

**FLAVIUS
JOSEPHUS**

AGAINST
APION

Flavius Josephus
Against Apion

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Josephus F.

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Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	19

Flavius Josephus Against Apion

AGAINST APION.

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BOOK 1

1. I Suppose that by my books of the Antiquity of the Jews, most excellent Epaphroditus, 2 have made it evident to those who peruse them, that our Jewish nation is of very great antiquity, and had a distinct subsistence of its own originally; as also, I have therein declared how we came to inhabit this country wherein we now live. Those Antiquities contain the history of five thousand years, and are taken out of our sacred books, but are translated by me into the Greek tongue. However, since I observe a considerable number of people giving ear to the reproaches that are laid against us by those who bear ill-will to us, and will not believe what I have written concerning the antiquity of our nation, while they take it for a plain sign that our nation is of a late date, because they are not so much as vouchsafed a bare mention by the most famous historiographers among the Grecians. I therefore have thought myself under an obligation to write somewhat briefly about these subjects, in order to convict those that reproach us of spite and voluntary falsehood, and to correct the ignorance of others, and withal to instruct all those who are desirous of knowing the truth of what great antiquity we really are. As for the witnesses whom I shall produce for the proof of what I say, they shall be such as are esteemed to be of the greatest reputation for truth, and the most skillful in the knowledge of all antiquity by the Greeks themselves. I will also show, that those who have written so reproachfully and falsely about us are to be convicted by what they have written themselves to the contrary. I shall also endeavor to give an account of the reasons why it hath so happened, that there have not been a great number of Greeks who have made mention of our nation in their histories. I will, however, bring those Grecians to light who have not omitted such our history, for the sake of those that either do not know them, or pretend not to know them already.

2. And now, in the first place, I cannot but greatly wonder at those men, who suppose that we must attend to none but Grecians, when we are inquiring about the most ancient facts, and must inform ourselves of their truth from them only, while we must not believe ourselves nor other men; for I am convinced that the very reverse is the truth of the case. I mean this,—if we will not be led by vain opinions, but will make inquiry after truth from facts themselves; for they will find that almost all which concerns the Greeks happened not long ago; nay, one may say, is of yesterday only. I speak of the building of their cities, the inventions of their arts, and the description of their laws; and as for their care about the writing down of their histories, it is very near the last thing they set about. However, they acknowledge themselves so far, that they were the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, and the Phoenicians (for I will not now reckon ourselves among them) that have preserved the memorials of the most ancient and most lasting traditions of mankind; for almost all these nations inhabit such countries as are least subject to destruction from the world about them; and these also have taken especial care to have nothing omitted of what was [remarkably] done among them; but their history was esteemed sacred, and put into public tables, as written by men of the greatest wisdom they had among them. But as for the place where the Grecians inhabit, ten thousand destructions have overtaken it, and blotted out the memory of former actions; so that they were ever beginning a new way of living, and supposed that every one of them was the origin of their new state. It was also late, and with difficulty, that they came to know the letters they now use; for those who would advance their use of these letters to the greatest antiquity pretend that they learned them from the Phoenicians and from Cadmus; yet is nobody able to demonstrate that they have any writing preserved from that time, neither in their temples, nor in any other public monuments. This appears, because the time when those lived who went to the Trojan war, so many years afterward, is in great doubt, and great inquiry is made, whether the Greeks used their letters at that time; and the most prevailing opinion, and that nearest the truth, is, that their present way of using those letters was unknown at that time. However, there is not any writing which the Greeks agree to be genuine among them ancients than Homer's Poems, who must plainly he confessed later than the siege of Troy; nay, the report goes, that even he

did not leave his poems in writing, but that their memory was preserved in songs, and they were put together afterward, and that this is the reason of such a number of variations as are found in them. [3](#) As for those who set themselves about writing their histories, I mean such as Cadmus of Miletus, and Acusilaus of Argos, and any others that may be mentioned as succeeding Acusilaus, they lived but a little while before the Persian expedition into Greece. But then for those that first introduced philosophy, and the consideration of things celestial and divine among them, such as Pherceydes the Syrian, and Pythagoras, and Thales, all with one consent agree, that they learned what they knew of the Egyptians and Chaldeans, and wrote but little And these are the things which are supposed to be the oldest of all among the Greeks; and they have much ado to believe that the writings ascribed to those men are genuine.

3. How can it then be other than an absurd thing, for the Greeks to be so proud, and to vaunt themselves to be the only people that are acquainted with antiquity, and that have delivered the true accounts of those early times after an accurate manner? Nay, who is there that cannot easily gather from the Greek writers themselves, that they knew but little on any good foundation when they set to write, but rather wrote their histories from their own conjectures? Accordingly, they confute one another in their own books to purpose, and are not ashamed, to give us the most contradictory accounts of the same things; and I should spend my time to little purpose, if I should pretend to teach the Greeks that which they know better than I already, what a great disagreement there is between Hellanicus and Acusilaus about their genealogies; in how many eases Acusilaus corrects Hesiod: or after what manner Ephorus demonstrates Hellanicus to have told lies in the greatest part of his history; as does Timeus in like manner as to Ephorus, and the succeeding writers do to Timeus, and all the later writers do to Herodotus nor could Timeus agree with Antiochus and Philistius, or with Callias, about the Sicilian History, no more than do the several writers of the Athide follow one another about the Athenian affairs; nor do the historians the like, that wrote the Argolics, about the affairs of the Argives. And now what need I say any more about particular cities and smaller places, while in the most approved writers of the expedition of the Persians, and of the actions which were therein performed, there are so great differences? Nay, Thucydides himself is accused of some as writing what is false, although he seems to have given us the exactest history of the affairs of his own time. [4](#)

