evident demonstration that Joseph had had criminal conversation with his wife; for that he would never have uttered what he had told him alone by himself, unless there had been such a great familiarity and firm confidence between them. And while he was in this passion he had like to have killed his wife; but being still overborne by his love to her, he restrained this his passion, though not without a lasting grief and disquietness of mind. However, he gave order to slay Joseph, without permitting him to come into his sight; and as for Alexandra, he bound her, and kept her in custody, as the cause of all this mischief.

### **Footnotes:**

1. When Josephus says here that this Ananelus, the new high priest, was "of the stock of the high priests," and since he had been just telling us that he was a priest of an obscure family or character, ch. 2. sect. 4, it is not at all probable that he could so soon say that he was "of the stock of the high priests." However, Josephus here makes a remarkable observation, that this Ananelus was the third that was ever unjustly and wickedly turned out of the high priesthood by the civil power, no king or governor having ventured to do so, that Josephus knew of, but that

heathen tyrant and persecutor Antiochus Epiphanes; that barbarous parricide Aristobulus, the first that took royal authority among the Maccabees; and this tyrant king Herod the Great, although afterward that infamous practice became frequent, till the very destruction of Jerusalem, when the office of high priesthood was at an end.

2. This entirely confutes the Talmudists, who pretend that no one under twenty years of age could officiate as high priest among the Jews.
3. A Hebrew chronicle, cited by Reland, says this drowning was at Jordan, not at Jericho, and this even when he quote Josephus. I suspect the transcriber of the Hebrew chronicle mistook the name, and wrote Jordan for Jericho.
4. The reading of one of Josephus's Greek MSS. seems here to be right, that Aristobulus was "not eighteen years old" when he was drowned, for he was not seventeen when he was made high priest, ch. 2. sect. 6, ch. 3. sect. 3, and he continued in that office but one year, as in the place before us.

## Chapter 4

### **Cleopatra Had Gotten from Antony Some Parts of Judea and Arabia**

1. Now at this time the affairs of Syria were in confusion by Cleopatra's constant persuasions to Antony to make an attempt upon every body's dominions; for she persuaded him to take those dominions away from their several princes, and bestow them upon her; and she had a mighty influence upon him, by reason of his being enslaved to her by his affections. She was also by nature very covetous, and stuck at no wickedness. She had already poisoned her brother, because she knew that he was to be king of Egypt, and this when he was but fifteen years old; and she got her sister Arsinoe to be slain, by the means of Antony, when she was a supplicant at Diana's temple at Ephesus; for if there were but any hopes of getting money, she would violate both temples and sepulchers. Nor was there any holy place that was esteemed the most inviolable, from which she would not fetch the ornaments it had in it; nor any place so profane, but was to suffer the most flagitious treatment possible from her, if it could but contribute somewhat to the covetous humor of this wicked creature: yet did not all this suffice so extravagant a woman, who was a slave to her lusts, but she still imagined that she wanted every thing she could think of, and did her utmost to gain it; for which reason she hurried Antony on perpetually to deprive others of their dominions, and give them to her. And as she went over Syria with him, she contrived to get it into her possession; so he slew Lysanias, the son of Ptolemy, accusing him of his bringing the Parthians upon those countries. She also petitioned Antony to give her Judea and Arabia; and, in order thereto, desired him to take these countries away from their present governors. As for Antony, he was so entirely overcome by this woman, that one would not think her conversation only could do it, but that he was some way or other bewitched to do whatsoever she would have him; yet did the

grossest parts of her injustice make him so ashamed, that he would not always hearken to her to do those flagrant enormities she would have persuaded him to. That therefore he might not totally deny her, nor, by doing every thing which she enjoined him, appear openly to be an ill man, he took some parts of each of those countries away from their former governors, and gave them to her. Thus he gave her the cities that were within the river Eleutherus, as far as Egypt, excepting Tyre and Sidon, which he knew to have been free cities from their ancestors, although she pressed him very often to bestow those on her also.

2. When Cleopatra had obtained thus much, and had accompanied Antony in his expedition to Armenia as far as Euphrates, she returned back, and came to Apamia and Damascus, and passed on to Judea, where Herod met her, and farmed of her parts of Arabia, and those revenues that came to her from the region about Jericho. This country bears that balsam, which is the most precious drug that is there, and grows there alone. The place bears also palm trees, both many in number, and those excellent in their kind. When she was there, and was very often with Herod, she endeavored to have criminal conversation with the king; nor did she affect secrecy in the indulgence of such sort of pleasures; and perhaps she had in some measure a passion of love to him; or rather, what is most probable, she laid a treacherous snare for him, by aiming to obtain such adulterous conversation from him: however, upon the whole, she seemed overcome with love to him. Now Herod had a great while borne no good-will to Cleopatra, as knowing that she was a woman irksome to all; and at that time he thought her particularly worthy of his hatred, if this attempt proceeded out of lust; he had also thought of preventing her intrigues, by putting her to death, if such were her endeavors. However, he refused to comply with her proposals, and called a counsel of his friends to consult with them whether he should not kill her, now he had her in his power; for that he should thereby deliver all those from a multitude of evils to whom she was already become irksome, and was expected to be still so for the time to come; and that this very thing would be

much for the advantage of Antony himself, since she would certainly not be faithful to him, in case any such season or necessity should come upon him as that he should stand in need of her fidelity. But when he thought to follow this advice, his friends would not let him; and told him that, in the first place, it was not right to attempt so great a thing, and run himself thereby into the utmost danger; and they laid hard at him, and begged of him to undertake nothing rashly, for that Antony would never bear it, no, not though any one should evidently lay before his eyes that it was for his own advantage; and that the appearance of depriving him of her conversation, by this violent and treacherous method, would probably set his affections more on a flame than before. Nor did it appear that he could offer any thing of tolerable weight in his defense, this attempt being against such a woman as was of the highest dignity of any of her sex at that time in the world; and as to any advantage to be expected from such an undertaking, if any such could be supposed in this case, it would appear to deserve condemnation, on account of the insolence he must take upon him in doing it: which considerations made it very plain that in so doing he would find his government filled with mischief, both great and lasting, both to himself and his posterity, whereas it was still in his power to reject that wickedness she would persuade him to, and to come off honorably at the same time. So by thus affrighting Herod, and representing to him the hazard he must, in all probability, run by this undertaking, they restrained him from it. So he treated Cleopatra kindly, and made her presents, and conducted her on her way to Egypt.

3. But Antony subdued Armenia, and sent Artabazes, the son of Tigranes, in bonds, with his children and procurators, to Egypt, and made a present of them, and of all the royal ornaments which he had taken out of that kingdom, to Cleopatra. And Artaxias, the eldest of his sons, who had escaped at that time, took the kingdom of Armenia; who yet was ejected by Archclaus and Nero Caesar, when they restored Tigranes, his younger brother, to that kingdom; but this happened a good while afterward.

4. But then, as to the tributes which Herod was to pay Cleopatra for that country which Antony had given her, he acted fairly with her, as deeming it not safe for him to afford any cause for Cleopatra to hate him. As for the king of Arabia, whose tribute Herod had undertaken to pay her, for some time indeed he paid him as much as came to two hundred talents; but he afterwards became very niggardly and slow in his payments, and could hardly be brought to pay some parts of it, and was not willing to pay even them without some deductions.

## Chapter 5

### **Herod Made War with the King of Arabia**

1. Hereupon Herod held himself ready to go against the king of Arabia, because of his ingratitude to him, and because, after all, he would do nothing that was just to him, although Herod made the Roman war an occasion of delaying his own; for the battle at Actium was now expected, which fell into the hundred eighty and seventh olympiad, where Caesar and Antony were to fight for the supreme power of the world; but Herod having enjoyed a country that was very fruitful, and that now for a long time, and having received great taxes, and raised great armies therewith, got together a body of men, and carefully furnished them with all necessaries, and designed them as auxiliaries for Antony. But Antony said he had no want of his assistance; but he commanded him to punish the king of Arabia; for he had heard both from him, and from Cleopatra, how perfidious he was; for this was what Cleopatra desired, who thought it for her own advantage that these two kings should do one another as great mischief as possible. Upon this message from Antony, Herod returned back, but kept his army with him, in order to invade Arabia immediately. So when his army of horsemen and footmen was ready, he marched to Diospolis, whither the Arabians came also to meet them, for they were not unapprized of this war that was coming upon them; and after a great battle had been fought, the Jews had the victory. But afterward there were gotten together another numerous army of the Arabians, at Cana, which is a place of Celesyria. Herod was informed of this beforehand; so he came marching against them with the greatest part of the forces he had; and when he was come near to Cana, he resolved to encamp himself; and he cast up a bulwark, that he might take a proper season for attacking the enemy; but as he was giving those orders, the multitude of the Jews cried out that he should make no delay, but lead them against the Arabians. They went with great spirit, as believing they were in very good order; and those especially were

so that had been in the former battle, and had been conquerors, and had not permitted their enemies so much as to come to a close fight with them. And when they were so tumultuous, and showed such great alacrity, the king resolved to make use of that zeal the multitude then exhibited; and when he had assured them he would not be behindhand with them in courage, he led them on, and stood before them all in his armor, all the regiments following him in their several ranks: whereupon a consternation fell upon the Arabians; for when they perceived that the Jews were not to be conquered, and were full of spirit, the greater part of them ran away, and avoided fighting; and they had been quite destroyed, had not Anthony fallen upon the Jews, and distressed them; for this man was Cleopatra's general over the soldiers she had there, and was at enmity with Herod, and very wistfully looked on to see what the event of the battle would be. He had also resolved, that in case the Arabians did any thing that was brave and successful, he would lie still; but in case they were beaten, as it really happened, he would attack the Jews with those forces he had of his own, and with those that the country had gotten together for him. So he fell upon the Jews unexpectedly, when they were fatigued, and thought they had already vanquished the enemy, and made a great slaughter of them; for as the Jews had spent their courage upon their known enemies, and were about to enjoy themselves in quietness after their victory, they were easily beaten by these that attacked them afresh, and in particular received a great loss in places where the horses could not be of service, and which were very stony, and where those that attacked them were better acquainted with the places than themselves. And when the Jews had suffered this loss, the Arabians raised their spirits after their defeat, and returning back again, slew those that were already put to flight; and indeed all sorts of slaughter were now frequent, and of those that escaped, a few only returned into the camp. So king Herod, when he despaired of the battle, rode up to them to bring them assistance; yet did he not come time enough to do them any service, though he labored hard to do it; but the Jewish camp was taken; so that the Arabians had unexpectedly a most glorious success, having gained that victory which of themselves they were no way likely to



have gained, and slaying a great part of the enemy's army: whence afterward Herod could only act like a private robber, and make excursions upon many parts of Arabia, and distress them by sudden incursions, while he encamped among the mountains, and avoided by any means to come to a pitched battle; yet did he greatly harass the enemy by his assiduity, and the hard labor he took in this matter. He also took great care of his own forces, and used all the means he could to restore his affairs to their old state.

