In his *Jewish Antiquities*, no less than in his essay *Against Apion*, Josephus is clearly concerned to defend the Jewish people against anti-Jewish charges and to build up Jewish heroes.\(^1\) Inasmuch as more than half of the *Antiquities* is concerned with the history of the biblical period, Josephus does much to aggrandize biblical figures such as Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samson, Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, Jonah, Hezekiah, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther.\(^2\)

But the Bible contains more than its share of Jewish rogues, particularly during the period of the kings of Judah and Israel. On the one hand, Josephus is not above omitting embarrassing incidents, as we see in his omission of certain incriminating details in connection with Jacob’s deception of his father in order to obtain his blessing (Genesis 27),\(^3\) the cunning of Jacob in connection with

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\(^3\) See Feldman, ‘Josephus’s portrait of Jacob’ (above, note 2), 114–16.
Laban's flock (Genesis 30:37-38), the Judah-Tamar episode (Genesis 38), Moses's slaying of the Egyptian (Exodus 2:12), the building of the golden calf (Exodus 32), Miriam's leprosy (Numbers 12), the story of Moses's striking the rock to bring forth water which speaks of Moses's disgrace (Numbers 20:10-12), the story of the brazen serpent (Numbers 21:4-9) whereby Moses cured those who had been bitten by the fiery serpents, several passages (1 Samuel 20:6, 21:4-7, 26:19) which seem to cast a shadow upon David's reputation for piety, the identification of Elijah as a zealot (1 Kings 19:9, 19:14) (which would have aroused the antagonism of the Romans in view of the role of the Zealots in the great uprising of 66-70), Elisha's cursing of the little boys who had jeered him in referring to his baldness (2 Kings 2:23-24), as well as his cursing of his disciple Gehazi for accepting gifts from Naaman (2 Kings 5:27), Jehu's conversion of the Temple of Baal into an outhouse (2 Kings 10:27) (which would have aroused charges of intolerance), Jonah's extreme anger with God because he had forgiven the Ninevites after they had repented (Jonah 4:1), Hezekiah's ingratitude to God (2 Chronicles 32:25) when he became sick, the charge (Nehemiah 2:19-20, 6:6) made by the neighbors of the Jews that the Jews were rebelling against the Persian king, the statement (Nehemiah 8:14, 17) that the Jews had failed to observe the commandment to dwell in sukkoth since the days of Joshua, the infighting among the Jews in the days of Nehemiah (Nehemiah 5:6-7, 5:12, 13:4-11) and the gathering of the virgins in the Esther narrative (Esther 2:19). And yet, we may call attention to certain major changes in his reworking of the Bible, namely, the downgrading of the role of God in order to call greater attention to the achievements of his heroes, the avoidance of miracles, which would have stretched the credulity of his readers, and the omission of passages which present serious questions as to the authorship and date of composition of various books of the Bible or of chronology. Likewise, Josephus is deliberately (Ant. 4.125), for apologetic reasons, evasive in presenting Balaam's eschatological prophecy (Numbers 24:17-18), in which calamities are foretold for...
kings and cities of the highest celebrity (presumably including Rome), as well as in explaining (Ant. 10.210) Daniel's prediction (Daniel 2:44-45) of a Messianic kingdom which would destroy all previous kingdoms (including, presumably, Rome). On the other hand, inasmuch as some of the Josephus's readers most probably were Jews who had access to the Septuagint translation of the Bible, Josephus had to be careful not to distort the biblical narrative excessively, especially in view of his promise (Ant. 1.17, cf. 20.261) that he will set forth the precise details of the Scriptures, neither adding nor subtracting anything.

In his portraits of two other wicked kings, Ahab and Manasseh, Josephus goes out of his way to restore respect for them, perhaps, in part, out of sheer regard for the institution of kingship. Thus, in an unscriptural detail (Ant. 8.386) he shows how much regard Ahab had for a supplicant, Ben-hadad. Again, Ahab's bravery is all the greater because Josephus (Ant. 8.371) has embellished the biblical statement (1 Kings 20:10) describing the terror tactics of Ben-hadad's army. Even in the case which constitutes the greatest blot upon Ahab's record, his dealings with Naboth, the reader will undoubtedly feel more sympathy for Ahab because, in Josephus's addition (Ant. 8.356) to the biblical account (1 Kings 21:6), Ahab tells his wife Jezebel how he had been insulted by Naboth by having his request refused despite his having used mild words hardly in keeping with his royal authority. Moreover, as with his portrait of Saul and of David, Josephus (Ant. 8.361) stresses Ahab's remorse. The fact that the Jews, and Josephus in particular, had been accused of being cowards makes all the more meaningful the presentation of Ahab as a great tactician and a brave leader who is, above all, concerned for his people (Ant. 8.370), as we see especially in his eagerness to keep up the morale of his soldiers even after he has been gravely wounded (Ant. 8.415). Likewise, in his diplomatic activities he is depicted more honorably than he is portrayed in the Bible (Ant. 8.398). Finally, in a rare editorial comment, Josephus (Ant. 8.409) goes out of his way not to censure Ahab for listening to the false prophet but rather places the blame on inexorable and inevitable Fate, even as Fate is the culprit determining the end of the good king Josiah (Ant. 10.76).

Likewise, in his portrait of Manasseh, Josephus seems to go out of his way to rehabilitate him. In order not to offend his idol-worshipping, non-Jewish readers, Josephus (Ant. 10.37, 42) omits the specifics of Manasseh's introduction of the worship of pagan gods; rather (Ant. 10.38) he magnifies his sins in killing the righteous men among the Jews and the prophets. In details that go

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11 See Feldman, 'Use, authority and exegesis of Mikra in the writings of Josephus' (above, note 1), 470-1.
beyond the Bible (Ant. 10.44) we are told of his major achievements in improving the city of Jerusalem. Finally, we may note that the basic difference between the accounts of Manasseh in the Book of Kings and in the Book of Chronicles is that the former says nothing about Manasseh’s repentance. Significantly, therefore, not only does Josephus (Ant. 10.41–45) call attention to Manasseh’s repentance, but he highlights it, remarking (Ant. 10.45) that such was the degree of his repentance that he was accounted a blessed and enviable man.