4. As for the occasions of so great disagreement of theirs, there may be assigned many that are very probable, if any have a mind to make an inquiry about them; but I ascribe these contradictions chiefly to two causes, which I will now mention, and still think what I shall mention in the first place to be the principal of all. For if we remember that in the beginning the Greeks had taken no care to have public records of their several transactions preserved, this must for certain have afforded those that would afterward write about those ancient transactions the opportunity of making mistakes, and the power of making lies also; for this original recording of such ancient transactions hath not only been neglected by the other states of Greece, but even among the Athenians themselves also, who pretend to be Aborigines, and to have applied themselves to learning, there are no such records extant; nay, they say themselves that the laws of Draco concerning murders, which are now extant in writing, are the most ancient of their public records; which Draco yet lived but a little before the tyrant Pisistratus. [5](#) For as to the Arcadians, who make such boasts of their antiquity, what need I speak of them in particular, since it was still later before they got their letters, and learned them, and that with difficulty also. [6](#)

5. There must therefore naturally arise great differences among writers, when they had no original records to lay for their foundation, which might at once inform those who had an inclination to learn, and contradict those that would tell lies. However, we are to suppose a second occasion besides the former of these contradictions; it is this: That those who were the most zealous to write history were not solicitous for the discovery of truth, although it was very easy for them always to make such a profession; but their business was to demonstrate that they could write well, and make an impression upon mankind thereby; and in what manner of writing they thought they were able to

exceed others, to that did they apply themselves, Some of them betook themselves to the writing of fabulous narrations; some of them endeavored to please the cities or the kings, by writing in their commendation; others of them fell to finding faults with transactions, or with the writers of such transactions, and thought to make a great figure by so doing. And indeed these do what is of all things the most contrary to true history; for it is the great character of true history that all concerned therein both speak and write the same things; while these men, by writing differently about the same things, think they shall be believed to write with the greatest regard to truth. We therefore [who are Jews] must yield to the Grecian writers as to language and eloquence of composition; but then we shall give them no such preference as to the verity of ancient history, and least of all as to that part which concerns the affairs of our own several countries.

6. As to the care of writing down the records from the earliest antiquity among the Egyptians and Babylonians; that the priests were intrusted therewith, and employed a philosophical concern about it; that they were the Chaldean priests that did so among the Babylonians; and that the Phoenicians, who were mingled among the Greeks, did especially make use of their letters, both for the common affairs of life, and for the delivering down the history of common transactions, I think I may omit any proof, because all men allow it so to be. But now as to our forefathers, that they took no less care about writing such records, [for I will not say they took greater care than the others I spoke of,] and that they committed that matter to their high priests and to their prophets, and that these records have been written all along down to our own times with the utmost accuracy; nay, if it be not too bold for me to say it, our history will be so written hereafter;—I shall endeavor briefly to inform you.

7. For our forefathers did not only appoint the best of these priests, and those that attended upon the Divine worship, for that design from the beginning, but made provision that the stock of the priests should continue unmixed and pure; for he who is partaker of the priesthood must propagate of a wife of the same nation, without having any regard to money, or any other dignities; but he is to make a scrutiny, and take his wife's genealogy from the ancient tables, and procure many witnesses to it. [7](#) And this is our practice not only in Judea, but wheresoever any body of men of our nation do live; and even there an exact catalogue of our priests' marriages is kept; I mean at Egypt and at Babylon, or in any other place of the rest of the habitable earth, whithersoever our priests are scattered; for they send to Jerusalem the ancient names of their parents in writing, as well as those of their remoter ancestors, and signify who are the witnesses also. But if any war falls out, such as have fallen out a great many of them already, when Antiochus Epiphanes made an invasion upon our country, as also when Pompey the Great and Quintilius Varus did so also, and principally in the wars that have happened in our own times, those priests that survive them compose new tables of genealogy out of the old records, and examine the circumstances of the women that remain; for still they do not admit of those that have been captives, as suspecting that they had conversation with some foreigners. But what is the strongest argument of our exact management in this matter is what I am now going to say, that we have the names of our high priests from father to son set down in our records for the interval of two thousand years; and if any of these have been transgressors of these rules, they are prohibited to present themselves at the altar, or to be partakers of any other of our purifications; and this is justly, or rather necessarily done, because every one is not permitted of his own accord to be a writer, nor is there any disagreement in what is written; they being only prophets that have written the original and earliest accounts of things as they learned them of God himself by inspiration; and others have written what hath happened in their own times, and that in a very distinct manner also.

8. For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another, [as the Greeks have,] but only twenty-two books, [8](#) which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine; and of them five belong to Moses, which contain his laws and the traditions of the origin of mankind till his death. This interval of time was little short of three thousand years; but as to the time from the death of Moses till the reign of

Artaxerxes king of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes, the prophets, who were after Moses, wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God, and precepts for the conduct of human life. It is true, our history hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time; and how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add any thing to them, to take any thing from them, or to make any change in them; but it is become natural to all Jews immediately, and from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain Divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and, if occasion be willingly to die for them. For it is no new thing for our captives, many of them in number, and frequently in time, to be seen to endure racks and deaths of all kinds upon the theatres, that they may not be obliged to say one word against our laws and the records that contain them; whereas there are none at all among the Greeks who would undergo the least harm on that account, no, nor in case all the writings that are among them were to be destroyed; for they take them to be such discourses as are framed agreeably to the inclinations of those that write them; and they have justly the same opinion of the ancient writers, since they see some of the present generation bold enough to write about such affairs, wherein they were not present, nor had concern enough to inform themselves about them from those that knew them; examples of which may be had in this late war of ours, where some persons have written histories, and published them, without having been in the places concerned, or having been near them when the actions were done; but these men put a few things together by hearsay, and insolently abuse the world, and call these writings by the name of Histories.