2. At this time it was that the fight happened at Actium, between Octavius Caesar and Antony, in the seventh year of the reign of Herod (1) and then it was also that there was an earthquake in Judea, such a one as had not happened at any other time, and which earthquake brought a great destruction upon the cattle in that country. About ten thousand men also perished by the fall of houses; but the army, which lodged in the field, received no damage by this sad accident. When the Arabians were informed of this, and when those that hated the Jews, and pleased themselves with aggravating the reports, told them of it, they raised their spirits, as if their enemy's country was quite overthrown, and the men were utterly destroyed, and thought there now remained nothing that could oppose them. Accordingly, they took the Jewish ambassadors, who came to them after all this had happened, to make peace with them, and slew them, and came with great alacrity against their army; but the Jews durst not withstand them, and were so cast down by the calamities they were under, that they took no care of their affairs, but gave up themselves to despair; for they had no hope that they should be upon a level again with them in battles, nor obtain any assistance elsewhere, while their affairs at home were in such great distress also. When matters were in this condition, the king persuaded the commanders by his words, and tried to raise their spirits, which were quite sunk; and first he endeavored to encourage and embolden some of the better sort beforehand, and then ventured to make a speech to the multitude, which he had before avoided to do, lest he should find them uneasy thereat, because of the misfortunes which had happened; so he made a consolatory speech to

the multitude, in the manner following:

3. "You are not unacquainted, my fellow soldiers, that we have had, not long since, many accidents that have put a stop to what we are about, and it is probable that even those that are most distinguished above others for their courage can hardly keep up their spirits in such circumstances; but since we cannot avoid fighting, and nothing that hath happened is of such a nature but it may by ourselves be recovered into a good state, and this by one brave action only well performed, I have proposed to myself both to give you some encouragement, and, at the same time, some information; both which parts of my design will tend to this point; that you may still continue in your own proper fortitude. I will then, in the first place, demonstrate to you that this war is a just one on our side, and that on this account it is a war of necessity, and occasioned by the injustice of our adversaries; for if you be once satisfied of this, it will be a real cause of alacrity to you; after which I will further demonstrate, that the misfortunes we are under are of no great consequence, and that we have the greatest reason to hope for victory. I shall begin with the first, and appeal to yourselves as witnesses to what I shall say. You are not ignorant certainly of the wickedness of the Arabians, which is to that degree as to appear incredible to all other men, and to include somewhat that shows the grossest barbarity and ignorance of God. The chief things wherein they have affronted us have arisen from covetousness and envy; and they have attacked us in an insidious manner, and on the sudden. And what occasion is there for me to mention many instances of such their procedure? When they were in danger of losing their own government of themselves, and of being slaves to Cleopatra, what others were they that freed them from that fear? for it was the friendship. I had with Antony, and the kind disposition he was in towards us, that hath been the occasion that even these Arabians have not been utterly undone, Antony being unwilling to undertake any thing which might be suspected by us of unkindness: but when he had a mind to bestow some parts of each of our dominions on Cleopatra, I also managed that matter so, that by giving him presents of my own, I might

obtain a security to both nations, while I undertook myself to answer for the money, and gave him two hundred talents, and became surety for those two hundred more which were imposed upon the land that was subject to this tribute; and this they have defrauded us of, although it was not reasonable that Jews should pay tribute to any man living, or allow part of their land to be taxable; but although that was to be, yet ought we not to pay tribute for these Arabians, whom we have ourselves preserved; nor is it fit that they, who have professed (and that with great integrity and sense of our kindness) that it is by our means that they keep their principality, should injure us, and deprive us of what is our due, and this while we have been still not their enemies, but their friends. And whereas observation of covenants takes place among the bitterest enemies, but among friends is absolutely necessary, this is not observed among these men, who think gain to be the best of all things, let it be by any means whatsoever, and that injustice is no harm, if they may but get money by it: is it therefore a question with you, whether the unjust are to be punished or not? when God himself hath declared his mind that so it ought to be, and hath commanded that we ever should hate injuries and injustice, which is not only just, but necessary, in wars between several nations; for these Arabians have done what both the Greeks and barbarians own to be an instance of the grossest wickedness, with regard to our ambassadors, which they have beheaded, while the Greeks declare that such ambassadors are sacred and inviolable. (2) And for ourselves, we have learned from God the most excellent of our doctrines, and the most holy part of our law, by angels or ambassadors; for this name brings God to the knowledge of mankind, and is sufficient to reconcile enemies one to another. What wickedness then can be greater than the slaughter of ambassadors, who come to treat about doing what is right? And when such have been their actions, how is it possible they can either live securely in common life, or be successful in war? In my opinion, this is impossible; but perhaps some will say, that what is holy, and what is righteous, is indeed on our side, but that the Arabians are either more courageous or more numerous than we are. Now, as to this, in the first place, it is not fit for us to say so, for with whom

is what is righteous, with them is God himself; now where God is, there is both multitude and courage. But to examine our own circumstances a little, we were conquerors in the first battle; and when we fought again, they were not able to oppose us, but ran away, and could not endure our attacks or our courage; but when we had conquered them, then came Athenion, and made war against us without declaring it; and pray, is this an instance of their manhood? or is it not a second instance of their wickedness and treachery? Why are we therefore of less courage, on account of that which ought to inspire us with stronger hopes? and why are we terrified at these, who, when they fight upon the level, are continually beaten, and when they seem to be conquerors, they gain it by wickedness? and if we suppose that any one should deem them to be men of real courage, will not he be excited by that very consideration to do his utmost against them? for true valor is not shown by fighting against weak persons, but in being able to overcome the most hardy. But then if the distresses we are ourselves under, and the miseries that have come by the earthquake, hath affrighted any one, let him consider, in the first place, that this very thing will deceive the Arabians, by their supposal that what hath befallen us is greater than it really is. Moreover, it is not right that the same thing that emboldens them should discourage us; for these men, you see, do not derive their alacrity from any advantageous virtue of their own, but from their hope, as to us, that we are quite cast down by our misfortunes; but when we boldly march against them, we shall soon pull down their insolent conceit of themselves, and shall gain this by attacking them, that they will not be so insolent when we come to the battle; for our distresses are not so great, nor is what hath happened all indication of the anger of God against us, as some imagine; for such things are accidental, and adversities that come in the usual course of things; and if we allow that this was done by the will of God, we must allow that it is now over by his will also, and that he is satisfied with what hath already happened; for had he been willing to afflict us still more thereby, he had not changed his mind so soon. And as for the war we are engaged in, he hath himself demonstrated that he is willing it should go on, and that he knows it to be a just war; for

while some of the people in the country have perished, all you who were in arms have suffered nothing, but are all preserved alive; whereby God makes it plain to us, that if you had universally, with your children and wives, been in the army, it had come to pass that you had not undergone any thing that would have much hurt you. Consider these things, and, what is more than all the rest, that you have God at all times for your Protector; and prosecute these men with a just bravery, who, in point of friendship, are unjust, in their battles perfidious, towards ambassadors impious, and always inferior to you in valor."

4. When the Jews heard this speech, they were much raised in their minds, and more disposed to fight than before. So Herod, when he had offered the sacrifices appointed by the law (3) made haste, and took them, and led them against the Arabians; and in order to that passed over Jordan, and pitched his camp near to that of the enemy. He also thought fit to seize upon a certain castle that lay in the midst of them, as hoping it would be for his advantage, and would the sooner produce a battle; and that if there were occasion for delay, he should by it have his camp fortified; and as the Arabians had the same intentions upon that place, a contest arose about it; at first they were but skirmishes, after which there came more soldiers, and it proved a sort of fight, and some fell on both sides, till those of the Arabian side were beaten and retreated. This was no small encouragement to the Jews immediately; and when Herod observed that the enemy's army was disposed to any thing rather than to come to an engagement, he ventured boldly to attempt the bulwark itself, and to pull it to pieces, and so to get nearer to their camp, in order to fight them; for when they were forced out of their trenches, they went out in disorder, and had not the least alacrity, or hope of victory; yet did they fight hand to hand, because they were more in number than the Jews, and because they were in such a disposition of war that they were under a necessity of coming on boldly; so they came to a terrible battle, while not a few fell on each side. However, at length the Arabians fled; and so great a slaughter was made upon their being routed, that they were not

only killed by their enemies, but became the authors of their own deaths also, and were trodden down by the multitude, and the great current of people in disorder, and were destroyed by their own armor; so five thousand men lay dead upon the spot, while the rest of the multitude soon ran within the bulwark for safety, but had no firm hope of safety, by reason of their want of necessaries, and especially of water. The Jews pursued them, but could not get in with them, but sat round about the bulwark, and watched any assistance that would get in to them, and prevented any there, that had a mind to it, from running away.

5. When the Arabians were in these circumstances, they sent ambassadors to Herod, in the first place, to propose terms of accommodation, and after that to offer him, so pressing was their thirst upon them, to undergo whatsoever he pleased, if he would free them from their present distress; but he would admit of no ambassadors, of no price of redemption, nor of any other moderate terms whatever, being very desirous to revenge those unjust actions which they had been guilty of towards his nation. So they were necessitated by other motives, and particularly by their thirst, to come out, and deliver themselves up to him, to be carried away captives; and in five days' time the number of four thousand were taken prisoners, while all the rest resolved to make a sally upon their enemies, and to fight it out with them, choosing rather, if so it must be, to die therein, than to perish gradually and ingloriously. When they had taken this resolution, they came out of their trenches, but could no way sustain the fight, being too much disabled, both in mind and body, and having not room to exert themselves, and thought it an advantage to be killed, and a misery to survive; so at the first onset there fell about seven thousand of them, after which stroke they let all the courage they had put on before fall, and stood amazed at Herod's warlike spirit under his own calamities; so for the future they yielded, and made him ruler of their nation; whereupon he was greatly elevated at so seasonable a success, and returned home, taking great authority upon him, on account of so bold and glorious an expedition as he had made.

## Footnotes:

1. The reader is here to take notice, that this seventh year of the reign of Herod, and all the other years of his reign, in Josephus, are dated from the death of Antigonus, or at the soonest from the conclusion of Antigonus, and the taking of Jerusalem a few months before, and never from his first obtaining the kingdom at Rome, above three years before, as some have very weakly and injudiciously done.
2. Herod says here, that as ambassadors were sacred when they carried messages to others, so did the laws of the Jews derive a sacred authority by being delivered from God by angels, [or Divine ambassadors,] which is St. Paul's expression about the same laws, Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2.
3. This piece of religion, the supplicating God with sacrifices, by Herod, before he went to this fight with the Arabians, taken notice of also in the first book of the War, ch. 19. sect. 5, is worth remarking, because it is the only example of this nature, so far as I remember, that Josephus ever mentions in all his large and particular accounts of this Herod; and it was when he had been in mighty distress, and discouraged by a great defeat of his former army, and by a very great earthquake in Judea, such times of affliction making men most religious; nor was he disappointed of his hopes here, but immediately gained a most signal victory over the Arabians, while they who just before had been so great victors, and so much elevated upon the earthquake in Judea as to venture to slay the Jewish ambassadors, were now under a strange consternation, and hardly able to fight at all.

## Chapter 6

### **Herod Obtained the Kingdom of Hyrcanus**

1. Herod's other affairs were now very prosperous, and he was not to be easily assaulted on any side. Yet did there come upon him a danger that would hazard his entire dominions, after Antony had been beaten at the battle of Actium by Caesar [Octavian]; for at that time both Herod's enemies and friends despaired of his affairs, for it was not probable that he would remain without punishment, who had showed so much friendship for Antony. So it happened that his friends despaired, and had no hopes of his escape; but for his enemies, they all outwardly appeared to be troubled at his case, but were privately very glad of it, as hoping to obtain a change for the better. As for Herod himself he saw that there was no one of royal dignity left but Hyrcanus, and therefore he thought it would be for his advantage not to suffer him to be an obstacle in his way any longer; for that in case he himself survived, and escaped the danger he was in, he thought it the safest way to put it out of the power of such a man to make any attempt against him, at such junctures of affairs, as was more worthy of the kingdom than himself; and in case he should be slain by Caesar, his envy prompted him to desire to slay him that would otherwise be king after him.

2. While Herod had these things in his mind, there was a certain occasion afforded him: for Hyrcanus was of so mild a temper, both then and at other times, that he desired not to meddle with public affairs, nor to concern himself with innovations, but left all to fortune, and contented himself with what that afforded him: but Alexandra [his daughter] was a lover of strife, and was exceeding desirous of a change of the government, and spake to her father not to bear for ever Herod's injurious treatment of their family, but to anticipate their future hopes, as he safely might; and desired him to write about these matters to Malchus, who was then governor



of Arabia, to receive them, and to secure them [from Herod], for that if they went away, and Herod's affairs proved to be as it was likely they would be, by reason of Caesar's enmity to him, they should then be the only persons that could take the government; and this, both on account of the royal family they were of, and on account of the good disposition of: the multitude to them. While she used these persuasions, Hyrcanus put off her suit; but as she showed that she was a woman, and a contentious woman too, and would not desist either night or day, but would always be speaking to him about these matters, and about Herod's treacherous designs, she at last prevailed with him to intrust Dositheus, one of his friends, with a letter, wherein his resolution was declared; and he desired the Arabian governor to send to him some horsemen, who should receive him, and conduct him to the lake Asphaltites, which is from the bounds of Jerusalem three hundred furlongs: and he did therefore trust Dositheus with this letter, because he was a careful attendant on him, and on Alexandra, and had no small occasions to bear ill-will to Herod; for he was a kinsman of one Joseph, whom he had slain, and a brother of those that were formerly slain at Tyre by Antony: yet could not these motives induce Dositheus to serve Hyrcanus in this affair; for, preferring the hopes he had from the present king to those he had from him, he gave Herod the letter. So he took his kindness in good part, and bid him besides do what he had already done, that is, go on in serving him, by rolling up the epistle and sealing it again, and delivering it to Malchus, and then to bring back his letter in answer to it; for it would be much better if he could know Malchus's intentions also. And when Dositheus was very ready to serve him in this point also, the Arabian governor returned back for answer, that he would receive Hyrcanus, and all that should come with him, and even all the Jews that were of his party; that he would, moreover, send forces sufficient to secure them in their journey; and that he should be in no want of any thing he should desire. Now as soon as Herod had received this letter, he immediately sent for Hyrcanus, and questioned him about the league he had made with Malchus; and when he denied it, he showed his letter to the Sanhedrim, and put the man to death immediately.

