

Cover Page



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5. God's Providence and Human Piety in Ant. 20:17-96

5.1. Introduction

In this part of our study we aim at understanding Josephus' notion of providence and piety in Ant. 20:17-96, as well as the connection between them. There is quite a number of places in Ant. 20:17-96 when Josephus brings up the topics of providence and piety, and he does it both directly (by using a distinctive terminology) and indirectly (in a descriptive way). As for the distinctive terminology on providence, Josephus employs a number of terms that were frequently used in ancient writings to, broadly speaking, refer to the experience of human destiny. It is first the Greek term τύχη that can be found in Ant. 20:50, 57, 60 and 61 (two occurrences). Again, the verb τυγχάνω, which is connected semantically with the noun τύχη⁴²⁰, can be found in Ant. 20:18, while the adjective εὐτυχές (*fortunate*) is present once in Ant. 20:18. Another distinctive term that ranks second in Ant. 20:17-96 in terms of numbers is πρόνοια that appears in Ant. 20:18, 49, 57, 91. Apart from Ant. 20:57, where πρόνοια appears alone, πρόνοια always appears as θεοῦ πρόνοια (God's providence). Further, we have two more terms that can belong to the same context – σύμμαχος (Ant. 20:85 and 60) and κηδεμών (Ant. 20:84). Σύμμαχος with regard to God brings an idea of divine guidance over human affairs⁴²¹, as does the notion of divine κηδεμονία meaning "active watchful care"⁴²². In sum, we have fourteen instances of vocabulary referring to the experience of human destiny⁴²³. However, the same idea can also be expressed in a descriptive way in the narrative, and this is certainly the case with Ant. 20:48 where Josephus announces God's salvation for Izates and his children (for instance, the verb δια-σώζω, *to preserve* is used), as well as throughout most of Ant. 20:18-33 where, as we have already observed, Monobazos' protective favour for Izates resulted from the divine revelation he had received.

As for *piety*, we can find a considerable number of references to it in Ant. 20:17-96 – we have altogether eight instances (Ant. 20:34, 37, 41, 45, 48, 75, 88, 94) of the vocabulary denoting this human sphere of life. What is more, there is some diversity in this group. Namely, as we have already observed (see chapter 4.3.2.), there was a number of Greek terms that together make up a large semantic family conveying a broad notion of human piety⁴²⁴. Accordingly, the reference in Ant. 20:17-96 can be divided into two groups – εὐσέβεια (Ant. 20:34, 45, 48, 75, 94), the second – σεβόμαι, σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν (Ant. 20:34, 41, 88), but both are based on the same Greek root: σεβ⁴²⁵. Further, as was the case with providence, the idea of piety could perhaps be expressed also in a narrative way, although we have not been able to suggest such occurrences yet. Perhaps, the reason is that as it often happens to terms widely used, people start losing a precise notion of the often-used terms. Therefore, we will have to take a look at what ideas ancient people understood under piety. The same refers to our key terms conveying the idea of God's providence. Therefore, before we proceed with our analysis, we need to take a glimpse at the background of specific terms that serve Josephus to express the idea of God's providence and human piety. Of interest to us will

⁴²⁰ Bauernfeind 1972: 238-245; Johannsen 2002: 936.

⁴²¹ Attridge 1976: 78.

⁴²² Attridge 1976: 72, n. 1.

⁴²³ Furthermore, this context is enhanced by numerous references to God Himself. The word *God* (θεός) appears sixteen times in Ant. 20:17-96 (Ant. 20:18; Ant. 20:34; Ant. 20:42; Ant. 20:44; Ant. 20:48; Ant. 20:49; Ant. 20:72; Ant. 20:75; Ant. 20:81; Ant. 20:84; Ant. 20:88; Ant. 20:89 (three instances); Ant. 20:91 (two occasions)). In addition to this, the noun *Deity* (θεῖον) is used once (Ant. 20:44). What is more, whenever the words God or Deity are mentioned, it is always with reference to God's activity directed towards humans or human responses to God. Consequently, Ant. 20:17-96 is not a treaty devoted to abstract intellectual speculation about the Divine, but is instead focused on God-human relations, especially on the problem of God's providence over human affairs.

⁴²⁴ Wander 1998: 54-86.

⁴²⁵ Wander 1998: 57-65, 73-80.

be both the Greco-Roman world, as well as the Biblical and Jewish tradition, that is, all cultural traditions to which Josephus was indebted.

5.2. Terminology of Providence and Piety

Τύχη is a word that belongs to a range of Greek philosophical ideas⁴²⁶, though its definition is not clear-cut⁴²⁷. Its basic meaning centres on the idea of *occurrence*, *happening* and in the first place conveys what happens to somebody⁴²⁸. Such occurrences are unpredictable, cannot be foreseen or explained⁴²⁹. Secondly, the Greek notion of Tyche included not only occurrences themselves (“das Geschehen“, “der Gang der Ereignisse”), but also what stood behind them – the power causing the occurrences (“die treibende Kraft”)⁴³⁰. In that sense, Tyche appears to be “something between chance, fortune and fate”⁴³¹. Whether such power was treated as divine or not depended on each individual case⁴³². However, a lot of Greeks perceived that power as divine⁴³³, even before it was clearly personified and became subject of regular cults⁴³⁴. Such belief took on strength in the Hellenistic period. Tyche could cause good as well as bad changes of fortune to humans. However, the negative aspect seems to prevail in Hellenistic sources, wherein Tyche appears as a blind, capricious and unfair power⁴³⁵. Tyche gives one positive thing for three bad ones (Diphilos 107), she is ruthless and unfair (Menander 256, 598, 812, 598) to the extent that death appears to bring a welcome relief from her rule (Diphilos 88)⁴³⁶. Especially a political downfall is often blamed on Tyche (Demosthenes, *De Corona* 306). On the other hand, there is also evidence for understanding Tyche as beneficial power. According to Polybius, the Romans owe their success to the favours of Tyche (Pol. 1.63.9). Further, many Greeks believed in ἀγαθὴ τύχη, sometimes coupled with ἀγαθὸς δαίμων, as a personal companion spirit ensuring good luck⁴³⁷. With time, Tyche also started to be understood as a tutelary deity governing the fortune and prosperity of a city⁴³⁸. Indeed, the cult of Tyche as ἀγαθὴ τύχη is attested since the 4th c. BCE in Greece, and later in the Mediterranean world⁴³⁹. The Greek Tyche was identified with *Fortuna* in the Roman Empire. Fortuna was a very popular goddess in ancient Rome and Italy whose number of cult attestations surpasses even the number of dedications and shrines for Jupiter⁴⁴⁰. Although the Roman Fortuna could also do harm, her overall character was benign, Fortuna was said to be ready to help the valiant (Plautus, *Poenulus*, 1328; Ennius, *Annales* 257 V (233 S); Cato, *Origines* 83) and her lack of help (rather than her explicit destructive action) led to a downfall⁴⁴¹.

⁴²⁶ Drachmann 1922: 91-95; Herzog-Hauser 1943: 1643-1696; Nilsson 1950: 190-207; Zimmerman 1966: 13-14; Meyer 2006: 335-354.

⁴²⁷ Drachmann 1922: 91; Herzog-Hauser 1943: 1644; Meyer 2006: 338-339.

⁴²⁸ Nilsson 1950: 190; Herzog-Hauser 1943: 1644; Meyer 2006: 338.

⁴²⁹ Meyer 2006: 338.

⁴³⁰ Nilsson 1950: 190-191; Meyer 2006: 339.

⁴³¹ Drachmann 1922: 91.

⁴³² Nilsson 1950: 191: „Da bot sich das Wort “tyche” an, das ohne Nebenbedeutung den Gang der Ereignisse, den Wechsel der Geschichte bezeichnete und nicht einmal auf ein Walten höherer Mächte hinzudeuten brauchte“; Meyer 2006: 339: „ob man in der treibenden Kraft, die das Geschehen herbeiführt, den Zufall oder eine Gottheit sieht, hängt von der jeweiligen Bewusstseinslage ab“.

⁴³³ Herzog-Hauser 1943: 1665-1670.

⁴³⁴ Herzog-Hauser 1943: 1673-1682.

⁴³⁵ Johannsen 2002: 937.

⁴³⁶ Herzog-Hauser 1943: 1689. For Menander’s and Diphilos’ fragments, see Kassel/Austin 1986; Kassel/Austin 1998. See also the prologue delivered by Tyche in Menander’s *Aspis* in Arnott 1979.

⁴³⁷ Nilsson 1950: 197-207.

⁴³⁸ Meyer 2006: 335-345.

⁴³⁹ Johannsen 2002: 937; Herzog-Hauser 1943: 1673-1682; Meyer 2006: 342-345.