9. As for myself, I have composed a true history of that whole war, and of all the particulars that occurred therein, as having been concerned in all its transactions; for I acted as general of those among us that are named Galileans, as long as it was possible for us to make any opposition. I was then seized on by the Romans, and became a captive. Vespasian also and Titus had me kept under a guard, and forced me to attend them continually. At the first I was put into bonds, but was set at liberty afterward, and sent to accompany Titus when he came from Alexandria to the siege of Jerusalem; during which time there was nothing done which escaped my knowledge; for what happened in the Roman camp I saw, and wrote down carefully; and what informations the deserters brought [out of the city], I was the only man that understood them. Afterward I got leisure at Rome; and when all my materials were prepared for that work, I made use of some persons to assist me in learning the Greek tongue, and by these means I composed the history of those transactions. And I was so well assured of the truth of what I related, that I first of all appealed to those that had the supreme command in that war, Vespasian and Titus, as witnesses for me, for to them I presented those books first of all, and after them to many of the Romans who had been in the war. I also sold them to many of our own men who understood the Greek philosophy; among whom were Julius Archelaus, Herod [king of Chalcis], a person of great gravity, and king Agrippa himself, a person that deserved the greatest admiration. Now all these men bore their testimony to me, that I had the strictest regard to truth; who yet would not have dissembled the matter, nor been silent, if I, out of ignorance, or out of favor to any side, either had given false colors to actions, or omitted any of them.

10. There have been indeed some bad men, who have attempted to calumniate my history, and took it to be a kind of scholastic performance for the exercise of young men. A strange sort of accusation and calumny this! since every one that undertakes to deliver the history of actions truly ought to know them accurately himself in the first place, as either having been concerned in them himself, or been informed of them by such as knew them. Now both these methods of knowledge I may very properly pretend to in the composition of both my works; for, as I said, I have translated the Antiquities out of our sacred books; which I easily could do, since I was a priest by my birth, and have studied that philosophy which is contained in those writings: and for the History of the War, I wrote it as having been an actor myself in many of its transactions, an eye-witness in the greatest

part of the rest, and was not unacquainted with any thing whatsoever that was either said or done in it. How impudent then must those deserve to be esteemed that undertake to contradict me about the true state of those affairs! who, although they pretend to have made use of both the emperors' own memoirs, yet could not they be acquainted with our affairs who fought against them.

11. This digression I have been obliged to make out of necessity, as being desirous to expose the vanity of those that profess to write histories; and I suppose I have sufficiently declared that this custom of transmitting down the histories of ancient times hath been better preserved by those nations which are called Barbarians, than by the Greeks themselves. I am now willing, in the next place, to say a few things to those that endeavor to prove that our constitution is but of late time, for this reason, as they pretend, that the Greek writers have said nothing about us; after which I shall produce testimonies for our antiquity out of the writings of foreigners; I shall also demonstrate that such as cast reproaches upon our nation do it very unjustly.

12. As for ourselves, therefore, we neither inhabit a maritime country, nor do we delight in merchandise, nor in such a mixture with other men as arises from it; but the cities we dwell in are remote from the sea, and having a fruitful country for our habitation, we take pains in cultivating that only. Our principal care of all is this, to educate our children well; and we think it to be the most necessary business of our whole life to observe the laws that have been given us, and to keep those rules of piety that have been delivered down to us. Since, therefore, besides what we have already taken notice of, we have had a peculiar way of living of our own, there was no occasion offered us in ancient ages for intermixing among the Greeks, as they had for mixing among the Egyptians, by their intercourse of exporting and importing their several goods; as they also mixed with the Phoenicians, who lived by the sea-side, by means of their love of lucre in trade and merchandise. Nor did our forefathers betake themselves, as did some others, to robbery; nor did they, in order to gain more wealth, fall into foreign wars, although our country contained many ten thousands of men of courage sufficient for that purpose. For this reason it was that the Phoenicians themselves came soon by trading and navigation to be known to the Grecians, and by their means the Egyptians became known to the Grecians also, as did all those people whence the Phoenicians in long voyages over the seas carried wares to the Grecians. The Medes also and the Persians, when they were lords of Asia, became well known to them; and this was especially true of the Persians, who led their armies as far as the other continent [Europe]. The Thracians were also known to them by the nearness of their countries, and the Scythians by the means of those that sailed to Pontus; for it was so in general that all maritime nations, and those that inhabited near the eastern or western seas, became most known to those that were desirous to be writers; but such as had their habitations further from the sea were for the most part unknown to them which things appear to have happened as to Europe also, where the city of Rome, that hath this long time been possessed of so much power, and hath performed such great actions in war, is yet never mentioned by Herodotus, nor by Thucydides, nor by any one of their contemporaries; and it was very late, and with great difficulty, that the Romans became known to the Greeks. Nay, those that were reckoned the most exact historians [and Ephorus for one] were so very ignorant of the Gauls and the Spaniards, that he supposed the Spaniards, who inhabit so great a part of the western regions of the earth, to be no more than one city. Those historians also have ventured to describe such customs as were made use of by them, which they never had either done or said; and the reason why these writers did not know the truth of their affairs was this, that they had not any commerce together; but the reason why they wrote such falsities was this, that they had a mind to appear to know things which others had not known. How can it then be any wonder, if our nation was no more known to many of the Greeks, nor had given them any occasion to mention them in their writings, while they were so remote from the sea, and had a conduct of life so peculiar to themselves?