One criterion of the importance which Josephus assigns to his biblical personalities is the sheer amount of space that he devotes to them. Thus Josephus has a ratio of 2.70 as compared with the Hebrew text for his account of Saul, 2.21 for Balaam, 2.16 for Jeroboam, 2.01 for Jehu, 2.01 for Jehoshaphat, 2.00 for Joseph (5.45 for the episode of Joseph and Potiphar’s wife and 3.28 for the narrative dealing with Joseph’s dreams and subsequent enslavement), 1.98 for Ahab, 1.95 for David, 1.87 for Samuel, 1.83 for Absalom, 1.71 for Josiah, 1.54 for Samson, 1.52 for Elijah, 1.39 for Asa, 1.32 for Daniel, 1.20 for Ezra (0.72 as compared with the Greek text of 1 Esdras, which was apparently Josephus’s source), 1.15 for Jonah, 1.11 for Elisha, 0.97 for Hezekiah, 0.91 for Manasseh, 0.90 for Gideon, and 0.24 for Nehemiah. From this point of view the attention given by Josephus (Ant. 9.27, 29–41, 51–52, 60–73, 81–86, 105–106, 112–119) to Jehoram (Joram) is rather striking as compared with the amount of space allocated to him in the Bible (2 Kings 3:1–27, 6:8–23, 7:10–20, 8:28–29, 9:15–26). This gives a ratio of 1.93 for Josephus as compared with the Hebrew text and 1.49 for Josephus as compared with the Septuagint.13 When one considers that Jehoram in the Bible is a relatively minor figure it is remarkable that he gets almost as much space relatively as David and considerably more than is allotted Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah and the good king Hezekiah. Indeed, the stature of Jehoram may be seen in the extra-biblical remark (Ant. 9.31) that when Jehoram came to Jerusalem he was splendidly (λαμπρῶς) entertained (ξενισθείς) by Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah.

The great hero, as we see particularly in Josephus’s portraits of Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samson, Saul, David, Jehu, Hezekiah, Daniel and Ezra,14 like Plato’s philosopher-

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12 For Josephus I have used the Loeb Classical Library text. For the Hebrew text I have used the standard edition with the commentary of Meir Loeb Malbim (New York: Friedman, s.a.).

13 For the Septuagint I have used the edition by Alfred Rahlfs, Septuaginta, vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Privilegierte Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935).

king,¹⁵ and like Thucydidès's¹⁶ ideal, Pericles, must be a true leader. We see this quality in Jehoram in that whereas the Bible (2 Kings 7:16) states that after reconnaissance had determined that it was safe for the Israelites to leave the city of Samaria where they had been besieged, the people went out, presumably on their own, and plundered the Syrian camp. In Josephus (Ant. 9.84) it is Jehoram who takes the lead and allows the people to plunder the enemy camp. They were rewarded, he adds, with no slight amount of gain but took much gold, silver, herds and flocks, as well as a quantity of wheat and barley such as they had never even dreamed of.

In addition, the ideal leader must possess the four cardinal virtues of wisdom, courage, temperance and justice, plus the virtue of piety, which Plato (Protagoras 349B) already counts as the fifth of the virtues.¹⁷ These are virtues which admirers of the Jews, such as Aristotle, Theophrastus, Megasthenes, Hecataeus of Abdera and Varro had noted in them, but which their detractors found wanting.¹⁸ The Jewish hero, in addition to being, in effect, a Platonic-like philosopher, must also be a Periclean-like statesman, a high priest and a prophet, all in one. The recitation of his virtues is a veritable aretalogy, such as was popular in Hellenistic times.¹⁹ We may, consequently, well ask to what degree Jehoram, in Josephus's portrait, attains or falls short of attaining these ideals.

Wisdom (οο νία) is the prime requisite for a leader, as we see in Plato's Republic and in the portrayal of Pericles in Thucydidès, as well as in the description of Oedipus in Sophocles's plays. That wisdom was the virtue of which the Jews were most proud may be indicated by the fact that it is this virtue which Josephus stresses in his account (Against Apion 1.175–182) of the admiration which Aristotle expressed for the Jew whom he met in Asia Minor. It is likewise this virtue which Josephus expands upon in numerous extra-biblical details pertaining to Abraham, Joseph, Moses,

¹⁵ On Josephus's knowledge of Plato see Feldman, 'Josephus as a biblical interpreter: the 'Aqedah' (above, note 2), 225, note 39.
¹⁷ Aristotle, De virtutibus et vitiiis 5.1250B22–23, defines piety as either a part of justice or as an accompaniment of it.
Joshua, Samson, David, Solomon and many other biblical heroes.  

Josephus (Ant. 9.83), in an editorial comment, ascribes wisdom to Jehoram, putting it into the mouth of an anonymous person but clearly reflecting his own thinking. He compliments Jehoram by adding that when the report was brought to him that the Syrian camp was empty, the king was suspicious with the best reason (ἀγνώστα) and most wisely (οὐνετωτάτα, 'intelligently', 'cleverly', 'sagaciously', 'resourcefully', 'ingeniously').

Another characteristic of a wise person, as we see, for example, in Moses's readiness to accept advice from his father-in-law Jethro, is willingness to listen to good counsel. We see this in an extra-biblical comment (Ant. 9.84) that when one of his men suggests to Jehoram that he send horsemen to see whether the enemy are hiding or whether they really have retreated, he is said to approve of the plan.

