

The heroic patriotism of the early Maccabean princes revived in the pious Jews that faith and hope which is given expression in the book of Daniel and many of the Psalms.

The coming of Pompey in 67 B.C., virtually terminated Jewish independence. Antipater, an Idumean prince, appears on the stage of Palestinian affairs. Eventually in 37 B. C., his younger son Herod secures the throne from Mark Antony and Octavius. To strengthen his position Herod married Mariamne, the last of the Maccabean princesses.

There are, said Dr. Bacon, three views of Herod.—(1) the New Testament view; (2) that recorded by Josephus; and, (3) as a friend of the Graeco-Roman civilization.

Influenced largely by the tragic story of his domestic relations, the New Testament pictures him as a usurper and inhuman tyrant. Josephus' picture is one of heroism mingled with audacity, magnificent buildings and generosity clouded by a long list of horrors. His mother-in-law, brother-in-law wife and sons were the victims of his unrestrained passions of ambition, and suspicion fostered by the enmities and jealousies of the various women in the royal household. Well might Augustus say: "Better be Herod's swine than Herod's son."

As a friend of Graeco-Roman civilization Herod deserves much praise. Through his Hellenizing policy he prepared the way for Christian civilization. During his reign Palestine enjoyed a tranquility and prosperity before unknown. He built impregnable fortresses, renovated the old cities of Palestine and built new ones. He established military posts, fortified castles, embellished the public buildings, erected baths and amphitheatres, encouraged commerce and built the great harbor of Caesarea, the metropolis of southern Syria. Many are the monuments at present being unearthed which indicate the aggressive policy of Herod the Great. The views were very distinct and included the prison of John the Baptist, a number of ruined cities of Decapolis, the harbor of Caesarea, the mosque of Omar, and the plan of the new non-sectarian building about to be erected in Jerusalem, to encourage and provide facilities for archaeological research.

A vote of thanks and appreciation was moved by the Rev. L. Pidgeon and seconded by Rev. Dr. MacKay. The chair was occupied by Mr. H. W. C. Boak.