13. Let us now put the case, therefore, that we made use of this argument concerning the Grecians, in order to prove that their nation was not ancient, because nothing is said of them in our records: would not they laugh at us all, and probably give the same reasons for our silence that I

have now alleged, and would produce their neighbor nations as witnesses to their own antiquity? Now the very same thing will I endeavor to do; for I will bring the Egyptians and the Phoenicians as my principal witnesses, because nobody can complain Of their testimony as false, on account that they are known to have borne the greatest ill-will towards us; I mean this as to the Egyptians in general all of them, while of the Phoenicians it is known the Tyrians have been most of all in the same ill disposition towards us: yet do I confess that I cannot say the same of the Chaldeans, since our first leaders and ancestors were derived from them; and they do make mention of us Jews in their records, on account of the kindred there is between us. Now when I shall have made my assertions good, so far as concerns the others, I will demonstrate that some of the Greek writers have made mention of us Jews also, that those who envy us may not have even this pretense for contradicting what I have said about our nation.

14. I shall begin with the writings of the Egyptians; not indeed of those that have written in the Egyptian language, which it is impossible for me to do. But Manetho was a man who was by birth an Egyptian, yet had he made himself master of the Greek learning, as is very evident; for he wrote the history of his own country in the Greek tongue, by translating it, as he saith himself, out of their sacred records; he also finds great fault with Herodotus for his ignorance and false relations of Egyptian affairs. Now this Manetho, in the second book of his Egyptian History, writes concerning us in the following manner. I will set down his very words, as if I were to bring the very man himself into a court for a witness: "There was a king of ours whose name was Timaus. Under him it came to pass, I know not how, that God was averse to us, and there came, after a surprising manner, men of ignoble birth out of the eastern parts, and had boldness enough to make an expedition into our country, and with ease subdued it by force, yet without our hazarding a battle with them. So when they had gotten those that governed us under their power, they afterwards burnt down our cities, and demolished the temples of the gods, and used all the inhabitants after a most barbarous manner; nay, some they slew, and led their children and their wives into slavery. At length they made one of themselves king, whose name was Salatis; he also lived at Memphis, and made both the upper and lower regions pay tribute, and left garrisons in places that were the most proper for them. He chiefly aimed to secure the eastern parts, as fore-seeing that the Assyrians, who had then the greatest power, would be desirous of that kingdom, and invade them; and as he found in the Saite Nomos, [Sethroite,] a city very proper for this purpose, and which lay upon the Bubastic channel, but with regard to a certain theologic notion was called Avaris, this he rebuilt, and made very strong by the walls he built about it, and by a most numerous garrison of two hundred and forty thousand armed men whom he put into it to keep it. Thither Salatis came in summer time, partly to gather his corn, and pay his soldiers their wages, and partly to exercise his armed men, and thereby to terrify foreigners. When this man had reigned thirteen years, after him reigned another, whose name was Beon, for forty-four years; after him reigned another, called Apachnas, thirty-six years and seven months; after him Apophis reigned sixty-one years, and then Janins fifty years and one month; after all these reigned Assis forty-nine years and two months. And these six were the first rulers among them, who were all along making war with the Egyptians, and were very desirous gradually to destroy them to the very roots. This whole nation was styled Hycsos, that is, Shepherd-kings: for the first syllable Hyc, according to the sacred dialect, denotes a king, as is Sos a shepherd; but this according to the ordinary dialect; and of these is compounded Hycsos: but some say that these people were Arabians." Now in another copy it is said that this word does not denote Kings, but, on the contrary, denotes Captive Shepherds, and this on account of the particle Hyc; for that Hyc, with the aspiration, in the Egyptian tongue again denotes Shepherds, and that expressly also; and this to me seems the more probable opinion, and more agreeable to ancient history. [But Manetho goes on]: "These people, whom we have before named kings, and called shepherds also, and their descendants," as he says, "kept possession of Egypt five hundred and eleven years." After these, he says, "That the kings of Thebais and the other parts of Egypt made an insurrection against the shepherds, and that there a terrible and long war

was made between them." He says further, "That under a king, whose name was Alisphragmuthosis, the shepherds were subdued by him, and were indeed driven out of other parts of Egypt, but were shut up in a place that contained ten thousand acres; this place was named Avaris." Manetho says, "That the shepherds built a wall round all this place, which was a large and a strong wall, and this in order to keep all their possessions and their prey within a place of strength, but that Thummosis the son of Alisphragmuthosis made an attempt to take them by force and by siege, with four hundred and eighty thousand men to lie rotund about them, but that, upon his despair of taking the place by that siege, they came to a composition with them, that they should leave Egypt, and go, without any harm to be done to them, whithersoever they would; and that, after this composition was made, they went away with their whole families and effects, not fewer in number than two hundred and forty thousand, and took their journey from Egypt, through the wilderness, for Syria; but that as they were in fear of the Assyrians, who had then the dominion over Asia, they built a city in that country which is now called Judea, and that large enough to contain this great number of men, and called it Jerusalem." [9](#) Now Manetho, in another book of his, says, "That this nation, thus called Shepherds, were also called Captives, in their sacred books." And this account of his is the truth; for feeding of sheep was the employment of our forefathers in the most ancient ages [10](#) and as they led such a wandering life in feeding sheep, they were called Shepherds. Nor was it without reason that they were called Captives by the Egyptians, since one of our ancestors, Joseph, told the king of Egypt that he was a captive, and afterward sent for his brethren into Egypt by the king's permission. But as for these matters, I shall make a more exact inquiry about them elsewhere. [11](#)