The second of the cardinal virtues, courage (ἀνδρεία) and skill in battle, is stressed by Josephus in a number of additions to the biblical narrative, especially since the Jews had been reproached with cowardice by such critics of the Jews as Apollonius Molon (ap. Against Apion 2.148). Josephus himself was especially sensitive on this point because he himself had been subjected to such a charge (War 3.358). Moreover, as a military general himself in the great Jewish war against the Romans, Josephus was particularly interested in military details and consequently often adds data not found in the Bible.

Josephus (Ant. 10.31; cf. 2 Kings 3:9) adds to the picture of the military effectiveness of Jehoram as one who planned carefully by noting that it was only after receiving assurances from Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, that he went to war against the Moabites. Moreover, whereas in the Bible (2 Kings 3:8) Jehoram asks

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20 See especially Feldman, 'Abraham the Greek philosopher in Josephus' (above, note 2), 150–6; 'Josephus's portrait of Jacob' (above, note 2), 109–10; 'Josephus's portrait of Joseph' (above, note 2), 390–400; 'Josephus's portrait of Joshua' (above, note 2), 355–7; 'Josephus's version of Samson' (above, note 2), 177–8; 'Josephus's portrait of Saul' (above, note 2), 64–6; 'Josephus's portrait of David' (above, note 2), 139–40; 'Josephus as an apologist to the Greco-Roman world: his portrait of Solomon' (above, note 2), 85–9; and 'Use, authority and exegesis of Mikra in the writings of Josephus' (above, note 1), 488–90.

21 Similarly, Ahab (Ant. 8.378), in an extra-biblical addition, though a wicked king, is partially rehabilitated by Josephus through being depicted as listening to the nameless prophet when he tells him to hold his forces in readiness for another attack by the Syrians in the following year. The biblical account (1 Kings 20:22) simply reports the words of the prophet without indicating the reaction of Ahab; but Josephus (Ant. 8.378) says specifically that Ahab attended to what the prophet told him.

22 See Feldman, 'Abraham the general in Josephus' (above, note 2); 'Josephus's portrait of Jacob' (above, note 2), 110–12; 'Josephus's portrait of Joseph' (above, note 2), 400–1; 'Josephus's portrait of Joshua' (above, note 2), 358–61; 'Josephus's version of Samson' (above, note 2), 179–89; 'Josephus's portrait of Saul' (above, note 2), 66–79; 'Josephus's portrait of David' (above, note 2), 141–7; and 'Use, authority and exegesis of Mikra in the writings of Josephus' (above, note 1), 490–1.
Jehoshaphat to join him, and it is Jehoshaphat who makes the decision to do so, in Josephus's version (Ant. 9.31) Jehoram is presented as planning carefully, as consulting with his ally Jehoshaphat and as participating in a joint decision with Jehoshaphat to make their advance upon the enemy, the Moabites, through the wilderness of Idumaea. Josephus adds that the reason for this strategy was that the Moabites would be caught by surprise in not expecting the allies to attack by this road. Furthermore, on the basis of the biblical account (2 Kings 3:9), one might well be critical of Jehoram for leading an army to a place where there was no water for the men or for their beasts, whereas Josephus (Ant. 9.32) clearly exonerates Jehoram by explaining that the reason why they found themselves without sufficient water was that their guides had lost their way.

We likewise see Jehoram's ability as a military leader in Josephus's explanation (Ant. 9.61) as to his strategy in fighting against King Ben-hadad of Syria when the latter besieged Samaria. The Bible (2 Kings 6:24) gives no explanation of Jehoram's strategy, but Josephus, himself a general in the great war against the Romans, records the extra-biblical detail that Jehoram shut himself up in Samaria, relying on the strength of its walls, inasmuch as he did not think that he was a match (διομαχομαι) for the Syrians. Again, whereas the Bible (2 Kings 6:25) describes in impersonal terms the famine in Samaria when it was being besieged by King Ben-hadad of Syria, Josephus (Ant. 9.62), on the other hand, focuses upon Jehoram and states that it was Jehoram's supply of necessities that was reduced, so that the cost of food escalated tremendously.

Jehoram's concern for his people during his military activities may be seen in another extra-biblical addition in Josephus. According to the Bible (2 Kings 6:26), while he was being besieged in Samaria, he happened to be passing on the wall of the city when a woman appealed to him for help in a dispute with another woman with whom she had made a pact, because of the tremendous famine, to eat their sons. In Josephus's version (Ant. 9.63) Jehoram is depicted as totally involved with his responsibilities. Indeed, he is described as walking around the walls every day in his fear lest, because of the famine, someone might betray the city to the enemy. He spies out whether any of the enemy are within the city and, we are told, through his appearance and precautions he prevents any citizen from wishing to betray the city or from carrying out any such plan. We see his steadfastness in enforcing discipline upon the inhabitants in that we are told, in an extra-biblical remark (Ant. 9.64; cf. 2 Kings 6:27), that when the woman approaches him asking for pity, he is angry, thinking that she was about to beg for food or the like, and he consequently calls down God's curse upon her.
We also see Jehoram’s virtue as a general in the way in which he deals with the report of the lepers about the flight of the Syrians. In the Bible (2 Kings 7:11-12) the lepers tell the gatekeepers, who, in turn, inform the king that the Syrian camp is empty. The king, in turn, then tells his servants his analysis of the situation. In Josephus’s version (Ant. 9.81) Jehoram speaks not to his servants but to his friends and commanders (γιεμιόνως); in other words, like a good general, he holds a conference to determine strategy. He then analyses the strategy of the enemy very carefully. Whereas in the biblical narrative (2 Kings 7:12) he states very simply that the Syrians, knowing that the Israelites are hungry, left the camp to hide in the field in order to seize them alive when they leave the city, Josephus (Ant. 9.82) bluntly declares the strategy of the Syrians to be a snare (ἐνέδειον, ‘ambush’, ‘trap’, ‘plot’) and a trick (τέχνην, ‘ruse’, ‘scheme’) and explains more fully their motive, namely that when the Israelites go out to plunder their camp in the belief that the Syrians have fled, they may suddenly fall upon them and kill them and thus take the city without a battle. He thereupon, excellent military leader and tactician that he is, urges his men to keep the enemy’s camp well guarded and by no means to be careless in attacking the enemy because of their withdrawal.