3. And this account we give the reader, as it is contained in the commentaries of king Herod: but other historians do not agree with them, for they suppose that Herod did not find, but rather make, this an occasion for thus putting him to death, and that by treacherously laying a snare for him; for thus do they write: That Herod and he were once at a treat, and that Herod had given no occasion to suspect [that he was displeased at him], but put this question to Hyrcanus, Whether he had received any letters from Malchus? and when he answered that he had received letters, but those of salutation only; and when he asked further, whether he had not received any presents from him? and when he had replied that he had received no more than four horses to ride on, which Malchus had sent him; they pretended that Herod charged these upon him as the crimes of bribery and treason, and gave order that he should be led away and slain. And in order to demonstrate that he had been guilty of no offense, when he was thus brought to his end, they alleged how mild his temper had been, and that even in his youth he had never given any demonstration of boldness or rashness, and that the case was the same when he came to be king, but that he even then committed the management of the greatest part of public affairs to Antipater; and that he was now above fourscore years old, and knew that Herod's government was in a secure state. He also came over Euphrates, and left those who greatly honored him beyond that river, though he were to be entirely under Herod's government; and that it was a most incredible thing that he should enterprise any thing by way of innovation, and not at all agreeable to his temper, but that this was a plot of Herod's contrivance.

4. And this was the fate of Hyrcanus; and thus did he end his life, after he had endured various and manifold turns of fortune in his lifetime. For he was made high priest of the Jewish nation in the beginning of his mother Alexandra's reign, who held the government nine years; and when, after his mother's death, he took the kingdom himself, and held it three months, he lost it, by the means of his brother Aristobulus. He was then restored by

Pompey, and received all sorts of honor from him, and enjoyed them forty years; but when he was again deprived by Antigonus, and was maimed in his body, he was made a captive by the Parthians, and thence returned home again after some time, on account of the hopes that Herod had given him; none of which came to pass according to his expectation, but he still conflicted with many misfortunes through the whole course of his life; and, what was the heaviest calamity of all, as we have related already, he came to an end which was undeserved by him. His character appeared to be that of a man of a mild and moderate disposition, and suffered the administration of affairs to be generally done by others under him. He was averse to much meddling with the public, nor had shrewdness enough to govern a kingdom. And both Antipater and Herod came to their greatness by reason of his mildness; and at last he met with such an end from them as was not agreeable either to justice or piety.

5. Now Herod, as soon as he had put Hyrcanus out of the way, made haste to Caesar; and because he could not have any hopes of kindness from him, on account of the friendship he had for Antony, he had a suspicion of Alexandra, lest she should take this opportunity to bring the multitude to a revolt, and introduce a sedition into the affairs of the kingdom; so he committed the care of every thing to his brother Pheroras, and placed his mother Cypros, and his sister [Salome], and the whole family at Masada, and gave him a charge, that if he should hear any sad news about him, he should take care of the government. But as to Mariamne his wife, because of the misunderstanding between her and his sister, and his sister's mother, which made it impossible for them to live together, he placed her at Alexandria, with Alexandra her mother, and left his treasurer Joseph and Sohemus of Iturea to take care of that fortress. These two had been very faithful to him from the beginning, and were now left as a guard to the women. They also had it in charge, that if they should hear any mischief had befallen him, they should kill them both, and, as far as they were able, to preserve the kingdom for his sons, and for his brother Pheroras.

6. When he had given them this charge, he made haste to Rhodes, to meet Caesar; and when he had sailed to that city, he took off his diadem, but remitted nothing else of his usual dignity. And when, upon his meeting him, he desired that he would let him speak to him, he therein exhibited a much more noble specimen of a great soul; for he did not betake himself to supplications, as men usually do upon such occasions, nor offered him any petition, as if he were an offender; but, after an undaunted manner, gave an account of what he had done; for he spake thus to Caesar: That he had the greatest friendship for Antony, and did every thing he could that he might attain the government; that he was not indeed in the army with him, because the Arabians had diverted him; but that he had sent him both money and corn, which was but too little in comparison of what he ought to have done for him; "for if a man owns himself to be another's friend, and knows him to be a benefactor, he is obliged to hazard every thing, to use every faculty of his soul, every member of his body, and all the wealth he hath, for him, in which I confess I have been too deficient. However, I am conscious to myself, that so far I have done right, that I have not deserted him upon his defeat at Actium; nor upon the evident change of his fortune have I transferred my hopes from him to another, but have preserved myself, though not as a valuable fellow soldier, yet certainly as a faithful counselor, to Antony, when I demonstrated to him that the only way that he had to save himself, and not to lose all his authority, was to slay Cleopatra; for when she was once dead, there would be room for him to retain his authority, and rather to bring thee to make a composition with him, than to continue at enmity any longer. None of which advises would he attend to, but preferred his own rash resolution before them, which have happened unprofitably for him, but profitably for thee. Now, therefore, in case thou determinest about me, and my alacrity in serving Antony, according to thy anger at him, I own there is no room for me to deny what I have done, nor will I be ashamed to own, and that publicly too, that I had a great kindness for him. But if thou wilt put him out of the case, and only examine how I behave myself to my

benefactors in general, and what sort of friend I am, thou wilt find by experience that we shall do and be the same to thyself, for it is but changing the names, and the firmness of friendship that we shall bear to thee will not be disapproved by thee."

7. By this speech, and by his behavior, which showed Caesar the frankness of his mind, he greatly gained upon him, who was himself of a generous and magnificent temper, insomuch that those very actions, which were the foundation of the accusation against him, procured him Caesar's good-will. Accordingly, he restored him his diadem again; and encouraged him to exhibit himself as great a friend to himself as he had been to Antony, and then had him in great esteem. Moreover, he added this, that Quintus Didius had written to him that Herod had very readily assisted him in the affair of the gladiators. So when he had obtained such a kind reception, and had, beyond all his hopes, procured his crown to be more entirely and firmly settled upon him than ever by Caesar's donation, as well as by that decree of the Romans, which Caesar took care to procure for his greater security, he conducted Caesar on his way to Egypt, and made presents, even beyond his ability, to both him and his friends, and in general behaved himself with great magnanimity. He also desired that Caesar would not put to death one Alexander, who had been a companion of Antony; but Caesar had sworn to put him to death, and so he could not obtain that his petition. And now he returned to Judea again with greater honor and assurance than ever, and affrighted those that had expectations to the contrary, as still acquiring from his very dangers greater splendor than before, by the favor of God to him. So he prepared for the reception of Caesar, as he was going out of Syria to invade Egypt; and when he came, he entertained him at Ptolemais with all royal magnificence. He also bestowed presents on the army, and brought them provisions in abundance. He also proved to be one of Caesar's most cordial friends, and put the army in array, and rode along with Caesar, and had a hundred and fifty men, well appointed in all respects, after a rich and sumptuous manner, for the better reception of him and his friends. He also

provided them with what they should want, as they passed over the dry desert, insomuch that they lacked neither wine nor water, which last the soldiers stood in the greatest need of; and besides, he presented Caesar with eight hundred talents, and procured to himself the good-will of them all, because he was assisting to them in a much greater and more splendid degree than the kingdom he had obtained could afford; by which means he more and more demonstrated to Caesar the firmness of his friendship, and his readiness to assist him; and what was of the greatest advantage to him was this, that his liberality came at a seasonable time also. And when they returned again out of Egypt, his assistances were no way inferior to the good offices he had formerly done them.

## Chapter 7

### **Herod Slew Sohemus, Mariamne, Alexandra and Costobarus**

1. However, when he came into his kingdom again, he found his house all in disorder, and his wife Mariamne and her mother Alexandra very uneasy; for as they supposed (what was easy to be supposed) that they were not put into that fortress [Alexandrium] for the security of their persons, but as into a garrison for their imprisonment, and that they had no power over any thing, either of others or of their own affairs, they were very uneasy; and Mariamne supposing that the king's love to her was but hypocritical, and rather pretended (as advantageous to himself) than real, she looked upon it as fallacious. She also was grieved that he would not allow her any hopes of surviving him, if he should come to any harm himself. She also recollected what commands he had formerly given to Joseph, insomuch that she endeavored to please her keepers, and especially Sohemus, as well apprized how all was in his power. And at the first Sohemus was faithful to Herod, and neglected none of the things he had given him in charge; but when the women, by kind words and liberal presents, had gained his affections over to them, he was by degrees overcome, and at length discovered to them all the king's injunctions, and this on that account principally, that he did not so much as hope he would come back with the same authority he had before; so that he thought he should both escape any danger from him, and supposed that he did hereby much gratify the women, who were likely not to be overlooked in the settling of the government; nay, that they would be able to make him abundant recompense, since they must either reign themselves, or be very near to him that should reign. He had a further ground of hope also, that though Herod should have all the success he could wish for, and should return again, he could not contradict his wife in what she desired, for he knew that the king's fondness for his wife was inexpressible. These were the

motives that drew Sohemus to discover what injunctions had been given him. So Mariamne was greatly displeased to hear that there was no end of the dangers she was under from Herod, and was greatly uneasy at it, and wished that he might obtain no favors [from Caesar], and esteemed it almost an insupportable task to live with him any longer; and this she afterward openly declared, without concealing her resentment.

2. And now Herod sailed home with joy, at the unexpected good success he had had; and went first of all, as was proper, to this his wife, and told her, and her only, the good news, as preferring her before the rest, on account of his fondness for her, and the intimacy there had been between them, and saluted her; but so it happened, that as he told her of the good success he had had, she was so far from rejoicing at it, that she rather was sorry for it; nor was she able to conceal her resentments, but, depending on her dignity, and the nobility of her birth, in return for his salutations, she gave a groan, and declared evidently that she rather grieved than rejoiced at his success, and this till Herod was disturbed at her, as affording him, not only marks of her suspicion, but evident signs of her dissatisfaction. This much troubled him, to see that this surprising hatred of his wife to him was not concealed, but open; and he took this so ill, and yet was so unable to bear it, on account of the fondness he had for her, that he could not continue long in any one mind, but sometimes was angry at her, and sometimes reconciled himself to her; but by always changing one passion for another, he was still in great uncertainty, and thus was he entangled between hatred and love, and was frequently disposed to inflict punishment on her for her insolence towards him; but being deeply in love with her in his soul, he was not able to get quit of this woman. In short, as he would gladly have her punished, so was he afraid lest, ere he were aware, he should, by putting her to death, bring a heavier punishment upon himself at the same time.

3. When Herod's sister and mother perceived that he was in this temper with regard to Mariamne they thought they had now got an excellent



opportunity to exercise their hatred against her and provoked Herod to wrath by telling him, such long stories and calumnies about her, as might at once excite his hatred and his jealousy. Now, though he willingly enough heard their words, yet had not he courage enough to do any thing to her as if he believed them; but still he became worse and worse disposed to her, and these ill passions were more and more inflamed on both sides, while she did not hide her disposition towards him, and he turned his love to her into wrath against her. But when he was just going to put this matter past all remedy, he heard the news that Caesar was the victor in the war, and that Antony and Cleopatra were both dead, and that he had conquered Egypt; whereupon he made haste to go to meet Caesar, and left the affairs of his family in their present state. However, Mariamne recommended Sohemus to him, as he was setting out on his journey, and professed that she owed him thanks for the care he had taken of her, and asked of the king for him a place in the government; upon which an honorable employment was bestowed upon him accordingly. Now when Herod was come into Egypt, he was introduced to Caesar with great freedom, as already a friend of his, and received very great favors from him; for he made him a present of those four hundred Galatians who had been Cleopatra's guards, and restored that country to him again, which, by her means, had been taken away from him. He also added to his kingdom Gadara, Hippos, and Samaria; and, besides those, the maritime cities, Gaza, and Anthedon, and Joppa, and Strato's Tower.