15. But now I shall produce the Egyptians as witnesses to the antiquity of our nation. I shall therefore here bring in Manetho again, and what he writes as to the order of the times in this case; and thus he speaks: "When this people or shepherds were gone out of Egypt to Jerusalem, Tethtosis the king of Egypt, who drove them out, reigned afterward twenty-five years and four months, and then died; after him his son Chebron took the kingdom for thirteen years; after whom came Amenophis, for twenty years and seven months; then came his sister Amesses, for twenty-one years and nine months; after her came Mephres, for twelve years and nine months; after him was Mephramuthosis, for twenty-five years and ten months; after him was Thmosis, for nine years and eight months; after him came Amenophis, for thirty years and ten months; after him came Orus, for thirty-six years and five months; then came his daughter Acenchres, for twelve years and one month; then was her brother Rathotis, for nine years; then was Acencheres, for twelve years and five months; then came another Acencheres, for twelve years and three months; after him Armais, for four years and one month; after him was Ramesses, for one year and four months; after him came Armesses Miammoun, for sixty-six years and two months; after him Amenophis, for nineteen years and six months; after him came Sethosis, and Ramesses, who had an army of horse, and a naval force. This king appointed his brother, Armais, to be his deputy over Egypt." [In another copy it stood thus: "After him came Sethosis, and Ramesses, two brethren, the former of whom had a naval force, and in a hostile manner destroyed those that met him upon the sea; but as he slew Ramesses in no long time afterward, so he appointed another of his brethren to be his deputy over Egypt.] He also gave him all the other authority of a king, but with these only injunctions, that he should not wear the diadem, nor be injurious to the queen, the mother of his children, and that he should not meddle with the other concubines of the king; while he made an expedition against Cyprus, and Phoenicia, and besides against the Assyrians and the Medes. He then subdued them all, some by his arms, some without fighting, and some by the terror of his great army; and being puffed up by the great successes he had had, he went on still the more boldly, and overthrew the cities and countries that lay in the eastern parts. But after some considerable time, Armais, who was left in Egypt, did all those very things, by way of opposition, which his brother had forbid him to do, without fear; for he used violence to the queen, and continued to make use of the rest of the concubines, without sparing any of them; nay, at the persuasion of his friends he put on the diadem, and set up to oppose his brother. But then he who was set over the

priests of Egypt wrote letters to Sethosis, and informed him of all that had happened, and how his brother had set up to oppose him: he therefore returned back to Pelusium immediately, and recovered his kingdom again. The country also was called from his name Egypt; for Manetho says, that Sethosis was himself called Egyptus, as was his brother Armais called Danaus."

16. This is Manetho's account. And evident it is from the number of years by him set down belonging to this interval, if they be summed up together, that these shepherds, as they are here called, who were no other than our forefathers, were delivered out of Egypt, and came thence, and inhabited this country, three hundred and ninety-three years before Danaus came to Argos; although the Argives look upon him [12](#) as their most ancient king Manetho, therefore, hears this testimony to two points of the greatest consequence to our purpose, and those from the Egyptian records themselves. In the first place, that we came out of another country into Egypt; and that withal our deliverance out of it was so ancient in time as to have preceded the siege of Troy almost a thousand years; but then, as to those things which Manetho adds, not from the Egyptian records, but, as he confesses himself, from some stories of an uncertain original, I will disprove them hereafter particularly, and shall demonstrate that they are no better than incredible fables.

17. I will now, therefore, pass from these records, and come to those that belong to the Phoenicians, and concern our nation, and shall produce attestations to what I have said out of them. There are then records among the Tyrians that take in the history of many years, and these are public writings, and are kept with great exactness, and include accounts of the facts done among them, and such as concern their transactions with other nations also, those I mean which were worth remembering. Therein it was recorded that the temple was built by king Solomon at Jerusalem, one hundred forty-three years and eight months before the Tyrians built Carthage; and in their annals the building of our temple is related; for Hirom, the king of Tyre, was the friend of Solomon our king, and had such friendship transmitted down to him from his forefathers. He thereupon was ambitious to contribute to the splendor of this edifice of Solomon, and made him a present of one hundred and twenty talents of gold. He also cut down the most excellent timber out of that mountain which is called Libanus, and sent it to him for adorning its roof. Solomon also not only made him many other presents, by way of requital, but gave him a country in Galilee also, that was called Chabulon. [13](#) But there was another passion, a philosophic inclination of theirs, which cemented the friendship that was betwixt them; for they sent mutual problems to one another, with a desire to have them unriddled by each other; wherein Solomon was superior to Hirom, as he was wiser than he in other respects: and many of the epistles that passed between them are still preserved among the Tyrians. Now, that this may not depend on my bare word, I will produce for a witness Dius, one that is believed to have written the Phoenician History after an accurate manner. This Dius, therefore, writes thus, in his Histories of the Phoenicians: "Upon the death of Abibalus, his son Hirom took the kingdom. This king raised banks at the eastern parts of the city, and enlarged it; he also joined the temple of Jupiter Olympius, which stood before in an island by itself, to the city, by raising a causeway between them, and adorned that temple with donations of gold. He moreover went up to Libanus, and had timber cut down for the building of temples. They say further, that Solomon, when he was king of Jerusalem, sent problems to Hirom to be solved, and desired he would send others back for him to solve, and that he who could not solve the problems proposed to him should pay money to him that solved them. And when Hirom had agreed to the proposals, but was not able to solve the problems, he was obliged to pay a great deal of money, as a penalty for the same. As also they relate, that one OEabdemon, a man of Tyre, did solve the problems, and propose others which Solomon could not solve, upon which he was obliged to repay a great deal of money to Hirom." These things are attested to by Dius, and confirm what we have said upon the same subjects before.