⁴⁴⁰ Weinstock 1971: 112.

⁴⁴¹ Latte 1960: 179; Weinstock 1971: 112-113.

When it comes to *πρόνοια*, its meaning is two-fold, a colloquial and a philosophical one⁴⁴². In the first meaning, *πρόνοια* means “care, provision, foresight” and shows up in the context where humans are the agents of such kinds of *πρόνοια* (see chapter 3.4.4.)⁴⁴³. In the case of the philosophical meaning, its basic idea is that of emanation of a reasonable divine power that governs the existing world⁴⁴⁴. *Πρόνοια* as divine providence was first used by Herodotus (*Hist.* 3.108.2)⁴⁴⁵, it was, however, Plato who built philosophical foundations for such an understanding of *πρόνοια*⁴⁴⁶. His ideas were continued and transformed by Stoicism, which formed the background to the doctrines of providence held by two prevailing schools of the Empire - Middle-Platonism and Neoplatonism⁴⁴⁷. For both Plato and later Stoics, the notion of *πρόνοια* was closely connected with the idea of the immanent active principle of the universe⁴⁴⁸. In both interpretations, the rational ordering of the universe emanated from the first principle that Plato put metaphysically but Stoics materialistically⁴⁴⁹. Since the first principle resulted in the existence of cosmic order and design, all worldly and human affairs were part of that cosmic order and could profit from it⁴⁵⁰. Once the first principle was interpreted in the religious context, it became identified with god/gods⁴⁵¹. Accordingly, Cicero explains (*De Natura Deorum* 2.74) that a full and complete understanding of the idea that “the world is governed by providence” (“cum providentia mundum administrari”) can be only achieved by an important addition – “by providence of the gods” (“[cum] providentia deorum mundum administrari”).

As for *σύμμαχος* and *κηδεμών*, they primarily referred to profane spheres of life. *Κηδεμών* can simply denote someone who cares for others, but particularly someone who cares, because he is in charge of a person or a thing⁴⁵². Consequently, the Greek *κηδεμών*, and its Latin equivalents *tutor*, *curator*, had a very special legal usage. They were used for legal guardians of fatherless and under-age minors in the Roman law system⁴⁵³. In turn, *σύμμαχος* basically means *ally*⁴⁵⁴ and expresses a fighting alliance between at least two sides, primarily neighbouring tribes, but later cities and states⁴⁵⁵. *Συμμαχία* means both an offensive and defensive alliance as opposed to *ἐπιμαχία*, the latter being only of defensive character⁴⁵⁶. With time this simple military and political arrangement evolved into more sophisticated political systems including the Athenian Confederacy⁴⁵⁷. Instances when *σύμμαχος* or *κηδεμών* were used to express divine support for humans (*συμμαχία*) or humanity's inferiority to supportive gods (*κηδεμονία*) are less common (e.g. Thucydides 3.58.1 for the former and Xenophon, *Cyr.* 3.3.21 for the latter)⁴⁵⁸, and it seems that this connotation took on strength in the Hellenistic-Jewish tradition.

The idea of God's governance over history and human affairs is intrinsic to the biblical tradition and consequently can be found in many biblical texts in Hebrew. However, the Biblical thought on the divine providence is most frequently expressed implicitly or by a usage of various

⁴⁴² Jacobs/Krienke 2005: 1335.

⁴⁴³ Jacobs/Krienke 2005: 1335.

⁴⁴⁴ Jacobs/Krienke 2005: 1335.

⁴⁴⁵ Jacobs/Krienke 2005: 1335.

⁴⁴⁶ Dillon 1992: 520; Dragona-Monachou 1994: 4419.

⁴⁴⁷ Dragona-Monachou 1994: 4419.

⁴⁴⁸ Dillon 1992: 520.

⁴⁴⁹ Dillon 1992: 520-521.

⁴⁵⁰ Dillon 1992: 520; Frick 1999: 5-6.

⁴⁵¹ Frick 1999: 6.

⁴⁵² Liddell/Scott/Jones 1986: 946.

⁴⁵³ For details of the Roman law, see Grubbs 2002: XVII-XXI.

⁴⁵⁴ Liddell/Scott/Jones 1986: 1677-1678.

⁴⁵⁵ S.R. Rufis 1978: 14.

⁴⁵⁶ Liddell/Scott/Jones 1986: 946 and 1677; Bederman 2004: 161-162.

⁴⁵⁷ See Dreher 1995: 273-292; Bederman 2004: 161-168.

⁴⁵⁸ See Liddell/Scott/Jones 1986: 946 and 1677.

terms, and as a result we cannot speak of one technical term strictly used to express the idea of God's providence. Accordingly, the Hebrew Bible knows that it is God who created the world and continues to work powerfully and directly in the world guiding and taking care of the creation according to His plan (e.g. Gen 8:22; Ps 65:6-13; Ps 104; Ps 145:15-21; Ps 147:8-20; Hos 2:10; Job 9:5-10; Isa 6:3)⁴⁵⁹. He supervises the history and shapes the destiny of all peoples (e.g. Isa 21:11-17; Isa 44:7; Amos 9:7; Amos 2:1-16; Gen 49:10; Job 12:13-25; 1 Kngs 19:15-21; Isa 10:16-34; Isa 2:2-4; Jer 27:1-11; Isa 41:1-12; Isa 45:1-25), His care and providence encompasses everything, great and small, and even things that seems to take place contingently, come from God (1 Sam 6:9; Prov 16:33; 1 Sam 10:19-24; 1 Sam 14:41)⁴⁶⁰.

As for the terms that are of interest to us because of their appearance in Ant. 20:17-96, they appear in the LXX, and not very frequently. In fact, the LXX follows in substance the Hebrew way of expressing the idea of God's providence implicitly. For instance, τύχη appears only twice in the LXX (Gen 30:11 and Isa 65:11). In Gen. 30:11 it is used in a colloquial way for the aetiology of the name of the patriarch Gad, while in Isa 65:11 it appears in the LXX where the parallel Hebrew text criticizes the forbidden cult of the deity Gad. In turn, the term πρόνοια appears nine times in later writings of the LXX (2 Macc 4:6; Wis 14:3; Wis 17:2; Dan 6:19; 3 Macc 4:21; 3 Macc 5:30; 4 Macc 9:24; 4 Macc 13:19; 4 Macc 17:22)⁴⁶¹. All but one reference (2 Macc 4:6) is used to describe God's governance and care for his chosen people⁴⁶².

As for σύμμαχος, it appears fourteen times in the LXX, but only in 1-2 Maccabees. Remarkably, while all references from 1 Macc. (1 Macc. 8:20, 8:24, 8:28, 8:31; 9:60; 10:6, 10:16; 12:14; 14:40; 15:17) refer to exclusively human alliances (especially between the Jews and Rome, or between the Maccabees and their Jewish supporters), all four references from 2 Maccabees (2 Macc 8:24; 10:16; 11:10; 12:36) refer to God as σύμμαχος of the fighting Maccabees. Likewise, συμμαχία appears sixteen times in the LXX (Jdt 3:6; 7:1; 1 Macc 8:17, 8:20, 8:22; 11:60; 12:3, 12:8, 12:16; 14:18, 14:24; 15:17; 2 Macc 4:11; 3 Macc 3:14, 21; Isa 16:4), but only in one case (3 Macc 3:14) refers to συμμαχία as divine support (τῶν θεῶν συμμαχία in the mouth of king Ptolemy Philopator). Lastly, κηδεμών, appears only once in the LXX (2 Macc 4:2), and only twice we have κηδεμονία recorded in the LXX (4 Macc 4:4, 4:20).

To sum up, it was the Jewish-Hellenistic thought that introduced specific terms present in the Greco-Roman literature into an ideologically rich but terminologically imprecise circle of Hebrew ideas concerning God's providence⁴⁶³. If we can speak of any tendencies in choosing the specific vocabulary, then it is πρόνοια that is the first choice of the LXX (eight instances), secondly, there is little appearance of συμμαχία (five cases) and τύχη (two cases), and lastly there is no use of κηδεμών with regard to human fate.

The trends of the LXX took on strength in Philo and Josephus to whom προνοία serves as the key term to convey the idea of God's providence over human affairs. For Philo the concept of divine providence as πρόνοια is central to his theology as a whole, since it serves him as a bridge connecting a philosophical principle of the utter transcendence of God and his Jewish belief in a personal God who immanently cares for his creation and creatures⁴⁶⁴. The concept of divine providence is also essential to Josephus' writings⁴⁶⁵, since his writings are all about trying to understand the sense of history – first, the destruction of the Jewish Temple in 70 CE⁴⁶⁶ and

⁴⁵⁹ Behm 1967: 1013.

⁴⁶⁰ Behm 1967: 1014.

⁴⁶¹ Jacobs/Krienke 2005: 1335.