4. Upon these new acquisitions, he grew more magnificent, and conducted Caesar as far as Antioch; but upon his return, as much as his prosperity was augmented by the foreign additions that had been made him, so much the greater were the distresses that came upon him in his own family, and chiefly in the affair of his wife, wherein he formerly appeared to have been most of all fortunate; for the affection he had for Mariamne was no way inferior to the affections of such as are on that account celebrated in history, and this very justly. As for her, she was in other respects a chaste woman, and faithful to him; yet had she somewhat of a woman rough by

nature, and treated her husband imperiously enough, because she saw he was so fond of her as to be enslaved to her. She did not also consider seasonably with herself that she lived under a monarchy, and that she was at another's disposal, and accordingly would behave herself after a saucy manner to him, which yet he usually put off in a jesting way, and bore with moderation and good temper. She would also expose his mother and his sister openly, on account of the meanness of their birth, and would speak unkindly of them, insomuch that there was before this a disagreement and unpardonable hatred among the women, and it was now come to greater reproaches of one another than formerly, which suspicions increased, and lasted a whole year after Herod returned from Caesar. However, these misfortunes, which had been kept under some decency for a great while, burst out all at once upon such an occasion as was now offered; for as the king was one day about noon lain down on his bed to rest him, he called for Mariamne, out of the great affection he had always for her. She came in accordingly, but would not lie down by him; and when he was very desirous of her company, she showed her contempt of him; and added, by way of reproach, that he had caused her father and her brother to be slain. (1) And when he took this injury very unkindly, and was ready to use violence to her, in a precipitate manner, the king's sister Salome, observing that he was more than ordinarily disturbed, sent in to the king his cup-bearer, who had been prepared long beforehand for such a design, and bid him tell the king how Mariamne had persuaded him to give his assistance in preparing a love potion for him; and if he appeared to be greatly concerned, and to ask what that love potion was, to tell him that she had the potion, and that he was desired only to give it him; but that in case he did not appear to be much concerned at this potion, to let the thing drop; and that if he did so, no harm should thereby come to him. When she had given him these instructions, she sent him in at this time to make such a speech. So he went in, after a composed manner, to gain credit to what he should say, and yet somewhat hastily, and said that Mariamne had given him presents, and persuaded him to give him a love potion. And when this moved the king, he said that this love potion was a composition that she

had given him, whose effects he did not know, which was the reason of his resolving to give him this information, as the safest course he could take, both for himself and for the king. When Herod heard what he said, and was in an ill disposition before, his indignation grew more violent; and he ordered that eunuch of Mariamne, who was most faithful to her, to be brought to torture about this potion, as well knowing it was not possible that any thing small or great could be done without him. And when the man was under the utmost agonies, he could say nothing concerning the thing he was tortured about, but so far he knew, that Mariamne's hatred against him was occasioned by somewhat that Sohemus had said to her. Now as he was saying this, Herod cried out aloud, and said that Sohemus, who had been at all other times most faithful to him, and to his government, would not have betrayed what injunctions he had given him, unless he had had a nearer conversation than ordinary with Mariamne. So he gave order that Sohemus should be seized on and slain immediately; but he allowed his wife to take her trial; and got together those that were most faithful to him, and laid an elaborate accusation against her for this love potion and composition, which had been charged upon her by way of calumny only. However, he kept no temper in what he said, and was in too great a passion for judging well about this matter. Accordingly, when the court was at length satisfied that he was so resolved, they passed the sentence of death upon her; but when the sentence was passed upon her, this temper was suggested by himself, and by some others of the court, that she should not be thus hastily put to death, but be laid in prison in one of the fortresses belonging to the kingdom: but Salome and her party labored hard to have the woman put to death; and they prevailed with the king to do so, and advised this out of caution, lest the multitude should be tumultuous if she were suffered to live; and thus was Mariamne led to execution.

5. When Alexandra observed how things went, and that there were small hopes that she herself should escape the like treatment from Herod, she changed her behavior to quite the reverse of what might have been expected

from her former boldness, and this after a very indecent manner; for out of her desire to show how entirely ignorant she was of the crimes laid against Mariamne, she leaped out of her place, and reproached her daughter in the hearing of all the people; and cried out that she had been an ill woman, and ungrateful to her husband, and that her punishment came justly upon her for such her insolent behavior, for that she had not made proper returns to him who had been their common benefactor. And when she had for some time acted after this hypocritical manner, and been so outrageous as to tear her hair, this indecent and dissembling behavior, as was to be expected, was greatly condemned by the rest of the spectators, as it was principally by the poor woman who was to suffer; for at the first she gave her not a word, nor was discomposed at her peevishness, and only looked at her, yet did she out of a greatness of soul discover her concern for her mother's offense, and especially for her exposing herself in a manner so unbecoming her; but as for herself, she went to her death with an unshaken firmness of mind, and without changing the color of her face, and thereby evidently discovered the nobility of her descent to the spectators, even in the last moments of her life.

6. And thus died Mariamne, a woman of an excellent character, both for chastity and greatness of soul; but she wanted moderation, and had too much of contention in her nature; yet had she all that can be said in the beauty of her body, and her majestic appearance in conversation; and thence arose the greatest part of the occasions why she did not prove so agreeable to the king, nor live so pleasantly with him, as she might otherwise have done; for while she was most indulgently used by the king, out of his fondness for her, and did not expect that he could do any hard thing to her, she took too unbounded a liberty. Moreover, that which most afflicted her was, what he had done to her relations, and she ventured to speak of all they had suffered by him, and at last greatly provoked both the king's mother and sister, till they became enemies to her; and even he himself also did the same, on whom alone she depended for her expectations of escaping the last of punishments.

7. But when she was once dead, the king's affections for her were kindled in a more outrageous manner than before, whose old passion for her we have already described; for his love to her was not of a calm nature, nor such as we usually meet with among other husbands; for at its commencement it was of an enthusiastic kind, nor was it by their long cohabitation and free conversation together brought under his power to manage; but at this time his love to Mariamne seemed to seize him in such a peculiar manner, as looked like Divine vengeance upon him for the taking away her life; for he would frequently call for her, and frequently lament for her in a most indecent manner. Moreover, he bethought him of every thing he could make use of to divert his mind from thinking of her, and contrived feasts and assemblies for that purpose, but nothing would suffice; he therefore laid aside the administration of public affairs, and was so far conquered by his passion, that he would order his servants to call for Mariamne, as if she were still alive, and could still hear them. And when he was in this way, there arose a pestilential disease, and carried off the greatest part of the multitude, and of his best and most esteemed friends, and made all men suspect that this was brought upon them by the anger of God, for the injustice that had been done to Mariamne. This circumstance affected the king still more, till at length he forced himself to go into desert places, and there, under pretense of going a hunting, bitterly afflicted himself; yet had he not borne his grief there many days before he fell into a most dangerous distemper himself: he had an inflammation upon him, and a pain in the hinder part of his head, joined with madness; and for the remedies that were used, they did him no good at all, but proved contrary to his case, and so at length brought him to despair. All the physicians also that were about him, partly because the medicines they brought for his recovery could not at all conquer the disease, and partly because his diet could be no other than what his disease inclined him to, desired him to eat whatever he had a mind to, and so left the small hopes they had of his recovery in the power of that diet, and committed him to fortune. And thus did his distemper go on, while he was at Samaria, now called Sebaste.

8. Now Alexandra abode at this time at Jerusalem; and being informed what condition Herod was in, she endeavored to get possession of the fortified places that were about the city, which were two, the one belonging to the city itself, the other belonging to the temple; and those that could get them into their hands had the whole nation under their power, for without the command of them it was not possible to offer their sacrifices; and to think of leaving on those sacrifices is to every Jew plainly impossible, who are still more ready to lose their lives than to leave off that Divine worship which they have been wont to pay unto God. Alexandra, therefore, discoursed with those that had the keeping of these strong holds, that it was proper for them to deliver the same to her, and to Herod's sons, lest, upon his death, any other person should seize upon the government; and that upon his recovery none could keep them more safely for him than those of his own family. These words were not by them at all taken in good part; and as they had been in former times faithful [to Herod], they resolved to continue so more than ever, both because they hated Alexandra, and because they thought it a sort of impiety to despair of Herod's recovery while he was yet alive, for they had been his old friends; and one of them, whose name was Achiabus, was his cousin-german. They sent messengers therefore to acquaint him with Alexandra's design; so he made no longer delay, but gave orders to have her slain; yet was it still with difficulty, and after he had endured great pain, that he got clear of his distemper. He was still sorely afflicted, both in mind and body, and made very uneasy, and readier than ever upon all occasions to inflict punishment upon those that fell under his hand. He also slew the most intimate of his friends, Costobarus, and Lysimachus, and Cadius, who was also called Antipater; as also Dositheus, and that upon the following occasion.

9. Costobarus was an Idumean by birth, and one of principal dignity among them, and one whose ancestors had been priests to the Koze, whom the Idumeans had [formerly] esteemed as a god; but after Hyrcanus had

made a change in their political government, and made them receive the Jewish customs and law, Herod made Costobarus governor of Idumea and Gaza, and gave him his sister Salome to wife; and this was upon the slaughter of [his uncle] Joseph, who had that government before, as we have related already. When Costobarus had gotten to be so highly advanced, it pleased him and was more than he hoped for, and he was more and more puffed up by his good success, and in a little while he exceeded all bounds, and did not think fit to obey what Herod, as their ruler, commanded him, or that the Idumeans should make use of the Jewish customs, or be subject to them. He therefore sent to Cleopatra, and informed her that the Idumeans had been always under his progenitors, and that for the same reason it was but just that she should desire that country for him of Antony, for that he was ready to transfer his friendship to her; and this he did, not because he was better pleased to be under Cleopatra's government, but because he thought that, upon the diminution of Herod's power, it would not be difficult for him to obtain himself the entire government over the Idumeans, and somewhat more also; for he raised his hopes still higher, as having no small pretenses, both by his birth and by these riches which he had gotten by his constant attention to filthy lucre; and accordingly it was not a small matter that he aimed at. So Cleopatra desired this country of Antony, but failed of her purpose. An account of this was brought to Herod, who was thereupon ready to kill Costobarus; yet, upon the entreaties of his sister and mother, he forgave him, and vouchsafed to pardon him entirely; though he still had a suspicion of him afterward for this his attempt.

10. But some time afterward, when Salome happened to quarrel with Costobarus, she sent him a bill of divorce (2) and dissolved her marriage with him, though this was not according to the Jewish laws; for with us it is lawful for a husband to do so; but a wife; if she departs from her husband, cannot of herself be married to another, unless her former husband put her away. However, Salome chose to follow not the law of her country, but the law of her authority, and so renounced her wedlock; and told her brother

Herod, that she left her husband out of her good-will to him, because she perceived that he, with Antipater, and Lysimachus, and Dositheus, were raising a sedition against him; as an evidence whereof, she alleged the case of the sons of Babas, that they had been by him preserved alive already for the interval of twelve years; which proved to be true. But when Herod thus unexpectedly heard of it, he was greatly surprised at it, and was the more surprised, because the relation appeared incredible to him. As for the fact relating to these sons of Babas, Herod had formerly taken great pains to bring them to punishment, as being enemies to his government; but they were now forgotten by him, on account of the length of time [since he had ordered them to be slain]. Now the cause of his ill-will and hatred to them arose hence, that while Antigonus was king, Herod, with his army, besieged the city of Jerusalem, where the distress and miseries which the besieged endured were so pressing, that the greater number of them invited Herod into the city, and already placed their hopes on him. Now the sons of Babas were of great dignity, and had power among the multitude, and were faithful to Antigonus, and were always raising calumnies against Herod, and encouraged the people to preserve the government to that royal family which held it by inheritance. So these men acted thus politically, and, as they thought, for their own advantage; but when the city was taken, and Herod had gotten the government into his hands, and Costobarus was appointed to hinder men from passing out at the gates, and to guard the city, that those citizens that were guilty, and of the party opposite to the king, might not get out of it, Costobarus, being sensible that the sons of Babas were had in respect and honor by the whole multitude, and supposing that their preservation might be of great advantage to him in the changes of government afterward, he set them by themselves, and concealed them in his own farms; and when the thing was suspected, he assured Herod upon oath that he really knew nothing of that matter, and so overcame the suspicions that lay upon him; nay, after that, when the king had publicly proposed a reward for the discovery, and had put in practice all sorts of methods for searching out this matter, he would not confess it; but being persuaded that



when he had at first denied it, if the men were found, he should not escape unpunished, he was forced to keep them secret, not only out of his good-will to them, but out of a necessary regard to his own preservation also. But when the king knew the thing, by his sister's information, he sent men to the places where he had the intimation they were concealed, and ordered both them, and those that were accused as guilty with them, to be slain, insomuch that there were now none at all left of the kindred of Hyrcanus, and the kingdom was entirely in Herod's own power, and there was nobody remaining of such dignity as could put a stop to what he did against the Jewish laws.