18. And now I shall add Menander the Ephesian, as an additional witness. This Menander wrote the Acts that were done both by the Greeks and Barbarians, under every one of the Tyrian kings, and had taken much pains to learn their history out of their own records. Now when he was writing about

those kings that had reigned at Tyre, he came to Hirom, and says thus: "Upon the death of Abibalus, his son Hirom took the kingdom; he lived fifty-three years, and reigned thirty-four. He raised a bank on that called the Broad Place, and dedicated that golden pillar which is in Jupiter's temple; he also went and cut down timber from the mountain called Libanus, and got timber Of cedar for the roofs of the temples. He also pulled down the old temples, and built new ones; besides this, he consecrated the temples of Hercules and of Astarte. He first built Hercules's temple in the month Peritus, and that of Astarte when he made his expedition against the Tityans, who would not pay him their tribute; and when he had subdued them to himself, he returned home. Under this king there was a younger son of Abdemon, who mastered the problems which Solomon king of Jerusalem had recommended to be solved." Now the time from this king to the building of Carthage is thus calculated: "Upon the death of Hirom, Baleazarus his son took the kingdom; he lived forty-three years, and reigned seven years: after him succeeded his son Abdastartus; he lived twenty-nine years, and reigned nine years. Now four sons of his nurse plotted against him and slew him, the eldest of whom reigned twelve years: after them came Astartus, the son of Deleastartus; he lived fifty-four years, and reigned twelve years: after him came his brother Aserymus; he lived fifty-four years, and reigned nine years: he was slain by his brother Pheles, who took the kingdom and reigned but eight months, though he lived fifty years: he was slain by Ithobalus, the priest of Astarte, who reigned thirty-two years, and lived sixty-eight years: he was succeeded by his son Badezorus, who lived forty-five years, and reigned six years: he was succeeded by Matgenus his son; he lived thirty-two years, and reigned nine years: Pygmalion succeeded him; he lived fifty-six years, and reigned forty-seven years. Now in the seventh year of his reign, his sister fled away from him, and built the city Carthage in Libya." So the whole time from the reign of Hirom, till the building of Carthage, amounts to the sum of one hundred fifty-five years and eight months. Since then the temple was built at Jerusalem in the twelfth year of the reign of Hirom, there were from the building of the temple, until the building of Carthage, one hundred forty-three years and eight months. Wherefore, what occasion is there for alleging any more testimonies out of the Phoenician histories [on the behalf of our nation], since what I have said is so thoroughly confirmed already? and to be sure our ancestors came into this country long before the building of the temple; for it was not till we had gotten possession of the whole land by war that we built our temple. And this is the point that I have clearly proved out of our sacred writings in my Antiquities.

19. I will now relate what hath been written concerning us in the Chaldean histories, which records have a great agreement with our books in oilier things also. Berosus shall be witness to what I say: he was by birth a Chaldean, well known by the learned, on account of his publication of the Chaldean books of astronomy and philosophy among the Greeks. This Berosus, therefore, following the most ancient records of that nation, gives us a history of the deluge of waters that then happened, and of the destruction of mankind thereby, and agrees with Moses's narration thereof. He also gives us an account of that ark wherein Noah, the origin of our race, was preserved, when it was brought to the highest part of the Armenian mountains; after which he gives us a catalogue of the posterity of Noah, and adds the years of their chronology, and at length comes down to Nabolassar, who was king of Babylon, and of the Chaldeans. And when he was relating the acts of this king, he describes to us how he sent his son Nabuchodonosor against Egypt, and against our land, with a great army, upon his being informed that they had revolted from him; and how, by that means, he subdued them all, and set our temple that was at Jerusalem on fire; nay, and removed our people entirely out of their own country, and transferred them to Babylon; when it so happened that our city was desolate during the interval of seventy years, until the days of Cyrus king of Persia. He then says, "That this Babylonian king conquered Egypt, and Syria, and Phoenicia, and Arabia, and exceeded in his exploits all that had reigned before him in Babylon and Chaldea." A little after which Berosus subjoins what follows in his History of Ancient Times. I will set down Berosus's own accounts, which are these: "When Nabolassar, father of Nabuchodonosor, heard that the governor whom he had set over Egypt, and over the parts of Celesyria and Phoenicia, had revolted from him, he was not able to bear it

any longer; but committing certain parts of his army to his son Nabuchodonosor, who was then but young, he sent him against the rebel: Nabuchodonosor joined battle with him, and conquered him, and reduced the country under his dominion again. Now it so fell out that his father Nabolassar fell into a distemper at this time, and died in the city of Babylon, after he had reigned twenty-nine years. But as he understood, in a little time, that his father Nabolassar was dead, he set the affairs of Egypt and the other countries in order, and committed the captives he had taken from the Jews, and Phoenicians, and Syrians, and of the nations belonging to Egypt, to some of his friends, that they might conduct that part of the forces that had on heavy armor, with the rest of his baggage, to Babylonia; while he went in haste, having but a few with him, over the desert to Babylon; whither, when he was come, he found the public affairs had been managed by the Chaldeans, and that the principal person among them had preserved the kingdom for him. Accordingly, he now entirely obtained all his father's dominions. He then came, and ordered the captives to be placed as colonies in the most proper places of Babylonia; but for himself, he adorned the temple of Belus, and the other temples, after an elegant manner, out of the spoils he had taken in this war. He also rebuilt the old city, and added another to it on the outside, and so far restored Babylon, that none who should besiege it afterwards might have it in their power to divert the river, so as to facilitate an entrance into it; and this he did by building three walls about the inner city, and three about the outer. Some of these walls he built of burnt brick and bitumen, and some of brick only. So when he had thus fortified the city with walls, after an excellent manner, and had adorned the gates magnificently, he added a new palace to that which his father had dwelt in, and this close by it also, and that more eminent in its height, and in its great splendor. It would perhaps require too long a narration, if any one were to describe it. However, as prodigiously large and as magnificent as it was, it was finished in fifteen days. Now in this palace he erected very high walks, supported by stone pillars, and by planting what was called a pensile paradise, and replenishing it with all sorts of trees, he rendered the prospect an exact resemblance of a mountainous country. This he did to please his queen, because she had been brought up in Media, and was fond of a mountainous situation."