⁴⁶² Jacobs/Krienke 2005: 1335.

⁴⁶³ Behm 1967: 1015.

⁴⁶⁴ Frick 1999: 193-194.

⁴⁶⁵ Moore 1929: 371-389; Lindner 1972: 42-48; Attridge 1976: 71-78; Betz 1987: 212-235; Mason 1991: 133-142; Feldman 1998a: 192-197.

⁴⁶⁶ Attridge 1984: 203-206.

secondly, the whole span of Jewish history (Ant. 20:1-16) and the idea that it is God who governs human history (Ant. 1:14)⁴⁶⁷. Thus, Josephus' notion of divine providence is related to his perception of history, and is not part of his philosophical dwelling on God's nature or His metaphysical presence in creation⁴⁶⁸. Throughout all his writings, Josephus employs a number of terms to refer to, broadly speaking, human experience of changes of fortune. In detail, he uses τὸ χρεόν sixteen times, εἰμαρμένη twenty times, τύχη one hundred and thirty-seven times and πρόνοια one hundred and fifty-nine times⁴⁶⁹. Thus, the two terms used most by Josephus to speak about human experience of changes of fortune are πρόνοια and τύχη and this is especially true for Ant., wherein Josephus limits the use of especially the first two terms (τὸ χρεόν and εἰμαρμένη) due to their deterministic connotations. Πρόνοια is therefore Josephus' key term to express the idea that God watches and directs human affairs⁴⁷⁰. When it comes to τύχη, Josephus' usage of this term is not uniform. In fact, it comprises typically Greek and Roman views of τύχη, as well as a Jewish interpretation of that notion⁴⁷¹. In the second case, although Josephus does not equate τύχη with God, it is nevertheless divine power that Josephus presents as one aspect of the biblical God⁴⁷². As for σύμμαχος and συμμαχία, σύμμαχος shows up one hundred and thirty-six times in all of Josephus' writings, and συμμαχία occurs ninety-four times; these are not small numbers and definitely exceed that of the κηδεμών occurrences (see below pp. 75-76). The overwhelming majority of Josephus' references are made in the context of military activities. For instance, it is used for Lot as an ally of the Sodomites (Ant. 1:209), Balak, the king of the Moabites having an alliance with the Midianites (4:102); it describes the alliance between David and Hiram king of Tyre (Ant. 7:66), as well as between the Jews on the one hand, and the Lacedaemonians (13:170) or the Romans on the other (Jonathan in 13:164 and Simon in 13:227). This strictly political and military terminology is also used for God, who steps in and helps his people in need. God as σύμμαχος of the Jewish people is someone who fights with the Jews against their enemies (e.g. Ant. 8:283, 9:55, 10:24). However, God can also act as a σύμμαχος of the other people to punish the Jewish people for their own sins, so He does during the Great Revolt when he is claimed to be in συμμαχία with the Roman legions (Bell. 6:41, 7:319).

In turn, κηδεμών and κηδεμονία are very rare terms in Josephus, the first appears only nine times throughout all his writings (Ant 1:231, 3:98, 4:321, 7:380, 11:39, 20:84, Bell. 1:202, 1:557, 2:14, 2:125, 2:638, 3:387, 4:575, C. Ap. 2:158) while the second, κηδεμονία can be found only four times in all Josephus' writings (Ant 2:26; 3:14; 20:12; Bell. 1:169). The term κηδεμών can be employed by Josephus to describe typical family relations between minors or aged people and their guardians (Ant 1:231; Bell. 1:557), but also to express obligations and rights of earthly rulers (of various kinds) towards the people (Ant. 3:98, Ant. 4:321, and C. Ap. 2:158 about Moses; Ant. 7:380 about Solomon; Bell. 2:14 about Archaelaos; Bell. 2:638 about Josephus as commander in the Galilee). Therefore, κηδεμών in Josephus always means to exercise care for someone's good (God's κηδεμονία in Ant. 2:26, 3:14, as well as κηδεμονία of Emperor Claudius towards the Jewish people, and Hyrcanus' care for the temple in Bell.1:169). Remarkably, only once (in addition to Ant. 20:84) Josephus explicitly calls God his κηδεμών, but the situation when he does it is extremely significant (Bell. 3:387). Namely, Josephus himself is said to commit his own fate to God, his κηδεμών, in the cave near Jotapata when he suggested to his companions to draw lots indicating the sequence of suicide.

⁴⁶⁷ Attridge 1984: 218-219.

⁴⁶⁸ Betz 1987: 216.

⁴⁶⁹ Mason 1991: 133, 135 and n. 56, 142 and n. 88; Feldman 1998a: 195-197.

⁴⁷⁰ Attridge 1984: 218.

⁴⁷¹ Lindner 1972: 46-47.

⁴⁷² Lindner 1972: 46-47, 88, 92.

To sum up, there is a world of difference between *τύχη* and *πρόνοια*, two terms that account for most references in Ant. 20:17-96 to the experience of human fate. Generally speaking, *πρόνοια* is the opposite of *τύχη* in that *πρόνοια* is always a positive power and there is no room for chance in its activity, while *τύχη* is unpredictable and can be harmful. No wonder that *πρόνοια* is the first choice of the LXX among Greek terms to express the idea of God's providence, while *τύχη* is hardly used and never with respect to God's activity. Next, *τύχη* can be used in many ways. First, it can be understood as a change of fortune, it can be perceived (but does not have to be) as caused by supernatural power. Such power can be perceived as divine, further as personified and even embodied in the cult of Tyche. Finally, the result of Tyche's activity can be two-fold – beneficial or harmful. As for *κηδεμονία* and *συμμαχία*, both terms come from primarily profane spheres of life – legal guardianship over someone or something and military alliance between two sides respectively, and in the second run started to be related to divine providence⁴⁷³. To be precise, in Josephus they appear to be two aspects of God's providence. *Κηδεμονία* implies human inferiority as a minor towards God and awareness of being in God's power, it is particularly recalled when one faces a life or death situation and commits his own fate to God as to one's legal guardian. *Συμμαχία* appears to be a military aspect of God's providence, it works when God steps in and delivers or supports (both defensively and offensively) the pious against his enemies.

Our last term to examine is piety. There are two Greek terms that Josephus uses in Ant. 20:17-96 to refer to piety – *εὐσέβεια* and the verb *σέβομαι*. *Εὐσέβεια* appears more frequently and in key moments of the narrative (esp. directly preceding Izates' conversion and in Josephus' grand manifesto of the Adiabene narrative), and this is quite natural because out of a number of Greek terms concerning the broad idea of human piety *εὐσέβεια* mostly appeared in ancient listings of the most important virtues. For instance, Dionysius of Halicarnassos (*Ant. Rom.* 1.5.3) enumerates *εὐσέβεια* (piety), *δικαιοσύνη* (justice), *σωφροσύνη* (self-control), and warlike valour (*ἀγωνιστής*); Diotogenes (apud Stobaeus 4.7.61) lists three virtues in describing the duties of a king: military leadership (*στρατεγέω*), the dispensing of justice (*δικαιοσύνη*), attending to the cults of the gods (*τὸ θεραπεύειν τὴν θεῶν*)⁴⁷⁴; Philo (*De specialibus legibus* 4.135) in turn discerns four different virtues: *εὐσέβεια* (piety), *φρόνησις* (wisdom), *σωφροσύνη* (self-control), and *δικαιοσύνη* (justice).

Thus, *εὐσέβεια* mostly appears in such lists of the most important virtues. Different authors place stress, however, on different virtues. Aristotle defines *εὐσέβεια* as a part of *δικαιοσύνη* or an accompaniment to it (*De virtutibus et vitiis* 55.1250.B22-23); Menander Rhetor (361.17-20) identifies the parts of *δικαιοσύνη* as *εὐσέβεια* towards the gods, fair dealing (*δικαιοπραγία*) toward men, and reverence (*δσιότης*) towards the departed. Thus, some authors tend to perceive all other virtues, including *εὐσέβεια*, as appearances of *δικαιοσύνη*. However, other writers juxtapose both *δικαιοσύνη* and *εὐσέβεια* as two leading virtues. So does Dionysius of Halicarnassos (*Ant. Rom.* 2.60.4), who says that Numa Pompilius, the great Roman lawgiver, introduced two virtues, by whose exercise the city should prosper – *δικαιοσύνη* and *θεοσέβεια*. Further, in some traditions piety alone seems to take the lead and function as the most important virtue. Piety (*pietas*) played a central role in the Roman system of values, it is the key quality of Aeneas in Virgil's national poem, too⁴⁷⁵.