We see the stature of Jehoram as a military leader in his campaign against the Syrian king, Hazael, Ben-hadad’s successor. According to the biblical version (2 Kings 8:28), it is Ahaziah, the king of Judah, who was joined by Jehoram in the war, whereas in Josephus’s account (Ant. 9.105) it is Jehoram who takes the initiative; and there is no mention that Ahaziah accompanied him. Moreover, Josephus highlights his leadership by adding (Ant. 9.105–106; cf. 2 Kings 8:29) that though he was wounded in the engagement, he intended, after being healed, to continue the war against the Syrians.

Another of the characteristics of a successful general is speed of decision. We see this quality in Josephus’s addition (Ant. 9.115; cf. 2 Kings 9:17) that when he was told that a company of horsemen was approaching he ordered one of his own horsemen at once to meet them and to find out who it was who was coming. Moreover, when he is informed that it is Jehu who is approaching, whereas the Bible (2 Kings 9:21) states that Jehoram told his followers to prepare a chariot, in Josephus (Ant. 9.117) Jehoram himself takes the initiative and mounts his chariot.

And yet, the goal of a successful military leader is not war for its own sake but rather a just peace, as we can see from Virgil’s statement of the Roman mission, pacisque imponere morem (Aeneid 6.852) and from Augustus’s pride (in the Monumentum Ancyranum)

23 It is apparent that here Josephus had an Aramaic text as his source, inasmuch as the Hebrew (2 Kings 9:20) states that Jehu drove madly (beshiga’on), as does the Septuagint (ἐν παραλλαγῇ), and that only the Targum, reading keniyaḥ, has the meaning ‘in good order’, whence Josephus’s μετ’ εὔταξις.
in the fact that during his rule the Temple of Janus was closed – an indication that Rome was at peace. Hence, we can appreciate Josephus’s comment (Ant. 9.94), in an addition to the Bible (2 Kings 8:15), that when he heard of the death of the Syrian king Ben-hadad he gladly welcomed peace.

The third of the cardinal virtues, temperance or restraint (σωφροσύνη), was a quality of supreme importance to the Greeks, as we can see from the fact that the prescription to avoid excess, μηδέν ἁγαν, was one of the two mottoes inscribed at the most important religious institution of the Greeks, the Delphic Oracle. It is significant that it is this quality of temperance, σωφροσύνη, which Aristotle (ap. Josephus, Against Apion 1.182) admires above all else in the manner of life (δίκαιον) led by the Jew whom he met in Asia Minor. It is likewise a recurring theme in extra-biblical additions to the portraits of his biblical heroes in Josephus. 24

Jehoram in Josephus exhibits the quality of restraint when he repents of his anger. Thus, whereas in the Bible (2 Kings 6:33), he, in his anger with Elisha for not praying to God to alleviate the famine, sends a messenger to kill him, and it is the messenger who declares that the calamity had been sent by God, in Josephus (Ant. 9.70) it is Jehoram who is depicted as repenting (καταγγείλω, ‘regretting’; ‘reproaching himself’) of his wrath against the prophet and who, fearing that the man who had been ordered to kill Elisha might already have done so, hastens to prevent the murder.

Justice (δίκαιος), it will be recalled, is the centerpiece of Plato’s Republic. The fact that Josephus (Ant. 6.305, 13.294) identifies justice with law must have made a powerful appeal to the Romans in his audience, who placed such a premium upon the rule of law and who were so proud of their achievements in this field. Josephus (Ant. 6.176) boastfully remarks that while customs vary even within a given nation, justice is regarded as most useful by both Greeks and non-Greeks, and that the laws of the Jews have the greatest sense of justice, so that, if they are properly kept, one must be kind and friendly to all men. He (Against Apion 1.60) remarks that the Jews strive especially to educate their children to keep the laws and the ancient piety. Indeed, the importance of justice as an attribute of the biblical heroes is constantly stressed by Josephus in extra-biblical additions. 25

24 See Feldman, 'Josephus's portrait of Jacob' (above, note 2), 112; 'Josephus's portrait of Joseph' (above, note 2), 401-5; 'Josephus's portrait of Joshua' (above, note 2), 361-2; 'Josephus's version of Samson' (above, note 2), 190; 'Josephus's portrait of Saul' (above, note 2), 79-82; 'Josephus's portrait of David' (above, note 2), 147-9; 'Josephus as an apologist to the Greco-Roman world: his portrait of Solomon' (above, note 2), 74-5; and 'Use, authority and exegesis of Mikra in the writings of Josephus' (above, note 1), 491-2.

