

**Source: The Histories of Polybius V2 by Polybius □**  
**(translated by Evelyn S. Shuckburgh 1889)**

BOOK XVI

PHILIP V. WAGES WAR WITH ATTALUS, KING OF PERGAMUM,  
AND THE RHODIANS. See *supra* 15, 20-24; Livy, 31,  
17, *sqq.*

1. KING PHILIP having arrived at Pergamum, and believing

Philip's impious conduct in Asia, gave the rein to every kind of outrage; and

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by way of gratifying his almost insane fury he vented his wrath even more against the gods than against man. For his skirmishing attacks being easily repelled by the garrison of Pergamum, owing to the strength of the place, and being prevented by the precautions taken by Attalus from getting booty from the country, he directed his anger against the seats of the gods and the sacred enclosures; in which, as it appears to me, he did not wrong Attalus so much as himself. He threw down the temples and the altars, and even had their stones broken to pieces that none of the buildings he had destroyed might be rebuilt. After spoiling the Nicephorium, cutting down its grove, and demolishing its ring wall, and levelling with the ground many costly fanes, he first directed his attack upon Thyatira, and thence marched into the plain of Thebe, thinking that this district would supply him with the richest spoil. But finding himself again disap-

Zeuxis, Satrap

of Antiochus, fails pointed in this respect, on arriving at the to help Philip "Holy Village" he sent a message to Zeuxis, substantially.

demanding that he would furnish him with corn, and render the other services stipulated for in the treaty.<sup>1</sup> Zeuxis, however, though feigning to fulfil the obligations of the treaty, was not minded to give Philip real and substantial help. . . .

<sup>1</sup> That is the treaty between Philip and Antiochus.

GREAT SEA-FIGHT OFF CHIOS BETWEEN PHILIP AND THE  
ALLIED FLEETS OF ATTALUS AND RHODES, B.C. 201

2. As the siege was not going on favourably for him, and the enemy were blockading him with an increasing number of decked vessels, he felt uncertain and uneasy as to the result. But as the state of affairs left him no choice, he suddenly put to sea quite unexpectedly to the enemy; for Attalus expected that he would persist in pushing on the mines he had commenced. But Philip was especially keen to make his putting to sea a surprise, because he thought that he would thus be able to outstrip the enemy, and complete the rest of his passage along the coast to Samos in security. But he was much disappointed in his calculations; for Attalus and Theophiliscus (of Rhodes), directly they saw him putting to sea, lost no time in taking action. And although, from their previous conviction that Philip meant to stay where he was, they were not in a position to put to sea quite simultaneously, still by a vigorous use of their oars they managed to overtake him, and attacked,—Attalus the enemy's right wing, which was his leading squadron, and Theophiliscus his left. Thus intercepted and surrounded, Philip gave the signal to the ships of his right wing, ordering them to turn their prows towards the enemy and engage them boldly; while he himself retreated under cover of the smaller islands, which lay in the way, with some light galleys, and thence watched the result of the battle. The whole number of ships engaged were, on Philip's side, fifty-three decked, accompanied by some undecked vessels, and galleys and beaked ships to the number of one hundred and fifty; for he had not been able to fit out all his ships in Samos. On the side of the enemy there were sixty-five decked vessels, besides those which came from Byzantium, and along with them nine *triemiolæ* (light-decked vessels), and three triremes.

3. The fight having been begun on the ship on which King Attalus was sailing, all the others near began charging each other without waiting for orders. Attalus ran into an eight-banked ship, and having struck it a well-directed blow below the water-line, after

Philip failing to  
take Chios sails  
off to Samos.

Attalus and  
Theophiliscus  
follow him.

Incidents in the  
battle.