As can be seen, not only the position and appreciation of piety differs in ancient sources, but the very definition of *εὐσέβεια* may also differ from one author to another. There seems to have been some development in the Greek notion of *εὐσέβεια* and therefore we can discern a few basic undertones of its meaning⁴⁷⁶. First, *εὐσέβεια* can have a very broad sense, since it means respect for

⁴⁷³ Likewise Attridge 1976: 78-92 (esp. 78-83).

⁴⁷⁴ Hense 1909: 265.

⁴⁷⁵ Cairns 1989: 1-21.

⁴⁷⁶ Foerster 1971a: 175-185.

the orders of domestic and national (as well as international) life⁴⁷⁷. Thus, such a respectful attitude can refer to many things: gods and their temples, the dead, parents, family and relatives, oaths, authorities, laws, treaties with other nations, and many others⁴⁷⁸. In that sense, εὐσέβεια is not directed only to the sphere of the gods. Second, with time εὐσέβεια came to increasingly refer to gods, since all the-above-mentioned spheres of life were believed to be under their sanction. In that sense, εὐσέβεια means right conduct towards the gods, while other virtues direct conduct towards other spheres of life, δικαιοσύνη means right conduct towards other humans and σωφροσύνη or ἐγκράτεια towards oneself⁴⁷⁹. With regard to the gods, εὐσέβεια means a reverent attitude toward the gods in a general sense but can be also used in a more specific way as e.g. an act of worship paid to them in cultic acts which includes a proper inner attitude and not merely cultic observance alone⁴⁸⁰.

All the-above-mentioned meanings of εὐσέβεια can be found in sources of the Hellenistic and Roman periods. At the same time, there seems to be some preference in the Roman perception of εὐσέβεια expressed by its Latin equivalent – *pietas*. In general, *pietas* defined a proper attitude of reverence and service towards the gods, parents and the fatherland. In detail, especially the role of keeping oaths and respecting parents are accentuated to the extent that seems to make them a Roman speciality⁴⁸¹, although both spheres in fact appear in earlier Greek sources as a matter of piety⁴⁸². The piety of the Romans (put in sources as εὐσέβεια, *pietas* or *fides* understood as a corollary of *pietas*) and impiety of their enemies was “a major propaganda theme of Roman expansion in the East”⁴⁸³. Rome's self-image presented its citizens and leaders as loyal to international treaties and consequently deserving the support of gods who sanctioned the oaths (Pol. 6.56.7; 24.13.3; Diod. Sic. 28.8). Again, a very telling example of a typically Roman link between piety and reverence to parents is the coinage struck by M. Herennius in 108/107 BCE. On the obverse, there appears a bust of *Pietas*, while the reverse illustrates one of the Catanæan brothers⁴⁸⁴ bearing his father on his shoulders⁴⁸⁵.

As far as Jewish-Hellenistic sources are concerned, εὐσέβεια and its cognates (θεοσεβής and θεοσεβείν) do not appear often in the LXX when the Hebrew text is translated and they are used there to translate a number of Hebrew notions (יראת יהוה, חסד, טוב, צדקה)⁴⁸⁶. Thus, we cannot find one specific meaning attached to it. Εὐσέβεια as a more distinctive term appears only in the Greek-Jewish literature, particularly in 4 Macc, the *Letter of Aristeas*, as well as in Philo and Josephus⁴⁸⁷. Josephus is of course of primary importance for us. It seems that three strains of his understanding of εὐσέβεια can be distinguished. First, in some cases Josephus refers εὐσέβεια to relations between humans (Ant. 7:269; Ant. 16:92) which reflects the broadest understanding of εὐσέβεια as respect for the orders of domestic and national life. Second, Josephus also juxtaposes εὐσέβεια and δικαιοσύνη as directing a proper attitude towards the divine and human spheres of life respectively (see Josephus' portrayal of the kings Solomon (Ant. 8:120), Jehoshaphat (Ant. 9:16), Jotham (Ant. 9:236), and Hezekiah (Ant. 9:260). There is, however, a third way in which Josephus apparently understands and uses the term εὐσέβεια. Namely, in answering anti-Jewish charges of impiety in

⁴⁷⁷ Foerster 1971a: 176.

⁴⁷⁸ Foerster 1971a: 176.

⁴⁷⁹ Foerster 1971a: 176.

⁴⁸⁰ Foerster 1971a: 177.

⁴⁸¹ Fears 1981: 864-866.

⁴⁸² Foerster 1971a: 176-178; Fears 1981: 864.

⁴⁸³ Fears 1981: 865.

⁴⁸⁴ For the story about the two Catanæan brothers (who saved their elderly parents from the eruption of Mount Etna by carrying them on their backs), see Goodyear 1960: 207-208.

⁴⁸⁵ Crawford 1974: no. 308.

⁴⁸⁶ Foerster 1971a: 179.

⁴⁸⁷ Foerster 1971a: 179.

Contra Apionem, Josephus seems to be close to acknowledging εὐσέβεια as the central value of the Mosaic Law and the Jewish people. Accordingly, the first quality that the Mosaic Law is designed to promote is εὐσέβεια (C. Ap. 2:146). Similarly, Josephus stresses that all Jewish people, even women and children, believe that εὐσέβεια must be the motive of all one's efforts in life (C. Ap. 2:281). Accordingly, Josephus exclaims "what greater beauty than inviolable εὐσέβεια? (τί γὰρ εὐσεβείας ἀπαραβάτου κάλλιον)" (C. Ap. 2:293). Thus, it seems that like Aristotle, who tended to identify all virtues as manifestations of one – δικαιοσύνη – so does Josephus in some cases, but instead he sees piety εὐσέβεια as the root of all virtue⁴⁸⁸, and furthermore, he sees εὐσέβεια as a reverent attitude towards God by keeping His Laws.

Next to εὐσέβεια, there is another phrase used by Josephus that belongs to the same range of Greek terms conveying the idea of human piety – σέβομαι, σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν (see also chapter 4.3.2.) There has also been some development in the Greek notion of σέβομαι⁴⁸⁹. In regard to the divine sphere, it can denote a wide range of human reactions toward the divine, such as *awe*, *fear* or *reverence*, some of which were not regarded by ancient moralists as proper reactions but rather superstitious attitudes of doubtful moral value⁴⁹⁰. However, one can notice some development of this term in the Hellenistic period, when its meaning became narrower and took on a religious significance in the first place⁴⁹¹. In that sense, it denotes an act rather than an attitude, and the worship of the gods rather than fear or general reverence⁴⁹². This stage of development is attested in the Jewish Hellenistic tradition. For instance, in the LXX it is rather φοβέισθαι than σέβομαι that renders the Hebrew term ירא (whose basic meaning is centred around the idea of awe), while σέβομαι is used much more when the idea of serving or worshiping God is implied⁴⁹³. Thus, its meaning is narrower - it denotes a worship of one's deity (both with regard to Jews and other peoples) and furthermore is less permeated with connotations of *superstitious* fear⁴⁹⁴. Σέβομαι still has some undertone of awe, but it is this kind of fear that leads human beings to a proper conduct towards the divine⁴⁹⁵. This understanding is also present in Josephus' Ant⁴⁹⁶. Namely, Josephus can use this verb with regard to both other peoples and their ancestral cults (e.g. Ant. 11:84-87 and 12:125-126), as well as to refer to the worship of the one true God (Ant. 12:17-23). It seems that for Josephus it is indeed a neutral phrase that can be employed whenever one treats about legitimate religious traditions, also if they are non-Jewish.

To sum up, the key ancient term to express the idea of piety is εὐσέβεια whose meaning can be very broad and consequently mean personal virtue (towards gods, but also towards other social spheres of life) but also function as a synonym for right conduct in accordance with one's ancestral traditions. Therefore, one has to define the meaning and role of εὐσέβεια in the text on a case-by-case basis. Unlike εὐσέβεια, the meaning of the phrase σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν seems to be more straightforward in the Hellenistic writings – it basically denotes a worship of the divine in accordance with one's ancestral traditions. Lastly, εὐσέβεια is a much broader notion than that of fear or worship, and therefore it is the phrase σεβόμενος τὸν θεόν than can function as an aspect to εὐσέβεια but not the reverse.

⁴⁸⁸ Attridge 1976: 116; Holladay 1977: 98.

⁴⁸⁹ Foerster 1964: 169-173.

⁴⁹⁰ Dihle 1970: 665; Wander 1998: 73, as well as nn. 52 and 54.

⁴⁹¹ Foerster 1964: 170-171; Wander 1998: 74-79.

⁴⁹² Foerster 1964: 171.

⁴⁹³ Foerster 1964: 171.

⁴⁹⁴ Wander 1998: 74-75.

⁴⁹⁵ Wander 1998: 74-75.

⁴⁹⁶ Wander 1998: 75-79.