20. This is what Berosus relates concerning the forementioned king, as he relates many other things about him also in the third book of his Chaldean History; wherein he complains of the Grecian writers for supposing, without any foundation, that Babylon was built by Semiramis, [14](#) queen of Assyria, and for her false pretense to those wonderful edifices thereto buildings at Babylon, do no way contradict those ancient and relating, as if they were her own workmanship; as indeed in these affairs the Chaldean History cannot but be the most credible. Moreover, we meet with a confirmation of what Berosus says in the archives of the Phoenicians, concerning this king Nabuchodonosor, that he conquered all Syria and Phoenicia; in which case Philostratus agrees with the others in that history which he composed, where he mentions the siege of Tyre; as does Megasthenes also, in the fourth book of his Indian History, wherein he pretends to prove that the forementioned king of the Babylonians was superior to Hercules in strength and the greatness of his exploits; for he says that he conquered a great part of Libya, and conquered Iberia also. Now as to what I have said before about the temple at Jerusalem, that it was fought against by the Babylonians, and burnt by them, but was opened again when Cyrus had taken the kingdom of Asia, shall now be demonstrated from what Berosus adds further upon that head; for thus he says in his third book: "Nabuchodonosor, after he had begun to build the forementioned wall, fell sick, and departed this life, when he had reigned forty-three years; whereupon his son Evilmerodach obtained the kingdom. He governed public affairs after an illegal and impure manner, and had a plot laid against him by Neriglisoor, his sister's husband, and was slain by him when he had reigned but two years. After he was slain, Neriglisoor, the person who plotted against him, succeeded him in the kingdom, and reigned four years; his son Laborosoarchod obtained the kingdom, though he was but a child, and kept it nine months; but by reason of the very ill temper and ill practices he exhibited to the world, a plot was laid against him also by his friends, and he was tormented to death. After his death, the conspirators got together, and by common

consent put the crown upon the head of Nabonnedus, a man of Babylon, and one who belonged to that insurrection. In his reign it was that the walls of the city of Babylon were curiously built with burnt brick and bitumen; but when he was come to the seventeenth year of his reign, Cyrus came out of Persia with a great army; and having already conquered all the rest of Asia, he came hastily to Babylonia. When Nabonnedus perceived he was coming to attack him, he met him with his forces, and joining battle with him was beaten, and fled away with a few of his troops with him, and was shut up within the city Borsippus. Hereupon Cyrus took Babylon, and gave order that the outer walls of the city should be demolished, because the city had proved very troublesome to him, and cost him a great deal of pains to take it. He then marched away to Borsippus, to besiege Nabonnedus; but as Nabonnedus did not sustain the siege, but delivered himself into his hands, he was at first kindly used by Cyrus, who gave him Carmania, as a place for him to inhabit in, but sent him out of Babylonia. Accordingly Nabonnedus spent the rest of his time in that country, and there died."

21. These accounts agree with the true histories in our books; for in them it is written that Nebuchadnezzar, in the eighteenth year of his reign, laid our temple desolate, and so it lay in that state of obscurity for fifty years; but that in the second year of the reign of Cyrus its foundations were laid, and it was finished again in the second year of Darius. I will now add the records of the Phoenicians; for it will not be superfluous to give the reader demonstrations more than enough on this occasion. In them we have this enumeration of the times of their several kings: "Nabuchodonosor besieged Tyre for thirteen years in the days of Ithobal, their king; after him reigned Baal, ten years; after him were judges appointed, who judged the people: Ecnibalus, the son of Baslacus, two months; Chelbes, the son of Abdeus, ten months; Abbar, the high priest, three months; Mitgonus and Gerastratus, the sons of Abdelemus, were judges six years; after whom Balatorus reigned one year; after his death they sent and fetched Merbalus from Babylon, who reigned four years; after his death they sent for his brother Hirom, who reigned twenty years. Under his reign Cyrus became king of Persia." So that the whole interval is fifty-four years besides three months; for in the seventh year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar he began to besiege Tyre, and Cyrus the Persian took the kingdom in the fourteenth year of Hirom. So that the records of the Chaldeans and Tyrians agree with our writings about this temple; and the testimonies here produced are an indisputable and undeniable attestation to the antiquity of our nation. And I suppose that what I have already said may be sufficient to such as are not very contentious.

22. But now it is proper to satisfy the inquiry of those that disbelieve the records of barbarians, and think none but Greeks to be worthy of credit, and to produce many of these very Greeks who were acquainted with our nation, and to set before them such as upon occasion have made mention of us in their own writings. Pythagoras, therefore, of Samos, lived in very ancient times, and was esteemed a person superior to all philosophers in wisdom and piety towards God. Now it is plain that he did not only know our doctrines, but was in very great measure a follower and admirer of them. There is not indeed extant any writing that is owned for his [15](#) but many there are who have written his history, of whom Hermippus is the most celebrated, who was a person very inquisitive into all sorts of history. Now this Hermippus, in his first book concerning Pythagoras, speaks thus: "That Pythagoras, upon the death of one of his associates, whose name was Calliphon, a Crotonlate by birth, affirmed that this man's soul conversed with him both night and day, and enjoined him not to pass over a place where an ass had fallen down; as also not to drink of such waters as caused thirst again; and to abstain from all sorts of reproaches." After which he adds thus: "This he did and said in imitation of the doctrines of the Jews and Thracians, which he transferred into his own philosophy." For it is very truly affirmed of this Pythagoras, that he took a great many of the laws of the Jews into his own philosophy. Nor was our nation unknown of old to several of the Grecian cities, and indeed was thought worthy of imitation by some of them. This is declared by Theophrastus, in his writings concerning laws; for he says that "the laws of the Tyrians forbid men to swear foreign oaths." Among which he enumerates some others, and particularly that called Corban: which oath