### **Footnotes:**

1. Whereas Mariamne is here represented as reproaching: Herod with the murder of her father [Alexander], as well as her brother [Aristobulus], while it was her grandfather Hyrcanus, and not her father Alexander, whom he caused to be slain, (as Josephus himself informs us, ch. 6. sect. 2,) we must either take Zonaras's reading, which is here grandfather, rightly, or else we must, as before, ch. 1. sect. 1, allow a slip of Josephus's pen or memory in the place before us.
2. Here is a plain example of a Jewish lady giving a bill of divorce to her husband, though in the days of Josephus it was not esteemed lawful for a woman so to do. See the like among the Parthians, Antiq. B. XVIII. ch. 9. sect. 6. However, the Christian law, when it allowed divorce for adultery, Matthew 5:32, allowed the innocent wife to divorce her guilty husband, as well as the innocent husband to divorce his guilty wife, as we learn from the shepherd of Hermas, Mand. B. IV., and from: the second apology of Justin Martyr, where a persecution was brought upon the Christians upon such a divorce; and I think the Roman laws permitted it at that time, as well as the laws of Christianity. Now this Babas, who was one of the race of the Asamoneans or Maccabees, as the latter end of this section informs us, is related by the Jews, as Dr. Hudson here remarks, to have been so eminently religious in the Jewish

way, that, except the day following the tenth of Tisri, the great day of atonement, when he seems to have supposed all his sins entirely forgiven, he used every day of the whole year to offer a sacrifice for his sins of ignorance, or such as he supposed he had been guilty of, but did not distinctly remember. See somewhat like it of Agrippa the Great, *Antiq. B. XIX. ch. 3. sect. 3*, and *Job 1:4, 5*.

## Chapter 8

# Ten Men of Jerusalem Made a Conspiracy Against Herod

1. On this account it was that Herod revolted from the laws of his country, and corrupted their ancient constitution, by the introduction of foreign practices, which constitution yet ought to have been preserved inviolable; by which means we became guilty of great wickedness afterward, while those religious observances which used to lead the multitude to piety were now neglected; for, in the first place, he appointed solemn games to be celebrated every fifth year, in honor of Caesar, and built a theater at Jerusalem, as also a very great amphitheater in the plain. Both of them were indeed costly works, but opposite to the Jewish customs; for we have had no such shows delivered down to us as fit to be used or exhibited by us; yet did he celebrate these games every five years, in the most solemn and splendid manner. He also made proclamation to the neighboring countries, and called men together out of every nation. The wrestlers also, and the rest of those that strove for the prizes in such games, were invited out of every land, both by the hopes of the rewards there to be bestowed, and by the glory of victory to be there gained. So the principal persons that were the most eminent in these sorts of exercises were gotten together, for there were very great rewards for victory proposed, not only to those that performed their exercises naked, but to those that played the musicians also, and were called Thymelici; and he spared no pains to induce all persons, the most famous for such exercises, to come to this contest for victory. He also proposed no small rewards to those who ran for the prizes in chariot races, when they were drawn by two, or three, or four pair of horses. He also imitated every thing, though never so costly or magnificent, in other nations, out of an ambition that he might give most public demonstration of his grandeur. Inscriptions also of the great actions of Caesar, and trophies of those nations which he

had conquered in his wars, and all made of the purest gold and silver, encompassed the theater itself; nor was there any thing that could be subservient to his design, whether it were precious garments, or precious stones set in order, which was not also exposed to sight in these games. He had also made a great preparation of wild beasts, and of lions themselves in great abundance, and of such other beasts as were either of uncommon strength, or of such a sort as were rarely seen. These were prepared either to fight with one another, or that men who were condemned to death were to fight with them. And truly foreigners were greatly surprised and delighted at the vastness of the expenses here exhibited, and at the great dangers that were here seen; but to natural Jews, this was no better than a dissolution of those customs for which they had so great a veneration. (1) It appeared also no better than an instance of barefaced impiety, to throw men to wild beasts, for the affording delight to the spectators; and it appeared an instance of no less impiety, to change their own laws for such foreign exercises: but, above all the rest, the trophies gave most distaste to the Jews; for as they imagined them to be images, included within the armor that hung round about them, they were sorely displeased at them, because it was not the custom of their country to pay honors to such images.

2. Nor was Herod unacquainted with the disturbance they were under; and as he thought it unseasonable to use violence with them, so he spake to some of them by way of consolation, and in order to free them from that superstitious fear they were under; yet could not he satisfy them, but they cried out with one accord, out of their great uneasiness at the offenses they thought he had been guilty of, that although they should think of bearing all the rest yet would they never bear images of men in their city, meaning the trophies, because this was disagreeable to the laws of their country. Now when Herod saw them in such a disorder, and that they would not easily change their resolution unless they received satisfaction in this point, he called to him the most eminent men among them, and brought them upon the theater, and showed them the trophies, and asked them what sort of things

they took these trophies to be; and when they cried out that they were the images of men, he gave order that they should be stripped of these outward ornaments which were about them, and showed them the naked pieces of wood; which pieces of wood, now without any ornament, became matter of great sport and laughter to them, because they had before always had the ornaments of images themselves in derision.

3. When therefore Herod had thus got clear of the multitude, and had dissipated the vehemency of passion under which they had been, the greatest part of the people were disposed to change their conduct, and not to be displeased at him any longer; but still some of them continued in their displeasure against him, for his introduction of new customs, and esteemed the violation of the laws of their country as likely to be the origin of very great mischiefs to them, so that they deemed it an instance of piety rather to hazard themselves [to be put to death], than to seem as if they took no notice of Herod, who, upon the change he had made in their government, introduced such customs, and that in a violent manner, which they had never been used to before, as indeed in pretense a king, but in reality one that showed himself an enemy to their whole nation; on which account ten men that were citizens [of Jerusalem] conspired together against him, and swore to one another to undergo any dangers in the attempt, and took daggers with them under their garments [for the purpose of killing Herod]. Now there was a certain blind man among those conspirators who had thus sworn to one another, on account of the indignation he had against what he heard to have been done; he was not indeed able to afford the rest any assistance in the undertaking, but was ready to undergo any suffering with them, if so be they should come to any harm, insomuch that he became a very great encourager of the rest of the undertakers.

4. When they had taken this resolution, and that by common consent, they went into the theater, hoping that, in the first place, Herod himself could not escape them, as they should fall upon him so unexpectedly; and

supposing, however, that if they missed him, they should kill a great many of those that were about him; and this resolution they took, though they should die for it, in order to suggest to the king what injuries he had done to the multitude. These conspirators, therefore, standing thus prepared beforehand, went about their design with great alacrity; but there was one of those spies of Herod, that were appointed for such purposes, to fish out and inform him of any conspiracies that should be made against him, who found out the whole affair, and told the king of it, as he was about to go into the theater. So when he reflected on the hatred which he knew the greatest part of the people bore him, and on the disturbances that arose upon every occasion, he thought this plot against him not to be improbable. Accordingly, he retired into his palace, and called those that were accused of this conspiracy before him by their several names; and as, upon the guards falling upon them, they were caught in the very fact, and knew they could not escape, they prepared themselves for their ends with all the decency they could, and so as not at all to recede from their resolute behavior, for they showed no shame for what they were about, nor denied it; but when they were seized, they showed their daggers, and professed that the conspiracy they had sworn to was a holy and pious action; that what they intended to do was not for gain, or out of any indulgence to their passions, but principally for those common customs of their country, which all the Jews were obliged to observe, or to die for them. This was what these men said, out of their undaunted courage in this conspiracy. So they were led away to execution by the king's guards that stood about them, and patiently underwent all the torments inflicted on them till they died. Nor was it long before that spy who had discovered them was seized on by some of the people, out of the hatred they bore to him; and was not only slain by them, but pulled to pieces, limb from limb, and given to the dogs. This execution was seen by many of the citizens, yet would not one of them discover the doers of it, till upon Herod's making a strict scrutiny after them, by bitter and severe tortures, certain women that were tortured confessed what they had seen done; the authors of which fact were so terribly punished by the king, that their entire families were destroyed for

this their rash attempt; yet did not the obstinacy of the people, and that undaunted constancy they showed in the defense of their laws, make Herod any easier to them, but he still strengthened himself after a more secure manner, and resolved to encompass the multitude every way, lest such innovations should end in an open rebellion.

5. Since, therefore, he had now the city fortified by the palace in which he lived, and by the temple which had a strong fortress by it, called Antonia, and was rebuilt by himself, he contrived to make Samaria a fortress for himself also against all the people, and called it Sebaste, supposing that this place would be a strong hold against the country, not inferior to the former. So he fortified that place, which was a day's journey distant from Jerusalem, and which would be useful to him in common, to keep both the country and the city in awe. He also built another fortress for the whole nation; it was of old called Strato's Tower, but was by him named Cesarea. Moreover, he chose out some select horsemen, and placed them ill the great plain; and built [for them] a place in Galilee, called Gaba with Hesebonitis, in Perea. And these were the places which he particularly built, while he always was inventing somewhat further for his own security, and encompassing the whole nation with guards, that they might by no means get from under his power, nor fall into tumults, which they did continually upon any small commotion; and that if they did make any commotions, he might know of it, while some of his spies might be upon them from the neighborhood, and might both be able to know what they were attempting, and to prevent it. And when he went about building the wall of Samaria, he contrived to bring thither many of those that had been assisting to him in his wars, and many of the people in that neighborhood also, whom he made fellow citizens with the rest. This he did out of an ambitious desire of building a temple, and out of a desire to make the city more eminent than it had been before; but principally because he contrived that it might at once be for his own security, and a monument of his magnificence. He also changed its name, and called it Sebaste. Moreover, he parted the adjoining country, which was excellent in

its kind, among the inhabitants of Samaria, that they might be in a happy condition, upon their first coming to inhabit. Besides all which, he encompassed the city with a wall of great strength, and made use of the acclivity of the place for making its fortifications stronger; nor was the compass of the place made now so small as it had been before, but was such as rendered it not inferior to the most famous cities; for it was twenty furlongs in circumference. Now within, and about the middle of it, he built a sacred place, of a furlong and a half [in circuit], and adorned it with all sorts of decorations, and therein erected a temple, which was illustrious on account of both its largeness and beauty. And as to the several parts of the city, he adorned them with decorations of all sorts also; and as to what was necessary to provide for his own security, he made the walls very strong for that purpose, and made it for the greatest part a citadel; and as to the elegance of the building, it was taken care of also, that he might leave monuments of the fineness of his taste, and of his beneficence, to future ages.

#### **Footnote:**

1. These grand plays, and shows, and Thymelici, or music meetings, and chariot races, when the chariots were drawn by two, three, or four pair of horses, etc., instituted by Herod in his theatres, were still, as we see here, looked on by the sober Jews as heathenish sports, and tending to corrupt the manners of the Jewish nation, and to bring them in love with paganish idolatry, and paganish conduct of life, but to the dissolution of the law of Moses, and accordingly were greatly and justly condemned by them, as appears here and every where else in Josephus. Nor is the case of our modern masquerades, plays, operas, and the like "pomps and vanities of this wicked world," of any better tendency under Christianity.



## Chapter 9

### Herod Rebuilt Cesarea

1. Now on this very year, which was the thirteenth year of the reign of Herod, very great calamities came upon the country; whether they were derived from the anger of God, or whether this misery returns again naturally in certain periods of time (1) for, in the first place, there were perpetual droughts, and for that reason the ground was barren, and did not bring forth the same quantity of fruits that it used to produce; and after this barrenness of the soil, that change of food which the want of corn occasioned produced distempers in the bodies of men, and a pestilential disease prevailed, one misery following upon the back of another; and these circumstances, that they were destitute both of methods of cure and of food, made the pestilential distemper, which began after a violent manner, the more lasting. The destruction of men also after such a manner deprived those that survived of all their courage, because they had no way to provide remedies sufficient for the distresses they were in. When therefore the fruits of that year were spoiled, and whatsoever they had laid up beforehand was spent, there was no foundation of hope for relief remaining, but the misery, contrary to what they expected still increased upon them; and this not only on that year, while they had nothing for themselves left [at the end of it], but what seed they had sown perished also, by reason of the ground not yielding its fruits on the second year. (2) This distress they were in made them also, out of necessity, to eat many things that did not use to be eaten; nor was the king himself free from this distress any more than other men, as being deprived of that tribute he used to have from the fruits of the ground, and having already expended what money he had, in his liberality to those whose cities he had built; nor had he any people that were worthy of his assistance, since this miserable state of things had procured him the hatred of his subjects: for it is a constant rule, that misfortunes are still laid to the account of those that govern.