5.3. Analysis of the Theme of God's Providence and Piety in Ant. 20:17-96

Most references to the idea of God's providence and literarily all references to the idea of piety are made to Izates, our main protagonist. This is of course natural for an account that is organized as his biography. However, there are also two distinctive moments in our narrative (Ant. 20:54-68: Izates and Artabanos and Ant. 20:69-73: Izates and Vardanes), when the vocabulary expressing Greek philosophical ideas (τύχη) is clearly used in reference to other protagonists, these are Artabanos, king of Parthia and one group protagonist – the Romans. This situation is suitable to us, because we can compare Izates' experience of human fate with that of the other rulers, as well as to relate Izates' fate to the political scene of those days (marked by the supremacy of Rome), and consequently gain a wider perspective on Josephus' portrayal of the idea of providence (and piety) in Ant. 20:17-96. Therefore, our analysis can be divided with regard to three different protagonists: Izates, Artabanos and the Romans.

5.3.1. God's Providence and Izates' Piety

Let us start our deliberations with the portrait of God's providence over our main protagonist, Izates and his piety. In fact, the number of references to God's providence over Izates is the largest in the Adiabene passage - seventeen. Interestingly, as we have already noticed, Ant. 20:17-96 consists of seven units, and in all but one (Ant. 20:92-96 – Izates' and Helena's death and burial) the theme of God's providence over Izates appears. This shows the great importance of the topic of providence - in carrying the story line from the very beginning until the end of the Adiabene narrative, Josephus keeps returning to the idea of divine providence. As for *piety*, five out of eight explicit references to it are located within the conversion story, which shows a strong connection between the topic of piety and that of conversion. However, piety is also explicitly recalled twice after the conversion story (Ant. 20:75 and 94), and, as we shall see, implicitly present before the conversion story, and so the topic of piety cannot be limited to only one unit of the Adiabene narrative. All in all, since the references to God's providence over Izates and his piety appear throughout the whole Adiabene account and the account spans the lifetime of Izates, it is most appropriate to follow up these references in line with the development of the narrative that in fact follows the course of Izates' life.

Already at the outset of the narrative, before the report on his birth, we can see that Izates is accompanied by God's providence. We read in Ant. 20:18 that King Monobazos seemed to hear a voice in his sleep, bidding him to remove his hand from his wife's belly so as not to harm the baby within it, whose life, by God's providence (θεοῦ πρόνοια), had begun and would have a fortunate end (καὶ ἀρχῆς τυχὸν καὶ τέλους εὐτυχῶς τευζόμενον). Thus, in Ant. 20:18 we encounter three of the words important for our analysis. First, we have the expression "God's providence" (θεοῦ πρόνοια). Second, the very fact that Izates' life was brought into being is expressed by the verb τυγχάνω, which appears here as an aorist active participle in the accusative neuter singular form – τυχόν. Third, Izates' life is predicted to have "a fortunate end" – τέλος εὐτυχές.

Three observations can be made about the appearance of the theme of God's providence in Ant. 20:18. First, a key role is played by θεοῦ πρόνοια. While the meaning of πρόνοια in general can be two-fold (see above p. 75), the addition of the genitive θεοῦ clearly points to "divine providence, divine governance, divine care"⁴⁹⁷, and the mention of God sets the whole context of this passage. Thus, Monobazos' revelation is of divine character, and it is God who announces his favour over Izates. Interestingly, the idea of "God's providence" is introduced into the Adiabene account for the first time as a response to the other theme that was expressed by Monobazos' hand laid upon the belly of his pregnant wife. Monobazos is asleep, so this deed must be unconscious,

⁴⁹⁷ Rengstorf 1983: 538.

but this does not change the fact that this event posed a threat to Izates and a dream came to Monobazos as a response to that threat. Thus, we can see that the literary theme of God's providence is preceded by the other theme – that of a threat. However, God's providence is said to lie even in creating Izates' life. Thus, theologically the idea of God's providence is primary and does not originate from the idea of danger. However, at the literary level the idea of God's providence can be best manifested when it has to counter a danger. Consequently, in all but one occurrences of the theme of God's providence over Izates we witness the juxtaposing of both themes – that of a threat and that of God's providence as a response to the threat.

The theme of θεοῦ πρόνοια is very often understood as that of divine help and it is also the case in Ant. 20:18 (as well as throughout most of Ant. 20:17-96 as we shall see) since Izates is saved from possible harm. However, the term πρόνοια as such can be understood much more broadly. It refers to the divine continuously upholding existence and the natural order of the universe, and consequently raises questions about pre-knowledge and destination⁴⁹⁸. Ant. 20:18 indeed touches on such problems. First, the revelation shows that Izates is protected by God even inside his mother before his birth. It is obvious that there is no possibility that this divine favour has been deserved by Izates, since he is still in his mother's womb. God's providence therefore anticipates those who will be supported by it without their former merit. Furthermore, the scale of God's providence as revealed through Ant. 20:18 goes a great deal further than only helping Izates without his former merit. Remarkably, God's providence is said even to create Izates' life. Izates like many ancient heroes is not only chosen before his death, but the very fact of his existence is said to have a divine reason. Again, a happy ending for Izates life is also foreseen and secured by θεοῦ πρόνοια. While some ancient sources saw human birth as a moment when a human character has been definitely shaped⁴⁹⁹, biographical writings accentuate death as the moment revealing and recapitulating the true character of a hero⁵⁰⁰. Ant. 20:18 enumerates both moments and in doing so, embraces the whole span of Izates' life. To conclude, Ant. 20:18 sets the context for the whole account, Ant. 20:17-96: God's providence is given to Izates, and his story has to be seen in this light.

Lastly, the co-appearance of two types of names which refer to the human experience of fate deserves our attention. Apart from θεοῦ πρόνοια, two other relevant expressions show up. These are the verb τυγχάνω and the adjective εὐτυχής. Both words belong to a range of Greek philosophical ideas expressed by the term τύχη, but the question arises what precisely they mean in such a context. In both cases, it is not the noun τύχη itself, but words belonging to that word family. The verb τυγχάνω can merely convey the idea of something that happens to somebody, is unexpected and impossible to exercise control upon. In the case of the birth description, it is a natural term to use since no one has any influence upon the fact of his/her own birth. Further, εὐτυχής is clearly derived from the noun τύχη and apparently means something received by a good change of fortune. Thus, according to Ant. 20:18 the fortune in Izates' life will always be positive. Yet, does this term imply that Izates' life profits from the favour of the Greek goddess Tyche? It seems that the ancients could accept that a single positive change of fortune was not brought by divine power (it would then be a *Zufall*). But if someone encounters only positive changes of fortune in his life (as is promised to Izates here), it would be unusual for most people in ancient times to perceive them as independent from divine power. This divine power could of course be *Tyche*, but it seems that the issue of identification of such power is resolved in Ant. 20:18 by the reference to θεοῦ πρόνοια. In fact, both τύχη-like terms in Ant. 20:18 are subordinate to the notion of θεοῦ πρόνοια that is said to govern both aspects (that is, the creation of life and the continuous good luck in life) marked by the use of the τύχη vocabulary in Ant. 20:18.

⁴⁹⁸ Winston 1973: 40-50; Dillon 1992: 520-521.

⁴⁹⁹ Feldman 1998b: 87-90.

⁵⁰⁰ Burridge 2006: 33.

Still in the first unit (Ant. 20:18-33) in Ant. 20:22 we hear of the envy and hatred on the part of Izates' half-brothers, and this animosity could lead to harm for Izates. Again, we have the motif of a threat. Similarly, in Ant. 20:24-33 (where we witness Izates' rise to power) we are again reminded of that threat posed by the envy and hatred that Izates' brothers (and kinsmen) bore to him (Ant. 20:25). In both cases, we are not explicitly told of θεοῦ πρόνοια. However, in both cases those who take care of Izates' security are his parents. It seems that the source for all these facts – the threat posed to Izates by his half-brothers and his parents' providence over Izates – can be found in Ant. 20:19 where Monobazos wakes up and tells “these things” to his wife. In doing so, he makes her share the divine message just received; that is a message on Izates as a chosen one and guarded by the Divine. Consequently, the parents naturally act on behalf of this message in Ant. 20:22 (Monobazos) and in Ant. 20:25 (Helena) when they further protect Izates. This case shows us a deep connection between divine πρόνοια and human πρόνοια. In fact, human πρόνοια is presented as resulting from God's πρόνοια which itself sets an ideal to follow up for human agents of πρόνοια. This is all in perfect accordance with prescriptions of the royal Hellenistic ideology that advised earthly rulers to imitate the divine ruler in exercising care for their subjects (see chapter 3.4.4.). What is more, as we know from our inquiry into the history of the term, piety also consisted in showing respect to one's parents. This strain of piety is well present in Ant. 20:18-33 where Izates strictly follows his father's wish. Likewise, it will also be present throughout the rest of the narrative where he will see Izates' reverent attitude towards Helena (Ant. 20:38-40 and 20:46: consulting his mother; Ant. 20:49-50: helping in her preparations to go to Jerusalem). Thus, the subtle presence of the motif of Izates' piety in the narrative indeed starts before the conversion story.