a prolonged struggle between the combatants on the decks, at length succeeded in sinking it. Philip's ten-  
 Loss of Philip's flagship and admiral, banked ship, which, moreover, was the admiral's, was captured by the enemy in an extraordinary manner. For one of the *triemioliae*, having run close under her, she struck against her violently amidships, just beneath the thole of the topmost bank of oars, and got fast jammed on to her, the steersman being unable to check the way of his ship. The result was that, by this craft hanging suspended to her, she became unmanageable and unable to turn one way or another. While in this plight, two quinqueremes charged her on both sides at once, and destroyed the vessel itself and the fighting men on her deck, among whom fell Democrates, Philip's admiral. At the same time Dionysodorus and Deinocrates, who were brothers and joint-admirals of the fleet of Attalus, charged, the one upon a seven-banked, the other upon an eight-banked ship of the enemy, and had a most extraordinary adventure in the battle. Deinocrates, in the first place, came into collision with an eight-banked ship, and had his ship struck above the water-line; for the enemy's ship had its prow built high; but he struck the enemy's ship below the water-line,<sup>1</sup> and at first could not get himself clear, though he tried again and again to back water; and, accordingly, when the Macedonian boarded him and fought with great gallantry, he was brought into the most imminent danger. Presently, upon Attalus coming to his aid, and by a vigorous charge separating the two ships, Deinocrates unexpectedly found himself free, and the enemy's boarders were all killed after a gallant resistance, while their own vessel being left without men was captured by Attalus. In the next place, Dionysodorus, making a furious charge, missed his blow; but running up alongside of the enemy lost all the oars on his right side, and had the timbers supporting his towers smashed to pieces, and was thereupon immediately surrounded by the enemy. In the midst of loud shouts and great confusion, all the rest of his marines perished along with the ship, but he himself with two others managed to

<sup>1</sup> The word *βλαχα* in the text is unknown, and certainly corrupt. The most obvious remedy is *ὑπὸ βρύχα* or *ὑποβρύχια*. But we cannot be sure.

escape by swimming to the *triemiolia* which was coming up to the rescue.

4. The fight between the rest of the fleet, however, was an undecided one ; for the superiority in the numbers of Philip's galleys was compensated for by The skill of the Rhodian sailors. Attalus's superiority in the number of his decked ships. Thus on the right wing of Philip's fleet the state of things was that the ultimate result was doubtful, but that, of the two, Attalus had the better hope of victory. As for the Rhodians, they were, at first starting, as I have said, far behind the enemy, but being much their superiors inspeed they managed to come up with the rear of the Macedonians. At first they charged the vessels on the stern as they were retiring, and broke off their oars ; but upon Philip's ships swinging round and beginning to bring help to those in danger, while those of the Rhodians who had started later than the rest reached the squadron of Theophiliscus, both parties turned their ships in line prow to prow and charged gallantly, inciting each other to fresh exertions by the sound of trumpets and loud cheers. Had not the Macedonians placed their galleys between the opposing lines of decked ships, the battle would have been quickly decided ; but, as it was, these proved a hindrance to the Rhodians in various ways. For as soon as the first charge had disturbed the original order of the ships, they became all mixed up with each other in complete confusion, which made it difficult to sail through the enemy's line or to avail themselves of the points in which they were superior, because the galleys kept running sometimes against the blades of their oars so as to hinder the rowing, and sometimes upon their prows, or again upon their sterns, thus hampering the service of steerers and rowers alike. In the direct charges, however, the Rhodians employed a particular manœuvre. By depressing their bows they received the blows of the enemy above the water-line, while by staving in the enemy's ships below the water-line they rendered the blows fatal. Still it was rarely that they succeeded in doing this, for, as a rule, they avoided collisions, because the Macedonians fought gallantly from their decks when they came to close quarters. Their most frequent manœuvre was to row through the Macedonian line, and disable the enemy's ships by

breaking off their oars, and then, rowing round into position, again charge the enemy on the stern, or catch them broadside as they were in the act of turning; and thus they either stove them in or broke away some necessary part of their rigging. By this manner of fighting they destroyed a great number of the enemy's ships.

5. But the most brilliant and hazardous exploits were those of three quinqueremes: the flagship on which Theophiliscus sailed, then that commanded by Philostratus, and lastly the one steered by Autolycus, and on board of which was Nicosphiliscus mortally wounded. This last charged an enemy's ship, and left its beak sticking in it. The ship thus struck sank with all hands; but Autolycus and his comrades, as the sea poured into his vessel through the prow, was surrounded by the enemy. For a time they defended themselves gallantly, but at last Autolycus himself was wounded, and fell overboard in his armour, while the rest of the marines were killed fighting bravely. While this was going on, Theophiliscus came to the rescue with three quinqueremes, and though he could not save the ship, because it was now full of water, he yet stove in three hostile vessels, and forced their marines overboard. Being quickly surrounded by a number of galleys and decked ships, he lost the greater number of his marines after a gallant struggle on their part; and after receiving three wounds himself, and performing prodigies of valour, just managed to get his own ship safely off with the assistance of Philostratus, who came to his aid and bravely took his share of the danger. Having thus rejoined his own squadron, he darted out once more and ran in upon the enemy, utterly prostrated in body by his wounds, but more dashing and vehement in spirit than before.