2. In these circumstances he considered with himself how to procure some seasonable help; but this was a hard thing to be done, while their neighbors had no food to sell them; and their money also was gone, had it been possible to purchase a little food at a great price. However, he thought it his best way, by all means, not to leave off his endeavors to assist his people; so he cut off the rich furniture that was in his palace, both of silver and gold, insomuch that he did not spare the finest vessels he had, or those that were made with the most elaborate skill of the artificers, but sent the money to Petronius, who had been made prefect of Egypt by Caesar; and as not a few had already fled to him under their necessities, and as he was particularly a friend to Herod, and desirous to have his subjects preserved, he gave leave to them in the first place to export corn, and assisted them every way, both in purchasing and exporting the same; so that he was the principal, if not the only person, who afforded them what help they had. And Herod taking care the people should understand that this help came from himself, did thereby not only remove the ill opinion of those that formerly hated him, but gave them the greatest demonstration possible of his good-will to them, and care of them; for, in the first place, as for those who were able to provide their own food, he distributed to them their proportion of corn in the exactest manner; but for those many that were not able, either by reason of their old age, or any other infirmity, to provide food for themselves, he made this provision for them, the bakers should make their bread ready for them. He also took care that they might not be hurt by the dangers of winter, since they were in great want of clothing also, by reason of the utter destruction and consumption of their sheep and goats, till they had no wool to make use of, nor any thing else to cover themselves withal. And when he had procured these things for his own subjects, he went further, in order to provide necessaries for their neighbors, and gave seed to the Syrians, which thing turned greatly to his own advantage also, this charitable assistance being afforded most seasonably to their fruitful soil, so that every one had now a plentiful provision of food. Upon the whole, when the harvest of the land

was approaching, he sent no fewer than fifty thousand men, whom he had sustained, into the country; by which means he both repaired the afflicted condition of his own kingdom with great generosity and diligence, and lightened the afflictions of his neighbors, who were under the same calamities; for there was nobody who had been in want that was left destitute of a suitable assistance by him; nay, further, there were neither any people, nor any cities, nor any private men, who were to make provision for the multitudes, and on that account were in want of support, and had recourse to him, but received what they stood in need of, insomuch that it appeared, upon a computation, that the number of cori of wheat, of ten attic medimni apiece, that were given to foreigners, amounted to ten thousand, and the number that was given in his own kingdom was about fourscore thousand. Now it happened that this care of his, and this seasonable benefaction, had such influence on the Jews, and was so cried up among other nations, as to wipe off that old hatred which his violation of some of their customs, during his reign, had procured him among all the nation, and that this liberality of his assistance in this their greatest necessity was full satisfaction for all that he had done of that nature, as it also procured him great fame among foreigners; and it looked as if these calamities that afflicted his land, to a degree plainly incredible, came in order to raise his glory, and to be to his great advantage; for the greatness of his liberality in these distresses, which he now demonstrated beyond all expectation, did so change the disposition of the multitude towards him, that they were ready to suppose he had been from the beginning not such a one as they had found him to be by experience, but such a one as the care he had taken of them in supplying their necessities proved him now to be.

3. About this time it was that he sent five hundred chosen men out of the guards of his body as auxiliaries to Caesar, whom Aelius Gallus (3) led to the Red Sea, and who were of great service to him there. When therefore his affairs were thus improved, and were again in a flourishing condition, he built himself a palace in the upper city, raising the rooms to a very great

height, and adorning them with the most costly furniture of gold, and marble scats, and beds; and these were so large that they could contain very many companies of men. These apartments were also of distinct magnitudes, and had particular names given them; for one apartment was called Caesar's, another Agrippa's. He also fell in love again, and married another wife, not suffering his reason to hinder him from living as he pleased. The occasion of this his marriage was as follows: There was one Simon, a citizen of Jerusalem, the son of one Boethus, a citizen of Alexandria, and a priest of great note there; this man had a daughter, who was esteemed the most beautiful woman of that time; and when the people of Jerusalem began to speak much in her commendation, it happened that Herod was much affected with what was said of her; and when he saw the damsel, he was smitten with her beauty, yet did he entirely reject the thoughts of using his authority to abuse her, as believing, what was the truth, that by so doing he should be stigmatized for violence and tyranny; so he thought it best to take the damsel to wife. And while Simon was of a dignity too inferior to be allied to him, but still too considerable to be despised, he governed his inclinations after the most prudent manner, by augmenting the dignity of the family, and making them more honorable; so he immediately deprived Jesus, the son of Phabet, of the high priesthood, and conferred that dignity on Simon, and so joined in affinity with him [by marrying his daughter].

4. When this wedding was over, he built another citadel in that place where he had conquered the Jews when he was driven out of his government, and Antigonus enjoyed it. This citadel is distant from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. It was strong by nature, and fit for such a building. It is a sort of a moderate hill, raised to a further height by the hand of man, till it was of the shape of a woman's breast. It is encompassed with circular towers, and hath a strait ascent up to it, which ascent is composed of steps of polished stones, in number two hundred. Within it are royal and very rich apartments, of a structure that provided both for security and for beauty. About the bottom there are habitations of such a structure as are well worth

seeing, both on other accounts, and also on account of the water which is brought thither from a great way off, and at vast expenses, for the place itself is destitute of water. The plain that is about this citadel is full of edifices, not inferior to any city in largeness, and having the hill above it in the nature of a castle.

5. And now, when all Herod's designs had succeeded according to his hopes, he had not the least suspicion that any troubles could arise in his kingdom, because he kept his people obedient, as well by the fear they stood in of him, for he was implacable in the infliction of his punishments, as by the provident care he had showed towards them, after the most magnanimous manner, when they were under their distresses. But still he took care to have external security for his government as a fortress against his subjects; for the orations he made to the cities were very fine, and full of kindness; and he cultivated a seasonable good understanding with their governors, and bestowed presents on every one of them, inducing them thereby to be more friendly to him, and using his magnificent disposition so as his kingdom might be the better secured to him, and this till all his affairs were every way more and more augmented. But then this magnificent temper of his, and that submissive behavior and liberality which he exercised towards Caesar, and the most powerful men of Rome, obliged him to transgress the customs of his nation, and to set aside many of their laws, and by building cities after an extravagant manner, and erecting temples, - not in Judea indeed, for that would not have been borne, it being forbidden for us to pay any honor to images, or representations of animals, after the manner of the Greeks; but still he did thus in the country [properly] out of our bounds, and in the cities thereof (4) The apology which he made to the Jews for these things was this: That all was done, not out of his own inclinations, but by the commands and injunctions of others, in order to please Caesar and the Romans, as though he had not the Jewish customs so much in his eye as he had the honor of those Romans, while yet he had himself entirely in view all the while, and indeed was very ambitious to leave great monuments of his government to posterity;

whence it was that he was so zealous in building such fine cities, and spent such vast sums of money upon them.

6. Now upon his observation of a place near the sea, which was very proper for containing a city, and was before called Strato's Tower, he set about getting a plan for a magnificent city there, and erected many edifices with great diligence all over it, and this of white stone. He also adorned it with most sumptuous palaces and large edifices for containing the people; and what was the greatest and most laborious work of all, he adorned it with a haven, that was always free from the waves of the sea. Its largeness was not less than the Pyrmum [at Athens], and had towards the city a double station for the ships. It was of excellent workmanship; and this was the more remarkable for its being built in a place that of itself was not suitable to such noble structures, but was to be brought to perfection by materials from other places, and at very great expenses. This city is situate in Phoenicia, in the passage by sea to Egypt, between Joppa and Dora, which are lesser maritime cities, and not fit for havens, on account of the impetuous south winds that beat upon them, which rolling the sands that come from the sea against the shores, do not admit of ships lying in their station; but the merchants are generally there forced to ride at their anchors in the sea itself. So Herod endeavored to rectify this inconvenience, and laid out such a compass towards the land as might be sufficient for a haven, wherein the great ships might lie in safety; and this he effected by letting down vast stones of above fifty feet in length, not less than eighteen in breadth, and nine in depth, into twenty fathom deep; and as some were lesser, so were others bigger than those dimensions. This mole which he built by the sea-side was two hundred feet wide, the half of which was opposed to the current of the waves, so as to keep off those waves which were to break upon them, and so was called Procymatia, or the first breaker of the waves; but the other half had upon it a wall, with several towers, the largest of which was named Drusus, and was a work of very great excellence, and had its name from Drusus, the son-in-law of Caesar, who died young. There were also a great number of arches where

the mariners dwelt. There was also before them a quay, [or landing place,] which ran round the entire haven, and was a most agreeable walk to such as had a mind to that exercise; but the entrance or mouth of the port was made on the north quarter, on which side was the stillest of the winds of all in this place: and the basis of the whole circuit on the left hand, as you enter the port, supported a round turret, which was made very strong, in order to resist the greatest waves; while on the right hand, as you enter, stood two vast stones, and those each of them larger than the turret, which were over against them; these stood upright, and were joined together. Now there were edifices all along the circular haven, made of the politest stone, with a certain elevation, whereon was erected a temple, that was seen a great way off by those that were sailing for that haven, and had in it two statues, the one of Rome, the other of Caesar. The city itself was called Cesarea, which was also itself built of fine materials, and was of a fine structure; nay, the very subterranean vaults and cellars had no less of architecture bestowed on them than had the buildings above ground. Some of these vaults carried things at even distances to the haven and to the sea; but one of them ran obliquely, and bound all the rest together, that both the rain and the filth of the citizens were together carried off with ease, and the sea itself, upon the flux of the tide from without, came into the city, and washed it all clean. Herod also built therein a theater of stone; and on the south quarter, behind the port, an amphitheater also, capable of holding a vast number of men, and conveniently situated for a prospect to the sea. So this city was thus finished in twelve years; (5) during which time the king did not fail to go on both with the work, and to pay the charges that were necessary.

### **Footnotes:**

1. Here we have an eminent example of the language of Josephus in his writing to Gentiles, different from that when he wrote to Jews; in his writing to whom he still derives all such judgments from the anger of God; but because he knew many of the Gentiles thought they might

naturally come in certain periods, he complies with them in the following sentence. See the note on the War. B. I. ch. 33. sect. 2.

2. This famine for two years that affected Judea and Syria, the thirteenth mid fourteenth years of Herod, which are the twenty-third and twenty-fourth years before the Christian era, seems to have been more terrible during this time than was that in the days of Jacob, Genesis 41., 42. And what makes the comparison the more remarkable is this, that now, as well as then, the relief they had was from Egypt also; then from Joseph the governor of Egypt, under Pharaoh king of Egypt; and now from Petronius the prefect of Egypt, under Augustus the Roman emperor. See almost the like case, Antiq. B. XX. ch. 2. sect. 6. It is also well worth our observation here, that these two years were a Sabbatic year, and a year of jubilee, for which Providence, during the theocracy, used to provide a triple crop beforehand; but became now, when the Jews had forfeited that blessing, the greatest years of famine to them ever since the days of Ahab, 1 Kings 17., 18.
3. This Aelius Gallus seems to be no other than that Aelius Lagus whom Dio speaks of as conducting an expedition that was about this time made into Arabia Felix, according to Betarius, who is here cited by Spanheim. See a full account of this expedition in Prideaux, at the years 23 and 24.
4. One may here take notice, that how tyrannical and extravagant soever Herod were in himself, and in his Grecian cities, as to those plays, and shows, and temples for idolatry, mentioned above, ch. 8. sect. 1, and here also; yet durst even he introduce very few of them into the cities of the Jews, who, as Josephus here notes, would not even then have borne them, so zealous were they still for many of the laws of Moses, even under so tyrannical a government as this was of Herod the Great; which tyrannical government puts me naturally in mind of Dean Prideaux's honest reflection upon the like ambition after such tyrannical power in Pompey and Caesar: "One of these (says he, at the year 60) could not bear an equal, nor the other a superior; and through this ambitions humor and thirst after more power in these two men, the whole Roman



empire being divided into two opposite factions, there was produced hereby the most destructive war that ever afflicted it; and the like folly too much reigns in all other places. Could about thirty men be persuaded to live at home in peace, without enterprising upon the rights of each other, for the vain glory of conquest, and the enlargement of power, the whole world might be at quiet; but their ambition, their follies, and their humor, leading them constantly to encroach upon and quarrel with each other, they involve all that are under them in the mischiefs thereof; and many thousands are they which yearly perish by it; so that it may almost raise a doubt, whether the benefit which the world receives from government be sufficient to make amends for the calamities which it suffers from the follies, mistakes, and real-administrations of those that manage it."