Another distinctive unit of the Adiabene narrative is the conversion story (Ant. 20:34-48). Here the topic of piety appears preeminently (Ant. 20:34, 37, 41, 45, 48), and Izates' way to conversion is marked by his growth in piety (see the conversion story) and only at the end of the conversion story is the topic of providence raised again. The first question we want to pose is what piety actually means in all these instances?

In Ant. 20:34, the first reference to that virtue in the course of the narrative, Izates is presented as under the influence of Ananias who teaches how to τὸν θεὸν σέβειν ὡς Ἰουδαίους πατέρα ἦν (“worship God according to Jewish customs”). On the one hand, the phrase τὸν θεὸν σέβειν means a general attitude of reverence towards God, on the other, it is clearly related to a specific kind of religious tradition – the Jewish one. Thus, Izates is introduced into a specifically Jewish form of piety (while before Ant. 20:34 he showed some signs of universally human piety (reverence towards parents)). Next, in Ant. 20: 37 Izates considered it impious (ἀσεβής) to put to death his relative claimants to the throne. As we already know (see chapter 1.2.), this report is inserted by the narrator in a way that ties Izates' pious act described in Ant. 20:37 to the context of Jewish piety in which Izates has just been introduced by Ananias in Ant. 20:34. Further, in Ant. 20:34 *piety* is undoubtedly attributed to the way one handles relationships with others⁵⁰¹. Therefore, we find here a usage of piety in a broad sense; it is piety that directs right conduct for the orders of different spheres of human life, in that case, towards Izates' relatives.

Another very meaningful reference to piety is made in Ant. 20:44 which presents the most defining moment of the conversion story since at that moment Izates decided to be circumcised. In Ant. 20:44 Izates is warned of wrong-doing (ἀδικῶν) and in Ant. 20:45 of impiety (ἀσέβεια) by Eleazar who urges Izates to undergo circumcision. The use of both negative terms recommends activity based on their antonyms – δικαιοσύνη and εὐσέβεια. However, a simultaneous use of both negative forms connected with ἀδικία and ἀσέβεια suggests a parallelism in that they do not refer to

⁵⁰¹ And this fact seems to counter Attridge's conclusion that in Josephus *justice* applies to relations among men, while *piety* pertains to man's relationships with God. See Attridge 1976: 115; Feldman 1998a: 127.

two different things but are different ways of saying one and the same thing⁵⁰². Thus, Izates is simply recommended to εὐσέβεια by Eleazar. As we have already stated, what is expected from Izates in Ant. 20:44-45 and expressed by two terms mentioned above is to *strictly* follow Jewish laws. Therefore, the core of piety lies in strict observance of Jewish laws.

In Ant. 20:46-47 Izates' pious conversion is said to raise concerns and even fear of his closest companions and advisers - his mother, Helena and teacher, Ananias. The problem as posed by Helena and Ananias is that Izates' subjects will not accept "a Jew ruling over them". Thus, we again witness a new threat to Izates and Josephus' explicit comments answers this threat (Ant. 20:48: Josephus' *grand manifesto*) - Josephus foresees that Helena's and Ananias' fear will not be realized thanks to God's salvation of Izates and his children from many dangers. As Josephus comments – in this way God demonstrated that "the fruit of piety does not perish as to those who fix their eyes on Him and trust in Him alone". Remarkably, Josephus' grand manifesto speaks of both εὐσέβεια and God's salvation and ties them with Izates' conversion. Izates' decision on the conversion had two aspects – first, he favored the strict observance of the Law, but additionally, he favored such observance in the face of a real danger. To take such a risk Izates indeed had to "put his faith only in God" (Ant. 20:48). Thus, a correct attitude towards God's providence is another indispensable characteristic of piety⁵⁰³ - piety appears to be humanity's adequate answer to God's providence, while impiety runs counter to God's providence.

God's promise of salvation is given to Izates in Ant. 20:48 because of his pious act of conversion. The very content of this promise (salvation from dangers) shows that in Ant. 20:17-96 God's promise to save Izates from danger demonstrates providence in the form of divine help for those in need. Further, the promise sets the agenda for the future narrative, and so allows us to see the further course of the narrative in the light of this promise. Indeed, from Ant. 20:49 onwards, the Adiabene narrative starts to be saturated with references to divine providence. While until Ant. 20:48 we had four explicit places that left us to ponder on divine providence in Izates' life, now we start to find them in abundance. Between Ant. 20:49 and Ant. 20:91 (the last mention), we have ten instances of references to divine providence. However, they do not always refer only to Izates, but also to others with whom Izates has to deal as a political leader. This situation is even more convenient for us, since we get to know different aspects of divine providence in Izates' life in the broader perspective of Josephus' view on world history.

The first reference appears in Ant. 20:49 right at the beginning of the fourth unit, which tells of Helena's and Izates' benefactions. This reference stands apart from the rest of such references from Ant. 20:49 on. It is extremely general, merely reading that Queen Helena saw "the peace in Izates' kingdom, his happiness and the admiration towards him from all men, even foreigners". These features are attributed to God's providence over Izates (διὰ τὴν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ πρόνοιαν). It is remarkable that this description of fabulous peace in Izates' kingdom stands in contrast to the subsequent narrative which supplies us with many cases of "impossible dangers" that would fall upon Izates. Thus, either this statement should be understood in the light of Helena's fears expressed previously in Ant. 20:47 and as such confirm that Izates' conversion is being 'paid off', or it is inserted for chronological reasons to make it clear that Helena left Adiabene at a time of peace and not during war conditions (which would cast her in a bad light). Either way, Ant. 20:49 again conveys a common idea, that prosperity in human life depends on God's providence.

Since God's providence is mostly understood as divine help and its theme is linked to that of a threat, it is obvious that the unit Ant. 20:75-91 telling of foreign invasions against Izates is a good opportunity to reflect on God's providence over his chosen one. The situations Izates faces in Ant. 20:75-91 can indeed be labelled with the language of Ant. 20:48 as "impossible dangers", and

⁵⁰² Foerster 1971b: 187.

⁵⁰³ For Attridge 1976: 116 it is even the height of piety.

consequently the content of this unit can at least partly be seen as the fulfilment of Josephus' promise in Ant. 20:48 to narrate such occurrences.

Ant. 20:75-91 describes two series of "impossible dangers". In both cases, the origin of plots against Izates' power comes from the Adiabene nobility, who are said to be angry either at Izates' own conversion (Ant. 20:77 and 81) or at that of Monobazos and his relatives (Ant. 20:75). In short, the high nobles of Adiabene rebel twice and in both cases call for foreign rulers to intervene. First, it is Abias the king of the Arabs (Ant. 20:71-80), and secondly, Vologases the Parthian king (Ant. 20:81-91). Thus, we witness a very specific kind of threat posed to Izates. It is a military challenge when Izates has to resort to fighting to save his power and life. The first scene is a bit shorter and is not elaborated as much literarily and theologically as the second. In Ant. 20:82-91 Izates is presented as succeeding on the battlefield thanks to his extraordinary human skills (see chapter 3.4.2.), and only the summary in Ant. 20:91 provides us with a theological background of these events by crediting the success to God Himself. This is of course very significant because the way Izates' deliverance takes place shows that God's guidance over human events can take place in a very subtle way, which for some might remain unnoticeable. However, the second scene is very spectacular in terms of miraculous events, where Izates faces the invasion of the mighty eastern neighbour – the Parthian empire. This scene is well elaborated; it includes two message exchanges between Izates and the invader – after Izates hears the first Parthian threat, he declares that God is his κηδεμών (Ant. 20:84) and σύμμαχος (Ant. 20:85); after Izates hears the Parthian declaration that God whom Izates worships (τὸν θεὸν ὃν σέβει in Ant. 20:88) will be unable to deliver him, he again declares that God is his σύμμαχος (Ant. 20:90) among dramatic gestures like falling upon the face and sprinkling ash on the head. In this way, Josephus paints a picture of the unprecedented danger that Izates faces and all this tension is built step by step until a sudden turn of events takes place - God steps in and miraculously delivers Izates (Ant. 20:91: καὶ Ἰζάτης οὕτω κατὰ θεοῦ πρόνοιαν τὰς ἀπειλὰς τοῦ Πάρθου διαφεύγει).