can only be found among the Jews, and declares what a man may call "A thing devoted to God." Nor indeed was Herodotus of Halicarnassus unacquainted with our nation, but mentions it after a way of his own, when he saith thus, in the second book concerning the Colchians. His words are these: "The only people who were circumcised in their privy members originally, were the Colchians, the Egyptians, and the Ethiopians; but the Phoenicians and those Syrians that are in Palestine confess that they learned it from the Egyptians. And for those Syrians who live about the rivers Thermodon and Parthenius, and their neighbors the Macrones, they say they have lately learned it from the Colchians; for these are the only people that are circumcised among mankind, and appear to have done the very same thing with the Egyptians. But as for the Egyptians and Ethiopians themselves, I am not able to say which of them received it from the other." This therefore is what Herodotus says, that "the Syrians that are in Palestine are circumcised." But there are no inhabitants of Palestine that are circumcised excepting the Jews; and therefore it must be his knowledge of them that enabled him to speak so much concerning them. Cherilus also, a still ancients writer, and a poet, [16](#) makes mention of our nation, and informs us that it came to the assistance of king Xerxes, in his expedition against Greece. For in his enumeration of all those nations, he last of all inserts ours among the rest, when he says, "At the last there passed over a people, wonderful to be beheld; for they spake the Phoenician tongue with their mouths; they dwelt in the Solymeian mountains, near a broad lake: their heads were sooty; they had round rasures on them; their heads and faces were like nasty horse-heads also, that had been hardened in the smoke." I think, therefore, that it is evident to every body that Cherilus means us, because the Solymeian mountains are in our country, wherein we inhabit, as is also the lake called Asphaltitis; for this is a broader and larger lake than any other that is in Syria: and thus does Cherilus make mention of us. But now that not only the lowest sort of the Grecians, but those that are had in the greatest admiration for their philosophic improvements among them, did not only know the Jews, but when they lighted upon any of them, admired them also, it is easy for any one to know. For Clearchus, who was the scholar of Aristotle, and inferior to no one of the Peripatetics whomsoever, in his first book concerning sleep, says that "Aristotle his master related what follows of a Jew," and sets down Aristotle's own discourse with him. The account is this, as written down by him: "Now, for a great part of what this Jew said, it would be too long to recite it; but what includes in it both wonder and philosophy it may not be amiss to discourse of. Now, that I may be plain with thee, Hyperochides, I shall herein seem to thee to relate wonders, and what will resemble dreams themselves. Hereupon Hyperochides answered modestly, and said, For that very reason it is that all of us are very desirous of hearing what thou art going to say. Then replied Aristotle, For this cause it will be the best way to imitate that rule of the Rhetoricians, which requires us first to give an account of the man, and of what nation he was, that so we may not contradict our master's directions. Then said Hyperochides, Go on, if it so pleases thee. This man then, [answered Aristotle,] was by birth a Jew, and came from Celesyria; these Jews are derived from the Indian philosophers; they are named by the Indians Calami, and by the Syrians Judaei, and took their name from the country they inhabit, which is called Judea; but for the name of their city, it is a very awkward one, for they call it Jerusalem. Now this man, when he was hospitably treated by a great many, came down from the upper country to the places near the sea, and became a Grecian, not only in his language, but in his soul also; insomuch that when we ourselves happened to be in Asia about the same places whither he came, he conversed with us, and with other philosophical persons, and made a trial of our skill in philosophy; and as he had lived with many learned men, he communicated to us more information than he received from us." This is Aristotle's account of the matter, as given us by Clearchus; which Aristotle discoursed also particularly of the great and wonderful fortitude of this Jew in his diet, and continent way of living, as those that please may learn more about him from Clearchus's book itself; for I avoid setting down any more than is sufficient for my purpose. Now Clearchus said this by way of digression, for his main design was of another nature. But for Hecateus of Abdera, who was both a philosopher, and one very useful in an active life, he was contemporary with king Alexander in his

youth, and afterward was with Ptolemy, the son of Lagus; he did not write about the Jewish affairs by the by only, but composed an entire book concerning the Jews themselves; out of which book I am willing to run over a few things, of which I have been treating by way of epitome. And, in the first place, I will demonstrate the time when this Hecateus lived; for he mentions the fight that was between Ptolemy and Demetrius about Gaza, which was fought in the eleventh year after the death of Alexander, and in the hundred and seventeenth olympiad, as Castor says in his history. For when he had set down this olympiad, he says further, that "in this olympiad Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, beat in battle Demetrius, the son of Antigonus, who was named Poliorcetes, at Gaza." Now, it is agreed by all, that Alexander died in the hundred and fourteenth olympiad; it is therefore evident that our nation flourished in his time, and in the time of Alexander. Again, Hecateus says to the same purpose, as follows: "Ptolemy got possession of the places in Syria after that battle at Gaza; and many, when they heard of Ptolemy's moderation and humanity, went along with him to Egypt, and were willing to assist him in his affairs; one of whom [Hecateus says] was Hezekiah [17](#)

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