5. Cesarea being here said to be rebuilt and adorned in twelve years, and soon afterwards in ten years, Antiq. B. XVI. ch. 5. sect. 1, there must be a mistake in one of the places as to the true number, but in which of them it is hard positively to determine.

## Chapter 10

### **Herod Sent His Sons to Rome**

1. When Herod was engaged in such matters, and when he had already re-edified Sebaste, [Samaria,] he resolved to send his sons Alexander and Aristobulus to Rome, to enjoy the company of Caesar; who, when they came thither, lodged at the house of Pollio, (1) who was very fond of Herod's friendship; and they had leave to lodge in Caesar's own palace, for he received these sons of Herod with all humanity, and gave Herod leave to give his, kingdom to which of his sons he pleased; and besides all this, he bestowed on him Trachon, and Batanea, and Auranitis, which he gave him on the occasion following: One Zenodorus (2) had hired what was called the house of Lysanias, who, as he was not satisfied with its revenues, became a partner with the robbers that inhabited the Trachonites, and so procured himself a larger income; for the inhabitants of those places lived in a mad way, and pillaged the country of the Damascenes, while Zenodorus did not restrain them, but partook of the prey they acquired. Now as the neighboring people were hereby great sufferers, they complained to Varro, who was then president [of Syria], and entreated him to write to Caesar about this injustice of Zenodorus. When these matters were laid before Caesar, he wrote back to Varro to destroy those nests of robbers, and to give the land to Herod, that so by his care the neighboring countries might be no longer disturbed with these doings of the Trachonites; for it was not an easy firing to restrain them, since this way of robbery had been their usual practice, and they had no other way to get their living, because they had neither any city of their own, nor lands in their possession, but only some receptacles and dens in the earth, and there they and their cattle lived in common together. However, they had made contrivances to get pools of water, and laid up corn in granaries for themselves, and were able to make great resistance, by issuing out on the sudden against any that attacked them; for the entrances of their caves were

narrow, in which but one could come in at a time, and the places within incredibly large, and made very wide but the ground over their habitations was not very high, but rather on a plain, while the rocks are altogether hard and difficult to be entered upon, unless any one gets into the plain road by the guidance of another, for these roads are not straight, but have several revolutions. But when these men are hindered from their wicked preying upon their neighbors, their custom is to prey one upon another, insomuch that no sort of injustice comes amiss to them. But when Herod had received this grant from Caesar, and was come into this country, he procured skillful guides, and put a stop to their wicked robberies, and procured peace and quietness to the neighboring people.

2. Hereupon Zenodorus was grieved, in the first place, because his principality was taken away from him; and still more so, because he envied Herod, who had gotten it; So he went up to Rome to accuse him, but returned back again without success. Now Agrippa was [about this time] sent to succeed Caesar in the government of the countries beyond the Ionian Sea, upon whom Herod lighted when he was wintering about Mitylene, for he had been his particular friend and companion, and then returned into Judea again. However, some of the Gadarens came to Agrippa, and accused Herod, whom he sent back bound to the king without giving them the hearing. But still the Arabians, who of old bare ill-will to Herod's government, were nettled, and at that time attempted to raise a sedition in his dominions, and, as they thought, upon a more justifiable occasion; for Zenodorus, despairing already of success as to his own affairs, prevented [his enemies], by selling to those Arabians a part of his principality, called Auranitis, for the value of fifty talents; but as this was included in the donations of Caesar, they contested the point with Herod, as unjustly deprived of what they had bought. Sometimes they did this by making incursions upon him, and sometimes by attempting force against him, and sometimes by going to law with him. Moreover, they persuaded the poorer soldiers to help them, and were troublesome to him, out of a constant hope that they should reduce the

people to raise a sedition; in which designs those that are in the most miserable circumstances of life are still the most earnest; and although Herod had been a great while apprized of these attempts, yet did not he indulge any severity to them, but by rational methods aimed to mitigate things, as not willing to give any handle for tumults.

3. Now when Herod had already reigned seventeen years, Caesar came into Syria; at which time the greatest part of the inhabitants of Gadara clamored against Herod, as one that was heavy in his injunctions, and tyrannical. These reproaches they mainly ventured upon by the encouragement of Zenodorus, who took his oath that he would never leave Herod till he had procured that they should be severed from Herod's kingdom, and joined to Caesar's province. The Gadarens were induced hereby, and made no small cry against him, and that the more boldly, because those that had been delivered up by Agrippa were not punished by Herod, who let them go, and did them no harm; for indeed he was the principal man in the world who appeared almost inexorable in punishing crimes in his own family, but very generous in remitting the offenses that were committed elsewhere. And while they accused Herod of injuries, and plunderings, and subversions of temples, he stood unconcerned, and was ready to make his defense. However, Caesar gave him his right hand, and remitted nothing of his kindness to him, upon this disturbance by the multitude; and indeed these things were alleged the first day, but the hearing proceeded no further; for as the Gadarens saw the inclination of Caesar and of his assessors, and expected, as they had reason to do, that they should be delivered up to the king, some of them, out of a dread of the torments they might undergo, cut their own throats in the night time, and some of them threw themselves down precipices, and others of them cast themselves into the river, and destroyed themselves of their own accord; which accidents seemed a sufficient condemnation of the rashness and crimes they had been guilty of; whereupon Caesar made no longer delay, but cleared Herod from the crimes he was accused of. Another happy accident there was, which was

a further great advantage to Herod at this time; for Zenodorus's belly burst, and a great quantity of blood issued from him in his sickness, and he thereby departed this life at Antioch in Syria; so Caesar bestowed his country, which was no small one, upon Herod; it lay between Trachon and Galilee, and contained Ulatha, and Paneas, and the country round about. He also made him one of the procurators of Syria, and commanded that they should do every thing with his approbation; and, in short, he arrived at that pitch of felicity, that whereas there were but two men that governed the vast Roman empire, first Caesar, and then Agrippa, who was his principal favorite, Caesar preferred no one to Herod besides Agrippa, and Agrippa made no one his greater friend than Herod besides Caesar. And when he had acquired such freedom, he begged of Caesar a tetrarchy (3) for his brother Pheroras, while he did himself bestow upon him a revenue of a hundred talents out of his own kingdom, that in case he came to any harm himself, his brother might be in safety, and that his sons might not have dominion over him. So when he had conducted Caesar to the sea, and was returned home, he built him a most beautiful temple, of the whitest stone, in Zenodorus's country, near the place called Panlure. This is a very fine cave in a mountain, under which there is a great cavity in the earth, and the cavern is abrupt, and prodigiously deep, and full of a still water; over it hangs a vast mountain; and under the caverns arise the springs of the river Jordan. Herod adorned this place, which was already a very remarkable one, still further by the erection of this temple, which he dedicated to Caesar.

4. At which time Herod released to his subjects the third part of their taxes, under pretense indeed of relieving them, after the dearth they had had; but the main reason was, to recover their good-will, which he now wanted; for they were uneasy at him, because of the innovations he had introduced in their practices, of the dissolution of their religion, and of the disuse of their own customs; and the people every where talked against him, like those that were still more provoked and disturbed at his procedure; against which discontents he greatly guarded himself, and took away the opportunities they

might have to disturb him, and enjoined them to be always at work; nor did he permit the citizens either to meet together, or to walk or eat together, but watched every thing they did, and when any were caught, they were severely punished; and many there were who were brought to the citadel Hyrcania, both openly and secretly, and were there put to death; and there were spies set every where, both in the city and in the roads, who watched those that met together; nay, it is reported that he did not himself neglect this part of caution, but that he would oftentimes himself take the habit of a private man, and mix among the multitude, in the night time, and make trial what opinion they had of his government: and as for those that could no way be reduced to acquiesce under his scheme of government, he prosecuted them all manner of ways; but for the rest of the multitude, he required that they should be obliged to take an oath of fidelity to him, and at the same time compelled them to swear that they would bear him good-will, and continue certainly so to do, in his management of the government; and indeed a great part of them, either to please him, or out of fear of him, yielded to what he required of them; but for such as were of a more open and generous disposition, and had indignation at the force he used to them, he by one means or other made away, with them. He endeavored also to persuade Pollio the Pharisee, and Satneas, and the greatest part of their scholars, to take the oath; but these would neither submit so to do, nor were they punished together with the rest, out of the reverence he bore to Pollio. The Essens also, as we call a sect of ours, were excused from this imposition. These men live the same kind of life as do those whom the Greeks call Pythagoreans, concerning whom I shall discourse more fully elsewhere. However, it is but fit to set down here the reasons wherefore Herod had these Essens in such honor, and thought higher of them than their mortal nature required; nor will this account be unsuitable to the nature of this history, as it will show the opinion men had of these Essens.

5. Now there was one of these Essens, whose name was Manahem, who had this testimony, that he not only conducted his life after an excellent

manner, but had the foreknowledge of future events given him by God also. This man once saw Herod when he was a child, and going to school, and saluted him as king of the Jews; but he, thinking that either he did not know him, or that he was in jest, put him in mind that he was but a private man; but Manahem smiled to himself, and clapped him on his backside with his hand, and said," However that be, thou wilt be king, and wilt begin thy reign happily, for God finds thee worthy of it. And do thou remember the blows that Manahem hath given thee, as being a signal of the change of thy fortune. And truly this will be the best reasoning for thee, that thou love justice [towards men], and piety towards God, and clemency towards thy citizens; yet do I know how thy whole conduct will be, that thou wilt not be such a one, for thou wilt excel all men in happiness, and obtain an everlasting reputation, but wilt forget piety and righteousness; and these crimes will not be concealed from God, at the conclusion of thy life, when thou wilt find that he will be mindful of them, and punish time for them." Now at that time Herod did not at all attend to what Manahem said, as having no hopes of such advancement; but a little afterward, when he was so fortunate as to be advanced to the dignity of king, and was in the height of his dominion, he sent for Manahem, and asked him how long he should reign. Manahem did not tell him the full length of his reign; wherefore, upon that silence of his, he asked him further, whether he should reign ten years or not? He replied, "Yes, twenty, nay, thirty years;" but did not assign the just determinate limit of his reign. Herod was satisfied with these replies, and gave Manahem his hand, and dismissed him; and from that time he continued to honor all the Essens. We have thought it proper to relate these facts to our readers, how strange soever they be, and to declare what hath happened among us, because many of these Essens have, by their excellent virtue, been thought worthy of this knowledge of Divine revelations.

### **Footnotes:**

1. This Pollio, with whom Herod's sons lived at Rome, was not Pollio the

Pharisee, already mentioned by Josephus, ch. 1. sect. 1, and again presently after this, ch. 10. sect. 4; but Asinine Pollo, the Roman, as Spanheim here observes.

2. The character of this Zenodorus is so like that of a famous robber of the same name in Strabo, and that about this very country, and about this very time also, that I think Dr. Hudson hardly needed to have put a overlaps to his determination that they were the same.
3. A tetrarchy properly and originally denoted the fourth part of an entire kingdom or country, and a tetrarch one that was ruler of such a fourth part, which always implies somewhat less extent of dominion and power than belong to a kingdom and to a king.