It is also interesting to compare Ant. 20:71-91 with the part about Izates and Vardanes. In Ant. 20:71-91 God's involvement takes place in the background of Izates' commitment to Jewish piety. In turn, Vardanes' motivation to fight against Izates was not connected with Izates' religious commitment; the question was about political issues. Even then, Izates could count on God's help. Thus, the conclusion which can be drawn is that God's providence functions on every level of human life, it works in favour of the pious not only when the danger is connected with religious issues but also with other 'natural' obligations of their life, such as conducting foreign policy in the case of a ruler.

Besides this, the way in which Izates was rescued by God from the hands of Vologases shows that God's favour can be enhanced by prayer⁵⁰⁴. Again, Izates' salvation from Vologases takes place when the tribes of Dahae and Sacae invade and plunder the Parthian territory, forcing Vologases to retreat home from Adiabene. For the second time, God makes use of the help of other people who unconsciously contributed to His plan, as in the case of overthrowing Vardanes. Izates' salvation from the hands of Abias occurs more naturally. We are not told of the participation of any third party (the Parthian people in Ant. 20:73, Dahae and Sacae in Ant. 20:91); Izates won the battle on the ground. However, this success is explicitly attributed to God Himself in Ant. 20:81. This shows that God's influence can also take place through a successful implementation of entirely human activities, like good tactics or bravery on the battlefield.

Only the last unit Ant. 20:92-96 (Izates' and Helena's death and burial) does not explicitly contain the theme of God's providence. However, here Izates' reign and life is briefly looked back on and we can see how fruitful it was. Izates' life is actually summarized with only one characteristic - his piety that is not only mentioned again; it is in fact accentuated in the form of the encomium – Izates is accordingly called εὐσεβέστατος ("the most pious"). Thus, while the

⁵⁰⁴ And this is a common place in Josephus – see Betz 1987: 215-216 and Jonquière 2007: 263-271.

beginning of the Adiabene narrative accentuates God's providence and made it clear that Izates' subsequent (from the birth report on) life can be understood through the perspective of the idea of God's providence, the summary of Ant. 20:17-96 stresses that the essence of Izates' life laid in his utmost piety. If we want to make a connection between both characteristics, then we see that Ant. 20:92-96 accounts for a good summary of the results of the working of divine providence in Izates' life mentioned at the beginning.

In this way, once again we see the implicit connection between human piety and God's providence in Izates' life. This connection suggests that Izates reached his human perfection not without God's providence.

5.3.2. Artabanos and the Idea of Sudden Changes of Fortune

Ant. 20:54-68 describes the meeting between Izates and Artabanos. However, it is Artabanos more than Izates whose situation attracts our attention in terms of his experience of fortune. Artabanos comes to Izates and asks him for shelter and help in regaining his throne. Artabanos had lost his power because of his subjects' plot against him (Ant. 20:54). This situation is characterized by a consistent reference to *τύχη*. First, Artabanos ascribes his political downfall to "the uncertainty of fortune" (τὸ τῆς τύχης ἄστατος). This point of view, ascribing the ups and downs of human life to *fortune* (here in fact only downs), is so strong that Artabanos' poor situation is constantly referred to in this part of the narrative as just "present fortune". Artabanos tells of "the fortune which came upon me" (τὴν ἐφεστῶσαν αὐτῷ τύχην) in Ant. 20:60, Izates sees Artabanos' "present fortune" (τὸ παρὸν αὐτοῦ τῆς τύχης in Ant. 20:61) in contrast to his former dignity. This fortune is deemed "common to all [men]" by them both (Ant. 20:59 by Artabanos, Ant. 20:61 by Izates). The vocabulary used to describe Artabanos' situation can be indeed best understood in the light of Hellenistic perceptions of *τύχη*⁵⁰⁵. Especially political downfalls of rulers were ascribed to the activity of *τύχη* (Dem. *Cor.* 18.207; 18.306). The undertone of *τύχη* in Ant. 20:54-68 is that of an unpredictable and capricious power. This aspect is enhanced by a three-fold appearance of the noun *μεταβολή* that seems to function as a synonym for *τύχη* in Ant. 20:56; 20:59 (and finally in Ant. 20:62 we have both terms joined: αἱ μεταβολαὶ τῆς τύχης)⁵⁰⁶. Further, the perceptions of *τύχη* in Ant. 20:54-68 is entirely negative, there is no trace of understanding it as possibly good or bad, instead it only means a negative change of one's fortune. Yet, *τύχη* is not invincible (see Pol. 10.5.8). Artabanos would not have come to Izates if he did not believe that something could be done to change fortune. Indeed, Artabanos comes to Izates and appeals to his sense of solidarity as sharing the same humanly fragile condition (Ant. 20:57 and 61). In detail, in Ant. 20:57 Artabanos appeals to Izates' sense of loyalty towards other rulers by pointing out that the same situation can happen to Izates. However, it is Izates who goes further since his motivation is not so much ascribed to class solidarity as to his humanity that lies in his recognition that changes of fortune are common to all men.

5.3.3. The Romans and the Idea of World Hegemony

The theme of *τύχη* appears again in another unit (Ant. 20:69-74) devoted to Izates' relations with Vardanes. In Ant. 20:72 we hear that Vardanes, the Parthian king, declares war against Izates because Izates is not willing to take part in Vardanes' plans to wage war on the Romans. One may wonder why Izates is so reluctant to do so while many of his descendants and relatives eagerly took part in the Jewish revolt against Rome in 66-73 CE, as we know from *De Bello Judaico* (Bell.

⁵⁰⁵ Lindner 1972: 47 counts the appearance of *τύχη* in Ant. 20:57 and 61 as Josephus' third category of the *τύχη* usage. Consequently, Josephus is to understand *τύχη* in Ant. 20:57 and 61 as *geschichtslenkende Macht*.

⁵⁰⁶ See Frickenschmidt 1997: 304 on the occurrence of *μεταβολή* in biographies where this term mostly denotes *Schicksalsschläge*.

6:356). The answer is that in Ant. 20:17-96 Izates is a perfect model of a pro-Roman politician. Izates is said to know the *strength* (δύναμις) and *tyche* (τύχη) of the Romans in Ant. 20:70, as well as *forces* (δυνάμεις) and *achievements* (πράξεις) in Ant. 20:71. Personal reasons (like the fact that his five sons and mother live in Jerusalem) are mentioned too, but are clearly presented as of secondary importance in Izates' reasoning. Thus, although Izates gives some rational reasons, such as good resources, he also mentions τύχη. What does τύχη stand for here? In Ant. 20:70 the reference to τύχη is in fact a little vague so that it is hard to formulate far-reaching interpretations. An approach towards such an understanding can only be gained by taking account of Josephus' references to τύχη elsewhere⁵⁰⁷. In fact, Josephus referred τύχη to the Romans a few times in his other writing, Bell. and all these references are very meaningful (Agrippa's speech: Bell. 2: 345-401; Josephus' speech: Bell. 5:362-374; Josephus' narrative comment in Bell. 3:354; the main idea behind all these statements is strikingly close to Vergilius' perception of Rome's destiny in his *Aeneid*⁵⁰⁸). In Agrippa's speech, the Romans are simply said to have a good fortune (Bell. 2:360.373.387, so in Bell. 3:354 too) which is understood as a source of their enormous political success. However, Bell. 2:390 goes further and also attributes this success to God: "for, without God's aid, so vast an empire could never have been built up"⁵⁰⁹. Thus, the Romans' success is attributed both to τύχη, and (once) to God. By the same token, in Josephus' speech to the defenders of Jerusalem (5:362-374), he openly states that "Tyche, indeed, had from all quarters passed over to them, and God, who went the round of the nations, bringing to each in turn the rod of the empire, now rested over Italy" (5:367)⁵¹⁰. Remarkable is the explicit co-appearance of both τύχη and θεός in Bell. 5:367. Apparently, there is some connection between τύχη and θεός, but, on the other hand, both terms are not completely identical⁵¹¹. Further, τύχη is subordinate to θεός, and means something less than God himself, but, at the same time, it means more than just "good luck" since it is clearly of divine character. All in all, Josephus seems to deliver a simple syllogism. He can see that humans, as well as whole group of nations, experience changes of fortune. If, someone, however, enjoys only positive turns of fortune, this fact asks for explanation. Josephus as an ancient writer is naturally inclined to see such a continuous good luck as a result of divine favour. This favour has to be of course reconciled with his conviction of the existence of one God and the unique role of Israel among nations. Thus, the τύχη of the Romans in Josephus' Bell. is divine power responsible for human history and directed by God⁵¹². Further, Josephus' choice of a Greek deterministic term (τύχη) apparently helps him underscore an aura of mystery in God's plan over human history, since God's will, even revealed, does not have to be explained⁵¹³. What is more, the idea of a foreign kingdom taking over the world's hegemony on behalf of the Jewish God is not only present in the Biblical tradition (especially Dan 2:1-48), but also plays a central role in Josephus' understanding of Jerusalem's capture and his own role as a prophet (Nebuchadnezzar's dream retold by Josephus in Ant. 10:208-210)⁵¹⁴.