25 See Feldman, 'Josephus's portrait of Jacob' (above, note 2), 112-13; 'Josephus's portrait of Joseph' (above, note 2), 405-13; 'Josephus's portrait of Joshua' (above, note 2), 362-4; 'Josephus's version of Samson' (above, note 2), 190-2; 'Josephus's portrait of Saul' (above, note 2), 82-3; 'Josephus's portrait of David' (above, note 2), 150-6; and 'Use, authority and exegesis of Mikra in the writings of Josephus' (above, note 1), 492-3.
We see the way Jehoram stands for justice in Josephus's version of the incident of the woman who has made the pact with her neighbour to eat their sons. In the biblical account (2 Kings 6:26–31) the woman does not specifically appeal to him for justice but rather asks him to save her, presumably, as he understands it in view of the famine, in order to secure some food for her. Josephus (Ant. 9.65) presents the crucial addition that she begs to have him judge her case against the other woman, clearly because she is confident that her king stands for justice.

One of the central aspects of justice is the virtue of humanity (φιλανθρωπία, Latin humanitas), as we see in Philo and in Macrobius. In his reply to the anti-Jewish critics, Josephus (Against Apion 2.146) stresses that the Mosaic Code was designed to promote humanity towards the world at large, that (Against Apion 2.211–213) 'our legislator', that is Moses, inculcated into the Jews the duty of sharing with others, and that not only must the Jew furnish food and supplies to those who ask for them but that he must show consideration even for declared enemies. He even adds unscriptural provisions, such as that Jews are forbidden to burn up the country of their enemies and to despoil fallen combatants. This gentleness (μερότητα) and humanity (φιλανθρωπίαν) extend even to animals, authorizing their use only in accordance with the Law.

Josephus is here clearly replying to the charge, frequently made against the Jews by such anti-Jewish writers as Apollonius Molon and Lysimachus (Against Apion 2.145), that they are guilty of hatred of mankind. Even Hecataeus (ap. Diodorus 40.3, 4), who is otherwise well disposed towards them, describes the Jewish way of life as 'somewhat unsocial' (διάδοτοις πάντα) and hostile to foreigners (μισοξένον). Consequently, in his paraphrase of the Bible, Josephus adds a number of touches to emphasize the
humanity of the Jews. Thus, for example, Reuben, in his speech to Josephus (Ant. 2.101), declares his confidence in his humanity (phiλανθρωπίαν). Moreover, in his final eulogy of David’s character, Josephus (Ant. 7.391) stresses, among other qualities, that he was just and humane (phiλάνθρωπος), ‘qualities which are especially applicable to kings’.

In his account of Jehoram Josephus likewise, through extra-biblical additions, takes advantage of the opportunity to answer such charges. Thus, in the biblical version (2 Kings 3:27), after Mesha, the king of Moabites, sacrifices his own son as a burnt-offering to his god, we hear only that Jehoram and Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, depart to their own lands, with no indication of their reaction to this act of desperation. Josephus (Ant. 9.43), however, paints a picture of the humanity (άνθρωπινόν τι) and compassion (έλεεινόν)\(^{30}\) of Jehoram and Jehoshaphat. We are told that they felt pity (κατῳκτείως) for Mesha, and that they consequently lifted the siege and returned home. Such a reaction is clearly an answer, especially in the use of the word άνθρωπινον, to the charge that the Jews hate mankind.

We see another instance of Jehoram’s compassion in Josephus’s depiction (Ant. 9.64) of the scene in which the woman who has made the pact with her neighbor to eat their sons begs him to have pity upon her. In the biblical version (2 Kings 6:27) he replies sarcastically, thinking that she was begging for food, ‘Whence shall I help you? From the threshing floor or from the wine press’? Josephus’s Jehoram is more sympathetic and omits the sarcasm; there he simply says that he has neither threshing-floor nor wine press from which he might give her something at her entreaty. Furthermore, we see the empathy that Jehoram has for his people in that whereas in the Bible (2 Kings 6:30) he merely rents his clothes, in Josephus’s version (Ant. 9.67) he also expresses his grief in words, since we are told that he grieved sorely (φοβοδώς) and cried out fearfully (δείνον). Indeed, whereas in the Bible (2 Kings 6:31), at this point, we read that Jehoram vows to kill Elisha and we are not given a reason for this outburst, Josephus, in an extra-biblical addition (Ant. 9.67), explains that he was determined to do so out of concern for his subjects, namely because Elisha had not asked God to give his people an escape from their ills, notably the famine that was now besetting them. In fact, when he thereafter comes to Elisha, Jehoram, in identifying himself with his people’s sufferings, reproaches him, in an addition to the biblical narrative (Ant. 9.70), for not having asked

\(^{30}\) Ralph Marcus, in his note (on Antiquities 9.43), in his edition of Josephus (Loeb Classical Library: London: Heinemann, 1937), 25, indicates that Josephus’s reference to the kings’ compassion is based on the Septuagint, which renders the Hebrew qezeph, ‘wrath’, by the Greek μετάμελος; but this word means ‘repentance’ rather than ‘compassion’; hence, the attribution of compassion to these kings is Josephus’s own addition.
God for a deliverance from the misfortunes which had afflicted the people and for looking on indifferently while they were suffering.

That the quality of compassion is a distinct compliment in Jewish eyes may be seen from the fact that the rabbis (Yebamoth 79a) single it out as one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Jewish people. Indeed, the quality of mercy is the litmus paper test, so to speak, of the Jew, as we hear (Bezah 32b): ‘Whoever is merciful to his fellow-men is certainly of the children of our father Abraham, and whosoever is not merciful to his fellow-men is certainly not of the children of our father Abraham’.