So that there were really two sea-fights going on at a considerable distance from each other. For the right wing of Philip's fleet, continually making for land in accordance with his original plan, was not far from the Asiatic coast; while the left wing, having to veer round to support the ships on the rear, were engaged with the Rhodians at no great distance from Chios.

6. As the fleet of Attalus, however, was rapidly overpowering the right wing of Philip, and was now approaching the small islands, under cover of which Philip was moored watching the result of the battle, Attalus saw one of his quinqueremes staved in and in the act of being sunk by an enemy's ship. He therefore hurried to its assistance with two quadriremes. The enemy's ship turning to flight, and making for the shore, he pursued it somewhat too eagerly in his ardent desire to effect its capture. Thereupon Philip, observing that Attalus had become detached a considerable distance from his own fleet, took four quinqueremes and three *hemioliae*, as well as all the galleys within reach, and darting out got between Attalus and his ships, and forced him in the utmost terror to run his three ships ashore. After this mishap the king himself and his crew made their way to Erythrae, while Philip captured his vessels and the royal equipage on board them. For in this emergency Attalus had employed an artifice. He caused the most splendid articles of the royal equipage to be spread out on the deck of his ship; the consequence of which was that the first Macedonians who arrived on the galleys, seeing a quantity of flagons and purple robes and such like things, abandoned the pursuit, and turned their attention to plundering these. Thus it came about that Attalus got safe away to Erythrae; while Philip, though he had distinctly got the worst of it in the general engagement, was so elated at the unexpected reverse which had befallen Attalus, that he put to sea again and exerted himself strenuously in collecting his ships and restoring the spirits of his men by assuring them that they were the victors. For when they saw Philip put to sea towing off the royal ship, they very naturally thought that Attalus had perished. But Dionysodorus, conjecturing what had really happened to the king, set about collecting his own ships by raising a signal; and this being speedily done, he sailed away unmolested to their station in Asia. Meanwhile those Macedonians who were engaged with the Rhodians, having been for some time past in evil case, were gradually extricating themselves from the battle, one after the

Attalus inter-  
cepted by Philip,  
and forced to  
abandon his ship.  
Victory of the  
Rhodians.

other retiring on the pretence of being anxious to support their comrades. So the Rhodians, taking in tow some of their vessels, and having destroyed others by charging them, sailed away to Chios.

7. In the battle with Attalus Philip had had destroyed a ten-banked, a nine-banked, a seven-banked, and a six-banked ship, ten other decked vessels, three *triemioliae*, twenty-five galleys and their crews.

B. C. 201.  
The losses in  
the battle.

In the battle with the Rhodians ten decked vessels and about forty galleys. While two quadriremes and seven galleys with their crews were captured. In the fleet of Attalus one *triemiolia* and two quinqueremes were sunk, while two quadriremes besides that of the king were captured. Of the Rhodian fleet two quinqueremes and a trireme were destroyed, but no ship was taken. Of men the Rhodians lost sixty, Attalus seventy; while Philip lost three thousand Macedonians and six thousand rowers. And of the Macedonians and their allies two thousand were taken prisoners, and of their opponents six hundred.

8. Such was the end of the battle of Chios; in which Philip claimed the victory on two pretexts. First, because he had driven Attalus ashore and had captured his ship; and secondly, because, as he had anchored at the promontory of Argennum, he had the credit of having taken up his anchorage where the wrecks were floating. He acted in accordance with this assertion next day by collecting the wrecks, and causing the corpses which could be recognised to be picked up for burial, all for the sake of strengthening this pretence. For that he did not himself believe that he had won was shortly afterwards proved by the Rhodians and Dionysodorus. For on that very next day, while he was actually engaged on these operations, after communication with each other they sailed out to attack him, but, on nobody putting out to meet them, they returned to Chios. Philip indeed had never before lost so many men either by land or sea at one time, and was extremely mortified at what had happened and had lost much of his spirit for the enterprise. To the outside world, however, he tried to conceal his real sentiments: though this was forbidden by facts.

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