Returning to the occurrence of τύχη in Ant. 20:70, we have to notice that the reference to τύχη in Ant. 20:70 is not so unambiguously made as in Bell. However, Ant. 20:70 is very close to the above-mentioned Bell. 2:373 that briefly mentions the *strength* (δύναμις) and *tyche* (τύχη) of the Romans in one sentence (with a little focus on τύχη in the next sentence) as a source of their

⁵⁰⁷ Lindner 1972: 42-49, 85-94; Attridge 1984:203-206; Michel 1984: 974-965.

⁵⁰⁸ See Cairn 1989: 109-128.

⁵⁰⁹ Thackeray 1927: 477.

⁵¹⁰ Thackeray 1928: 315.

⁵¹¹ Lindner 1972: 45: „Die Tyche ist eine ‘Seite’ Gottes; Lindner 1972: 92: Sie ist zwar nicht mit Gott identisch, aber doch eine ‘Seite’ des biblischen Gottes, so dass man nicht die ‘Unausgeglichenheit zwischen Schicksal und Gottesmacht’, wie sie sich in der griechischen Tradition findet, auf Josephus übertragen sollte“.

⁵¹² Lindner 1972: 45, 92; Mason 1991: 135 and n. 56.

⁵¹³ Lindner 1972: 44-45.

⁵¹⁴ Lindner 1972: 43-45; Michel 1984: 960, 966.

superb control over Gallia. Thus, there is good reason to think that Josephus' firm conviction about the divine support for the Romans so clearly expressed in Bell. echoes again in Ant. 20:70, though on a smaller scale. Such an interpretation of Ant. 20:70 is in line with the way Josephus describes Vardanes' downfall in Ant. 20:72-73. The Parthians, when they learned of Vardanes' intention to go to war with the Romans, put him to death. All in all, God's intervention saved Izates. However, there is one interesting thing in all this. Namely, God's intervention is conducted through the Parthian subjects of the king, who rebelled against the royal power. The motivation of the Parthian subjects is explicitly referred to the perspective of the war against the Romans, and not to Izates' righteousness in the argument with Vardanes. Thus, one may pose the question why God decided to protect Izates. Did His decision favour Izates because he was right not to go to war against the Romans? Was God's favour connected with the issue at hand at all, or did he just support Izates because of the general rule that he supports those who have been pious? It seems that the confusion is superficial and in fact exists only as long as we do not recall Josephus' pro-Roman tendency. Namely, it is wrong to fight against the Romans, who are supported by God, and God's other chosen one – Izates – must know that. Thus, in Josephus' eyes Vardanes was adequately punished for his plan to wage war against the Romans, as well as against Izates.

5.4. Conclusions

All in all, the following conclusions can be reached based on our analysis.

1. Ant. 20:17-96 is full of references to divine governance of human affairs. The theme of God's providence is expressed by Josephus through the use of special terms from a range of Greek philosophical ideas, especially *πρόνοια* and *τύχη* (plus *σύμμαχος* and *κηδεμών*) or in a narrative way.
2. There are two key terms to convey the idea of God's providence in Ant. 20:17-96. On the one hand, there is the issue of *τύχη*, as the good or bad luck that is common to all men. On the other, Josephus clearly proclaims his belief in God's governance of history. As for the relation between *τύχη* and *πρόνοια* in Ant. 20:17-96 we can suggest that although *τύχη* refers to the ups and downs of all human life (and a great deal of *τύχη* can suggest divine favour like in the case of the Romans, while the sudden changes of fortune in Artabanos' life appear to be a product of a blind and destructive force), those who are pious, and consequently, like Izates, choose a Jewish way of life, are above the "uncertainty of fortune", since their life and prosperity are secured by "God's providence".
3. Except for Ant. 20:18 and Ant. 20:49, the idea of God's providence is understood in Ant. 20:17-96 as that of divine help in danger. This means two things. First, the idea of God's providence in Ant. 20:17-96 is in fact broader than the notion of divine protection in times of trouble. God's providence brings peace, happiness and admiration from other people (so Ant. 20:49). What is more, God's providence in Ant. 20:18 embraces the very essence of Izates' existence. Secondly, God's providence can be best (and most spectacularly) manifested when it has to counter a danger. That is why God's providence is mostly presented as divine help given to the pious in need. When this help has to reveal itself on the battlefield, it can be called *σμμαχία*. This *aspect* of God's providence⁵¹⁵ is best illustrated by Josephus in Ant. 20:75-81 and particularly in Ant. 20:81-91.
4. The very existence of a connection between God's providence and human piety (stated in Ant. 20:48) raises another question, namely that of causality – which comes first? Providence or piety? Does providence reward piety or does providence lead to it? Remarkably, in Ant. 20:49-91, otherwise so permeated with the theme of "impossible dangers" to Izates (from

⁵¹⁵ See that God's involvement in Ant. 20:81-91 where Izates twice calls to God as to his *σύμμαχος* is summarized in the end as *πρόνοια* in Ant. 20:91.

which God miraculously saves him), we twice find statements that hardly fit the context. These are Ant. 20:49 and 20:75. In both cases we hear of Izates' fabulous prosperity, especially the admiration from all men. Once this admiration is said to result from God's providence (Ant. 20:49 ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ πρόνοιαν), and once it is said to ensue from Izates' piety (Ant. 20:75: διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν εὐσέβειαν). Theoretically one could wonder what the reason for the admiration of Izates is. Piety or providence? Likewise, on the one hand, Izates is given God's providence at the very beginning of his life, and so it is providence that comes first; on the other, while growing in piety, his fate is still secured by God's providence (like in Ant. 20:75). However, there is no contradiction if we take account of the fact that Ant. 20:48 states that one of piety's attributes is a human's adequate answer to God's providence (Ant. 20:48). Thus, providence is always given to humans, and piety helps humans go along with divine providence, while impiety runs counter to God's providence and consequently the impious exclude themselves from the benevolent results of the working of God's providence⁵¹⁶.

5. The question of misfortune that comes upon the pious that is present in many Biblical traditions (e.g. Judg 6:13; Job 5:7; Job 6:2, 3; Job 13:15; Job 14:1; Job 23:2-9; Ps 73:1-16; Qoh 7:15; Qoh 8:14; Jer 12:1-4; Jer 15:15-18; John 9:1-3) has apparently not occurred to Josephus, at least not in Ant. 20:17-96.
6. The fact that providence helps Izates rise to the height of piety may raise the question of determinism. The relation between human merit and divine providence is actually a notorious philosophical question⁵¹⁷ and one may wonder if we can expect its solution from Josephus. By way of illustration, Philo, who even wrote a treatise on divine providence, is said not to "present us with a thoroughly argued concept of divine providence"⁵¹⁸, but rather only to have "a coherent pattern of thinking on the question of providence"⁵¹⁹. The less so Josephus who is sometimes believed to be a man of inconsistencies. However, let us assume that there is "a coherent pattern of thinking" in Josephus on that issue and we can find at least some clues in his writings that help us understand the above-mentioned paradox of Ant. 20:17-96. Perhaps some help lies in Ant. 3:99 where Josephus declares that God's providence was best manifested in the bestowal of his law. Interestingly, it is this law whose strict observance opens people to God's providence (Ant. 1:14) and whose purpose is to promote piety (C. Ap. 2:146). If we compare all this to Ant. 20:17-96, then we see that although Izates has been given the privilege of God's providence before his birth, he still needed to make his effort which made him worthy of continual divine support. This understanding of "the grace-and-merit problem" could also be enhanced by a parallel idea found in Philo (e.g. *De agricultura* 169) who states that the acquisition of virtue cannot be accomplished without the help of divine providence⁵²⁰. To be precise, Philo neither rejects the element of human effort nor ascribes all perfection to divine providence; instead he thinks that there is some predisposition given by the Divine that still does not exclude human involvement which is obligatory to take place⁵²¹. Thus, in Ant. 20:17-96 the pious benefit from God's providence, but at the same time one cannot reach to piety without any deal of antecedent providence.

⁵¹⁶ Only in that sense may we accept Attridge's 1976: 83-85 conclusion that the basic sense of God's involvement in human affairs is that he rewards the pious and punishes the wicked. An idea that one can *earn* God's providence would be highly unusual for any intellectual of the Hellenistic world, one of which Josephus certainly was.

⁵¹⁷ Winston 1973: 40-50.

⁵¹⁸ Frick: 1999: 193.

⁵¹⁹ Frick: 1999: 193.

⁵²⁰ Frick 1999: 180.

⁵²¹ Frick 1999: 171-176.