A particular aspect of φιλανθρωπία is the quality of hospitality, a virtue that was very much prized in the entire ancient world, both in the Near East and in Greece and Rome, as we see, for example, in the episode of Glaucus and Diomedes at the beginning of Book 6 of Homer’s Iliad. We see this trait, for example, in the warm greeting given by Moses (Ant. 3.63) to his father-in-law Jethro when the latter visits him after the encounter with the Amalekites. The Bible (Exodus 18:12) says that Jethro offered sacrifices and that Aaron and the people joined him in the sacred meal, but nothing is said about a public feast given by Moses. In Josephus it is Moses who offers the sacrifices and makes a feast for the people. Furthermore, to show the respect that Jews have for non-Jews, Josephus (Ant. 3.64) has an extended description of this banquet given by Moses in honour of his father-in-law, where an ecumenical spirit prevails, with Aaron and his company being joined by Jethro in chanting hymns to God as the author and dispenser of their salvation and their liberty. We likewise see this trait of hospitality in Josephus’s extra-biblical comment (Ant. 7.54), to which nothing in the Bible (2 Samuel 5:3) corresponds, that when the tribal leaders came to pay homage to David at Hebron, he entertained and treated them hospitably (φιλοφρονησάμενος) and then sent them to bring all the people to him. Likewise, when the Syrian soldiers have been taken captive by Jehoram, while it is true that Elisha counsels him to set bread and water before them, in Josephus’s version he actually uses the word for hospitality (ξενίων) when he states what Elisha had counselled him to offer them.

Piety (εὐσέβεια), the fifth of the cardinal virtues, as we see in Plato (Protagoras 330B, 349B) and in the Stoics (Stoicorum veterum fragmenta 3.64.40 and Diogenes Laertius 7.119), was likewise especially important for the Romans, as may be perceived in the fact that the key quality of Aeneas in Virgil’s great national poem is pietas. Hence it is not surprising that this virtue is, as Attridge notes, exemplified in almost every major character in Josephus.

Indeed, the juxtaposition of justice and piety is frequent in Josephus’s additions to the biblical text.32

At first glance it would seem that Josephus blackens Jehoram even beyond the portrait in the Bible, where we are told (2 Kings 3:2) that Jehoram did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, though not like his father and mother Ahab and Jezebel, since he removed the pillar of Baal which his father had made. Josephus (Ant. 9.27), instead of noting that he was better than his father Ahab, states that he was very like Ahab in wickedness and adds that he showed every form of lawlessness (παρανομία) and impiety (ἀσεβεία) toward God, since he neglected His service (θρησκευτω) and worshipped strange gods, precisely the opposite of what Jehoram did, according to the Bible, in removing the pillar of Baal.

As we read on, however, both in the biblical account and in Josephus, we see that the picture is far from one-sided. Thus, the biblical narrative (2 Kings 3:3) continues that Jehoram did, nevertheless, cling to the sins of Jeroboam, ‘who caused Israel to sin’, and adds, for emphasis, that he did not turn away from it. The fact that Josephus makes no mention of the comparison with Jeroboam is significant, inasmuch as Josephus finds no redeeming features in him. Thus, whereas in the Bible (1 Kings 12:30) there is mention of Jeroboam’s action in setting up calves at Bethel and Dan, in Josephus (Ant. 8.229) it is by words that he misleads the people and causes them to transgress the laws. It was such demagoguery, according to Josephus in an extra-biblical editorial remark, that was the beginning of the Jews’ misfortunes and led to their being defeated in war by other peoples and to their falling captive. Moreover, to Josephus hot-headedness was the defining characteristic of the revolutionaries against Rome whom he so despised; hence we can see the significance of Josephus’s clear condemnation of Jeroboam, whom he depicts, in an extra-biblical comment (Ant. 8.209), as hot-headed (Θεμός) by nature. Furthermore, to Josephus, whose ancestors were high priests, the major sin on the part of Jeroboam was that he set up his own alternative to the Jerusalem Temple; whereas in the Bible (1 Kings 12:28) Jeroboam gives no reasons for preventing his people from going to Jerusalem, in Josephus’s version (Ant. 8.227–8) he gives no fewer than five reasons for this impious act. In sum, Josephus

32 See Attridge (above, note 31), 115–16, note 3. So also Dionysius of Halicarnassus (2.62.5) remarks that the great Roman lawgiver, Numa Pompilius, introduced two virtues through which the city would be prosperous – justice and piety. For Josephus’s emphasis on justice in his treatment of biblical figures see Feldman, ‘Josephus’s portrait of Jacob’ (above, note 2), 112–13; ‘Josephus’s portrait of Joseph’ (above, note 2), 405–13; ‘Josephus’s portrait of Joshua’ (above, note 2), 362–4; ‘Josephus’s portrait of Saul’ (above, note 2), 82; ‘Josephus’s portrait of David’ (above, note 2), 150–6; ‘Josephus as an apologist to the Greco-Roman world: his portrait of Solomon’ (above, note 2), 73–4; and ‘Use, authority and exegesis of Mikra in the writings of Josephus’ (above, note 1), 492–3.
(Ant. 8.245) amplifies the sins of Jeroboam by referring to him as committing an outrage against the Deity and transgressing His laws, so that every day he sought to commit some new act more heinous than the reckless acts of which he was already guilty. To Josephus the priest, Jeroboam’s greatest sin was the fact that he continued (Ant. 8.265) to erect altars and to appoint priests from among the common people. Moreover, to Josephus (Ant. 8.205) Jeroboam is the outstanding example of the disaster wrought by secession and civil strife and was, in effect, the prototype of the revolutionaries of his own day (Ant. 8.209). Indeed, when the kingdom of Israel comes to an end and Josephus (Ant. 9.282) seeks to analyse the underlying cause of its demise, he insists that the beginning of Israel’s troubles was the rebellion which it undertook against the legitimate king, Rehoboam, when it chose Jeroboam as king.