## Chapter 11

### **Herod Rebuilt the Temple and Made it More Magnificent Than It Was Before**

1. And now Herod, in the eighteenth year of his reign, and after the acts already mentioned, undertook a very great work, that is, to build of himself the temple of God, (1) and make it larger in compass, and to raise it to a most magnificent altitude, as esteeming it to be the most glorious of all his actions, as it really was, to bring it to perfection; and that this would be sufficient for an everlasting memorial of him; but as he knew the multitude were not ready nor willing to assist him in so vast a design, he thought to prepare them first by making a speech to them, and then set about the work itself; so he called them together, and spake thus to them: "I think I need not speak to you, my countrymen, about such other works as I have done since I came to the kingdom, although I may say they have been performed in such a manner as to bring more security to you than glory to myself; for I have neither been negligent in the most difficult times about what tended to ease your necessities, nor have the buildings I have made been so proper to preserve me as yourselves from injuries; and I imagine that, with God's assistance, I have advanced the nation of the Jews to a degree of happiness which they never had before; and for the particular edifices belonging to your own country, and your own cities, as also to those cities that we have lately acquired, which we have erected and greatly adorned, and thereby augmented the dignity of your nation, it seems to me a needless task to enumerate them to you, since you well know them yourselves; but as to that undertaking which I have a mind to set about at present, and which will be a work of the greatest piety and excellence that can possibly be undertaken by us, I will now declare it to you. Our fathers, indeed, when they were returned from Babylon, built this temple to God Almighty, yet does it want sixty cubits of its largeness in altitude; for so much did that first temple which

Solomon built exceed this temple; nor let any one condemn our fathers for their negligence or want of piety herein, for it was not their fault that the temple was no higher; for they were Cyrus, and Darius the son of Hystaspes, who determined the measures for its rebuilding; and it hath been by reason of the subjection of those fathers of ours to them and to their posterity, and after them to the Macedonians, that they had not the opportunity to follow the original model of this pious edifice, nor could raise it to its ancient altitude; but since I am now, by God's will, your governor, and I have had peace a long time, and have gained great riches and large revenues, and, what is the principal filing of all, I am at amity with and well regarded by the Romans, who, if I may so say, are the rulers of the whole world, I will do my endeavor to correct that imperfection, which hath arisen from the necessity of our affairs, and the slavery we have been under formerly, and to make a thankful return, after the most pious manner, to God, for what blessings I have received from him, by giving me this kingdom, and that by rendering his temple as complete as I am able." 2. And this was the speech which Herod made to them; but still this speech afrighted many of the people, as being unexpected by them; and because it seemed incredible, it did not encourage them, but put a damp upon them, for they were afraid that he would pull down the whole edifice, and not be able to bring his intentions to perfection for its rebuilding; and this danger appeared to them to be very great, and the vastness of the undertaking to be such as could hardly be accomplished. But while they were in this disposition, the king encouraged them, and told them he would not pull down their temple till all things were gotten ready for building it up entirely again. And as he promised them this beforehand, so he did not break his word with them, but got ready a thousand waggons, that were to bring stones for the building, and chose out ten thousand of the most skillful workmen, and bought a thousand sacerdotal garments for as many of the priests, and had some of them taught the arts of stone-cutters, and others of carpenters, and then began to build; but this not till every thing was well prepared for the work.

3. So Herod took away the old foundations, and laid others, and erected the temple upon them, being in length a hundred cubits, and in height twenty additional cubits, which [twenty], upon the sinking of their foundations (2) fell down; and this part it was that we resolved to raise again in the days of Nero. Now the temple was built of stones that were white and strong, and each of their length was twenty-five cubits, their height was eight, and their breadth about twelve; and the whole structure, as also the structure of the royal cloister, was on each side much lower, but the middle was much higher, till they were visible to those that dwelt in the country for a great many furlongs, but chiefly to such as lived over against them, and those that approached to them. The temple had doors also at the entrance, and lintels over them, of the same height with the temple itself. They were adorned with embroidered veils, with their flowers of purple, and pillars interwoven; and over these, but under the crown-work, was spread out a golden vine, with its branches hanging down from a great height, the largeness and fine workmanship of which was a surprising sight to the spectators, to see what vast materials there were, and with what great skill the workmanship was done. He also encompassed the entire temple with very large cloisters, contriving them to be in a due proportion thereto; and he laid out larger sums of money upon them than had been done before him, till it seemed that no one else had so greatly adorned the temple as he had done. There was a large wall to both the cloisters, which wall was itself the most prodigious work that was ever heard of by man. The hill was a rocky ascent, that declined by degrees towards the east parts of the city, till it came to an elevated level. This hill it was which Solomon, who was the first of our kings, by Divine revelation, encompassed with a wall; it was of excellent workmanship upwards, and round the top of it. He also built a wall below, beginning at the bottom, which was encompassed by a deep valley; and at the south side he laid rocks together, and bound them one to another with lead, and included some of the inner parts, till it proceeded to a great height, and till both the largeness of the square edifice and its altitude were immense, and till the vastness of the stones in the front were plainly visible on the outside, yet so

that the inward parts were fastened together with iron, and preserved the joints immovable for all future times. When this work [for the foundation] was done in this manner, and joined together as part of the hill itself to the very top of it, he wrought it all into one outward surface, and filled up the hollow places which were about the wall, and made it a level on the external upper surface, and a smooth level also. This hill was walled all round, and in compass four furlongs, [the distance of] each angle containing in length a furlong: but within this wall, and on the very top of all, there ran another wall of stone also, having, on the east quarter, a double cloister, of the same length with the wall; in the midst of which was the temple itself. This cloister looked to the gates of the temple; and it had been adorned by many kings in former times; and round about the entire temple were fixed the spoils taken from barbarous nations; all these had been dedicated to the temple by Herod, with the addition of those he had taken from the Arabians.

4. Now on the north side [of the temple] was built a citadel, whose walls were square, and strong, and of extraordinary firmness. This citadel was built by the kings of the Asamonean race, who were also high priests before Herod, and they called it the Tower, in which were repositied the vestments of the high priest, which the high priest only put on at the time when he was to offer sacrifice. These vestments king Herod kept in that place; and after his death they were under the power of the Romans, until the time of Tiberius Caesar; under whose reign Vitellius, the president of Syria, when he once came to Jerusalem, and had been most magnificently received by the multitude, he had a mind to make them some requital for the kindness they had shewn him; so, upon their petition to have those holy vestments in their own power, he wrote about them to Tiberius Caesar, who granted his request: and this their power over the sacerdotal vestments continued with the Jews till the death of king Agrippa; but after that, Cassius Longinus, who was president of Syria, and Cuspius Fadus, who was procurator of Judea, enjoined the Jews to reposit those vestments in the tower of Antonia, for that they ought to have them in their power, as they formerly had. However, the

Jews sent ambassadors to Claudius Caesar, to intercede with him for them; upon whose coming, king Agrippa, junior, being then at Rome, asked for and obtained the power over them from the emperor, who gave command to Vitellius, who was then commander in Syria, to give it them accordingly. Before that time they were kept under the seal of the high priest, and of the treasurers of the temple; which treasurers, the day before a festival, went up to the Roman captain of the temple guards, and viewed their own seal, and received the vestments; and again, when the festival was over, they brought it to the same place, and showed the captain of the temple guards their seal, which corresponded with his seal, and repositied them there. And that these things were so, the afflictions that happened to us afterwards [about them] are sufficient evidence. But for the tower itself, when Herod the king of the Jews had fortified it more firmly than before, in order to secure and guard the temple, he gratified Antonius, who was his friend, and the Roman ruler, and then gave it the name of the Tower of Antonia.

5. Now in the western quarters of the enclosure of the temple there were four gates; the first led to the king's palace, and went to a passage over the intermediate valley; two more led to the suburbs of the city; and the last led to the other city, where the road descended down into the valley by a great number of steps, and thence up again by the ascent for the city lay over against the temple in the manner of a theater, and was encompassed with a deep valley along the entire south quarter; but the fourth front of the temple, which was southward, had indeed itself gates in its middle, as also it had the royal cloisters, with three walks, which reached in length from the east valley unto that on the west, for it was impossible it should reach any farther: and this cloister deserves to be mentioned better than any other under the sun; for while the valley was very deep, and its bottom could not be seen, if you looked from above into the depth, this further vastly high elevation of the cloister stood upon that height, insomuch that if any one looked down from the top of the battlements, or down both those altitudes, he would be giddy, while his sight could not reach to such an immense depth. This cloister had

pillars that stood in four rows one over against the other all along, for the fourth row was interwoven into the wall, which [also was built of stone]; and the thickness of each pillar was such, that three men might, with their arms extended, fathom it round, and join their hands again, while its length was twenty-seven feet, with a double spiral at its basis; and the number of all the pillars [in that court] was a hundred and sixty-two. Their chapiters were made with sculptures after the Corinthian order, and caused an amazement [to the spectators], by reason of the grandeur of the whole. These four rows of pillars included three intervals for walking in the middle of this cloister; two of which walks were made parallel to each other, and were contrived after the same manner; the breadth of each of them was thirty feet, the length was a furlong, and the height fifty feet; but the breadth of the middle part of the cloister was one and a half of the other, and the height was double, for it was much higher than those on each side; but the roofs were adorned with deep sculptures in wood, representing many sorts of figures. The middle was much higher than the rest, and the wall of the front was adorned with beams, resting upon pillars, that were interwoven into it, and that front was all of polished stone, insomuch that its fineness, to such as had not seen it, was incredible, and to such as had seen it, was greatly amazing. Thus was the first enclosure. In the midst of which, and not far from it, was the second, to be gone up to by a few steps: this was encompassed by a stone wall for a partition, with an inscription, which forbade any foreigner to go in under pain of death. Now this inner enclosure had on its southern and northern quarters three gates [equally] distant one from another; but on the east quarter, towards the sun-rising, there was one large gate, through which such as were pure came in, together with their wives; but the temple further inward in that gate was not allowed to the women; but still more inward was there a third [court of the] temple, whereinto it was not lawful for any but the priests alone to enter. The temple itself was within this; and before that temple was the altar, upon which we offer our sacrifices and burnt-offerings to God. Into none of these three did king Herod enter, (3) for he was forbidden, because he was not a priest. However, he took care of the cloisters

and the outer enclosures, and these he built in eight years.

6. But the temple itself was built by the priests in a year and six months; upon which all the people were full of joy; and presently they returned thanks, in the first place, to God; and in the next place, for the alacrity the king had showed. They feasted and celebrated this rebuilding of the temple: and for the king, he sacrificed three hundred oxen to God, as did the rest every one according to his ability; the number of which sacrifices is not possible to set down, for it cannot be that we should truly relate it; for at the same time with this celebration for the work about the temple fell also the day of the king's inauguration, which he kept of an old custom as a festival, and it now coincided with the other, which coincidence of them both made the festival most illustrious.

7. There was also an occult passage built for the king; it led from Antonia to the inner temple, at its eastern gate; over which he also erected for himself a tower, that he might have the opportunity of a subterraneous ascent to the temple, in order to guard against any sedition which might be made by the people against their kings. It is also reported, (4) that during the time that the temple was building, it did not rain in the daytime, but that the showers fell in the nights, so that the work was not hindered. And this our fathers have delivered to us; nor is it incredible, if any one have regard to the manifestations of God. And thus was performed the work of the rebuilding of the temple.

### **Footnotes:**

1. We may here observe, that the fancy of the modern Jews, in calling this temple, which was really the third of their temples, the second temple, followed so long by later Christians, seems to be without any solid foundation. The reason why the Christians here followed the Jews is, because of the prophecy of Haggai, 2:6-9, which they expound of the

Messiah's coming to the second or Zorobabel's temple, of which they suppose this of Herod to be only a continuation; which is meant, I think, of his coming to the fourth and last temple, of that future, largest, and most glorious one, described by Ezekiel; whence I take the former notion, how general soever, to be a great mistake. See Lit. Accorap. of Proph. p. 2.

2. Some of our modern students in architecture have made a strange blunder here, when they imagine that Josephus affirms the entire foundations of the temple or holy house sunk down into the rocky mountain on which it stood no less than twenty cubits, whereas he is clear that they were the foundations of the additional twenty cubits only above the hundred (made perhaps weak on purpose, and only for show and grandeur) that sunk or fell down, as Dr. Hudson rightly understands him; nor is the thing itself possible in the other sense. Agrippa's preparation for building the inner parts of the temple twenty cubits higher (History of the War, B. V. ch. 1. sect. 5) must in all probability refer to this matter, since Josephus says here, that this which had fallen down was designed to be raised up again under Nero, under whom Agrippa made that preparation. But what Josephus says presently, that Solomon was the first king of the Jews, appears by the parallel place, Antiq. B. XX. ch. 9. sect. 7, and other places, to be meant only the first of David's posterity, and the first builder of the temple.
3. "Into none Of these three did king Herod enter," i.e. 1. Not into the court of the priests; 2. Nor into the holy house itself; 3. Nor into the separate place belonging to the altar, as the words following imply; for none but priests, or their attendants the Levites, might come into any of them. See Antiq. B. XVI. ch. 4. sect. 6, when Herod goes into the temple, and makes a speech in it to the people, but that could only be into the court of Israel, whither the people could come to hear him.
4. This tradition which Josephus here mentions, as delivered down from fathers to their children, of this particular remarkable circumstance relating to the building of Herod's temple, is a demonstration that such



its building was a known thing in Judea at this time. He was born about forty-six years after it is related to have been finished, and might himself have seen and spoken with some of the builders themselves, and with a great number of those that had seen it building. The doubt therefore about the truth of this history of the pulling down and rebuilding this temple by Herod, which some weak people have indulged, was not then much greater than it soon may be, whether or not our St. Paul's church in London was burnt down in the fire of London, A.D. 1666, and rebuilt by Sir Christopher Wren a little afterward.