It is significant, therefore, that in his account of Jehoram Josephus omits all reference to his continuing in the ways of Jeroboam, the arch-culprit in his paraphrase of the Bible. It is striking that Josephus (Ant. 9.282) points his finger at Jeroboam’s lawlessness (πωρανομιαν) (the very quality which he denounces in the revolutionaries and particularly in his bitter attack on the Sicarii [War 7.262]) and that he mentions (Ant. 9.27) this as characteristic of Jehoram, and yet that he omits the equation of Jehoram and Jeroboam that is highlighted in the Bible. Indeed, that Josephus sought to diminish his attack on Jehoram may be seen in the statement that follows (Ant. 9.27) his description of Jehoram’s wickedness, namely that he was also a man of bold action (δραστηριος) in other respects. The word δραστηριος, we may note, 33 is rarely used in a pejorative sense, and hence the meaning here would seem to refer to Jehoram’s active, enterprising, energetic, determined, bold, spirited and efficacious character.

Another clue that Josephus was seeking a partial rehabilitation of Jehoram may be seen in the fact whereas the Bible (2 Kings 3:6) mentions that Jehoram conducted a census of his kingdom, Josephus, realizing the negative view of such censuses as seen by the plagues that followed them (cf. Numbers 26:2, 51, 62; 2 Samuel 24:9–11; 1 Chronicles 21:5–8), omits all mention of it; significantly, Josephus (Ant. 7.319–321) does mention the census conducted by the great king David, the sinfulness of which David (Ant. 7.321) recognized. 34 We may surmise that this recasting of relative wickedness of Jehoram was the result of the appreciation by

34 On Josephus’s diminution of the importance of David see Feldman, ‘Josephus’s portrait of David’ (above, note 2), especially 172–4.
Josephus, who thought of himself as a prophet,\textsuperscript{35} of the fact that Jehoram permitted Elisha and other prophets to act freely.\textsuperscript{36}

That Josephus softens his indictment of Jehoram may be seen in his version of Elisha's remark (2 Kings 6:32) to the elders sitting with him that 'this murderer',\textsuperscript{37} that is, Jehoram, has sent a messenger to cut off his head. Josephus (\textit{Ant.} 9.68), however, refers to Jehoram here as 'the son of a murderer', thus shifting the blame to his father, Ahab. Indeed, whereas in the Bible (2 Kings 6:32) Elisha then predicts that the king will follow this messenger, Josephus (\textit{Ant.} 9.69) specifically declares, in obvious vindication of Jehoram's character, that the king will have changed his mind (\textit{μεταβεβολευμένος}, 'altered plans').

A clear indication that Jehoram was not impious may be seen in Josephus's version (\textit{Ant.} 9.32) of the incident where he, Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, and the Idumaean king while going to war with the Moabites find themselves without water for their men or their beasts. In the biblical version (2 Kings 3:10) there is no indication that Jehoram prayed to God at this juncture; we are merely given his lament that God had delivered the three kings into the hands of the Moabites. In contrast, in Josephus (\textit{Ant.} 9.32) we are told that while all were in torment, it was Jehoram most of all who felt distressed and that he called out to God asking what evil deed He had charged them with that he had led out the kings to deliver them without a struggle into the hands of the Moabite king; the clear implication here is that Jehoram is a believer in divine justice and ready to accept God's verdict if, indeed, he had sinned.

Likewise, whereas, according to the Bible (2 Kings 3:12), Jehoram, Jehoshaphat, and the king of Idumaeans jointly consult with Elisha, Josephus (\textit{Ant.} 9.34) by noting that it was Jehoram in particular who consulted Elisha indicates that it was he who had the greatest reverence for the prophet. Moreover, whereas in the Bible (2 Kings 3:13), when Elisha refuses to prophesy, Jehoram is depicted as merely objecting to Elisha's bitter suggestion that he go to the prophets of Ahab and Jezebel, in Josephus's version (\textit{Ant.} 9.34) Jehoram, clearly the suppliant, is described as having begged (\textit{εὐπηρετήσας}) Elisha to prophesy and to save the kings. Elisha, in Josephus's paraphrase (\textit{Ant.} 9.35), is manifestly not so negative to Jehoram, for in the Bible (2 Kings 3:14) he indignantly tells him that were it not for the respect which he had for Jehoshaphat he would

\textsuperscript{35} See Feldman, 'Prophets and prophecy in Josephus', \textit{Journal of Theological Studies}, 41 (1990), 386-422.

\textsuperscript{36} We may note a similar rehabilitation of Jehoram in the rabbinic tradition, where we read (\textit{Mekhilta de-Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai} 162) that it was on account of the merit of their observance of the Sabbath that God gave the victory to Jehoram and his allies over the Moabites.

\textsuperscript{37} The Hebrew \textit{ben-hamorazah} is to be understood as a hyphenated word meaning not 'son of a murderer' but 'murderer'
neither look at him nor see him; in Josephus the reply is much milder: there Elisha declares merely that he would not answer him were it not for the sake of Jehoshaphat. Indeed, the close association of Jehoram with Elisha may be seen in Josephus’s addition (Ant. 9.46) that when he returned from the campaign against the Moabites Jehoram brought Elisha with himself. Again, it is Jehoram’s obedience to Elisha that is stressed in an extra-biblical remark (Ant. 9.51 vs. 2 Kings 6:10) that it was in obedience to the prophet’s word, warning him to beware of a Syrian plot to kill him, that Jehoram did not start out for the hunt.38

Further indication of close co-ordination between Elisha and Jehoram may be seen in Josephus’s version of the episode of the blinding of the army of the Syrian king Benhadad. In the biblical account (2 Kings 6:20), when the army, having been blinded, enters Samaria, it is Elisha alone who asks God to open their eyes, whereas in Josephus’s version (Ant. 9.57) we see the co-operation of Elisha and Jehoram in that the former ordered the latter to shut the gates and to place his army around the Syrians. Then, whereas in the Bible (2 Kings 6:21) Jehoram asks Elisha whether he should slay them, in Josephus (Ant. 9.58) Jehoram is more dependent upon Elisha in that he asks whether it is Elisha’s order (κελεύσεως) that the enemy be shot down. Again, the regard which Jehoram has for Elisha is to be seen in the fact that whereas in the Bible (2 Kings 6:23) we are told that Jehoram prepared a great feast for Benhadad’s army, in accordance with Elisha’s advice, in Josephus (Ant. 9.59) Jehoram does so in obedience (πειθόμενος) to the prophet’s advice. Moreover, whereas the Bible states that they ate and drank, Josephus adds a dimension by asserting that Jehoram entertained the Syrians very splendidly (καμπτώς) and lavishly (φιλοτιμώς; ‘eagerly’, ‘with an honorable escort’, ‘honorably’, ‘readily’, ‘generously’, ‘splendidly’, ‘brilliantly’, ‘with great expenditure’, ‘sparing no expense’, ‘magnificently’).

Likewise, whereas in the Bible (2 Kings 6:33), when Jehoram, in his anger with Elisha for not praying to God to alleviate the famine, sends a messenger to kill him, it is the messenger who declares that the calamity had been sent by God, in Josephus (Ant. 9.70) it is Jehoram who is depicted as repenting (καταγγέλλων; ‘regretting’, ‘reproaching himself’) of his wrath against the prophet and who, fearing that the man who had been ordered to kill Elisha might already have done so, hastens to prevent the murder.

38 The fact that Jehoram, in obedience to Elisha, does not start out for the hunt may again be a compliment to Elisha in view of the traditional Jewish abhorrence of hunting, as we can see from the question (Hullin 60b) ascribed to the third-century Babylonian rabbi, Hanan bar Raba, ‘Was Moses a hunter?’ in seeking to prove that the Torah was divinely revealed, inasmuch as Moses could not of his own knowledge have described the various animals mentioned in the Torah in view of the aversion to hunting.
Indeed, Jehoram (Ant. 9.72) is presented as a man of faith, in contrast to his captain who is incredulous of Elisha's prophecy (2 Kings 7:1–2) that the famine will end on the following day. Specifically, we read that Elisha's words change the feelings of Jehoram and those present to one of joy, since they did not hesitate to believe the prophet, having been convinced of his truthfulness by earlier experiences, and that, in fact, their expected day of plenty made their continued famine of that day seem light to them. Moreover, our sympathies are aroused for Jehoram when Jehu reviles (βλασφημονεῖτο) Jehoram bitterly (πυροῦσ), whereas the Bible (2 Kings 9:22) has Jehu mention only the harlotries and sorceries of Jehoram's mother Jezebel.39

In summary, as in the case of two other wicked kings, Ahab and Menasseh, Josephus seeks to rehabilitate Jehoram (Joram), at least partly. It is he who takes the lead in allowing his people to plunder the Syrian camp when there is some question as to whether the Syrians have planted a ruse. In addition, Jehoram possesses the cardinal virtues of wisdom, courage, temperance, justice and piety. He shows his wisdom in the way he handles the matter of the empty Syrian camp. He displays his military ability in his careful planning in consultation with his ally Jehoshaphat the king of Judah. He holds conferences to determine strategy and analyses the strategy of the enemy very carefully. He is capable of speed of decision. He is realistic in perceiving when he is no match for the Syrians and accordingly stays behind the strong walls of Samaria. He is depicted as totally involved with his responsibilities and forever concerned for his people. And yet, war is not an end in itself; he welcomes peace. Furthermore, Jehoram shows the quality of moderation when he repents of his decision to kill the prophet Elisha.

In view of the premium which the Romans in particular placed upon justice, it is significant that his subjects, as exemplified by the pitiful woman who had made a pact with her neighbour to cook their sons, have confidence that he will judge them fairly. In view of the charge of inhumanity made by detractors of the Jews, it is most effective that Josephus ascribes to Jehoram the qualities of humanity and compassion, so much stressed by the rabbis as the sine qua non for the Jewish people, in the incident when Mesha, king of Moab, 39 This partial rehabilitation of Jehoram is paralleled in rabbinic literature. Thus the rabbis clearly disapproved of Elisha's rebuke of Jehoram; and they remark (Pesahim 66b) that when Elisha rebuked him the spirit of prophecy forsook him, so that he had to resort to artificial means to reawaken it within himself. On the other hand, the rabbis (Exodus Rabbah 31.9; Tanhuma Mishpatim 9, Midrash on Psalms 15.6) condemned Jehoram for exacting usury from Obadiah, the pious protector of the prophets; and as a consequence, they say, he was pierced between his arms, with the arrow going out at his heart, inasmuch as he had stretched out his arms to receive usury and had hardened his heart against compassion. This contrasts with Josephus's picture, as noted above, of Jehoram as showing compassion.
offers his own son as a sacrifice, as well as in his reaction to the famine that afflicted his nation while being besieged in Samaria. Likewise, he exhibits hospitality, so much prized by the ancients, toward the Syrian captives.

As to the fifth virtue of piety, though Josephus does say that Jehoram showed every form of lawlessness and impiety, the picture is by no means completely black. In particular, it is significant that he does not repeat the biblical statement that Jehoram clung to the sins of Jeroboam, the one king who, for Josephus, as for the rabbis, is the most wicked of all, primarily because he broke the unity of the Jewish people. On the contrary, we see Jehoram's piety in Josephus's addition that when his troops and animals are without water he prays to God seeking to know what sin he had committed that had brought on this dearth; clearly he is convinced that God would not have acted thus if it were not deserved. He has the greatest reverence for the prophet Elisha, to whose advice he adheres. Indeed, he is a man of faith who is convinced of the truthfulness of Elisha's prophecies.