

Fellowship of Christian Goths



Festival of Hanukkah

Hanukkah

Holidays should be a time for our families (and our extended family or community) to come together and draw closer to God, bringing God even more-so into everything we do.

May this Haggadah foster a great time of fellowship as we enjoy God and all that He has done for us throughout history and into this present time. Our prayer is; what God has done in the past will provide us with great hope for the future.

May God richly bless you!

Haggadah Hag Hanukkah The Liturgy for The Feast of Re-Dedication

This is written for a family setting. If one lives alone, they say all of the parts and do all of the actions themselves. If this is to be done as part of a formal public religious service, then the leader (Rabbi, Priest, Pastor, Shepherd) takes on the role of the Father, a Deacon, Nun, or Assistant takes on the role of the Mother, and either Monks and Nuns, Altar Servers, select members of the Laity, or children, take on the role of the Children.

History of Hanukkah: to be read during the First Night

Father:

The Hebrew word, Hanukkah, means “Dedication” or “Re-dedication”.

325 years before the birth of Yahshua (Jesus), Alexander The Great conquered Syria, Egypt, and Israel. He allowed the people under his control to continue observing their own religions. In fact, everything was so good, many Israelites assimilated into the Hellenistic culture, adopting the customs, the dress, and the language of the Greeks.

Then, Antiochus IV came to power. He began to oppress the Israelites who lived in Judea and were called Judeans or Jews. Making it against the law for them to practice their religion, he even had Jews killed for practising their faith, and he desecrated the Temple of YHVH by sacrificing pigs in it.

In 167 B.C., after years of these persecutions and desecrations, MattasYahu (Also known as Mattathias) and his son Yahudah Hasmonea (Judah Maccabee) led a revolution, and even though they were greatly outnumbered by the Syrian and Hellenic armies, after many tough battles – the Maccabees won. Entering into the Temple, they found it a mess, defiled and in tatters. Within the Temple had always been the Menorah, a sacred six branched candelabrum shaped like an almond tree, which YHVH commanded was to remain continuously lit with an “Eternal Flame” fuelled by the purest of olive oil. The Menorah was however almost out of oil, only having enough oil to burn for one more day, and it would take eight days before they could get more of the pure oil. Yet a miracle happened, that small amount of oil continued to burned for the eight days! Thus the Temples was Re-Dedicated to YHVH, and the miracle of the Re-Dedication, the miracle of Hanukkah was declared.

Ever since that time, people have commemorated that miracle by lighting a special menorah (candlestick) called a “Hanukkiah” for eight days: one light on the first night, two on the second and so on until eight lights are glowing on the last night. Celebrations include giving gifts to friends and family, doing acts of charity, singing songs, playing games such as spinning tops called dreidels, eating foods fried in oil such as potato pancakes and donuts, and retelling the exciting stories of the victories of Judah Maccabee and Judith; the boys dressing up as Maccabean warriors, and the girls as Judith.

Now, you may be asking, “Who is Judith?” After the Re-Dedication of the Temple, the people made the Maccabees the Kings of Judea, and called them the Hasmonean dynasty. After many years, a female Hasmonean, Salome Alexandra, became the Queen of Judea and was therefore called Judith, which meant, “The Woman of Judea.” During her reign, a pagan Assyrian king named Saosduchin wanted to capture Judea, and rule over it, sending his army, lead by the general Holofernes, to conquer the Judeans. Judith, being a widow, met with Holofernes, tricking him into thinking that she wanted to unite with him. Feeding him salty cheese and wine, she incapacitated him, and in his own bed, killed him with his own sword. Judea was once again saved from persecution and idolatry. Judith’s victory is commemorated on the seventh night of Hanukkah, which is called “Hag HaBanut: The Festival of the Daughters.” A day to remember all of the miracles YHVH does through courages and strong women.

We can all relate to these stories. So often Mainstream Society, Norms, pressure us to conform to their ways, to assimilate into their culture, just like the Judeans of that time were pressured to conform and assimilate into the Hellenistic and pagan cultures. But deep down in our souls, we know that just is not who we are, is not what we are meant to be. We feel a calling to be Set-Apart, to be a peculiar people, even overcoming persecution from the World who in the darkness of their ignorance slanders and hates us. Like Judah Maccabee and Judith, we must rise up, stand for what is right, and remain true to what we are meant to be, a Set-Apart, peculiar people who loves and honours YHVH.

Where is Hanukkah in The Bible?

If one reads a Protestant Bible, they will only see Hanukkah mentioned once, in John 10:22, “Then came Hanukkah; it was winter in Jerusalem. Yahshua was walking in the Temple around Solomon's Colonnade.” However, if one reads the far older Catholic, Byzantine, Coptic, and Ethiopic Bibles, they will find entire books telling the story of Hanukkah, called the Books of the Maccabees, of which there are two books in the Catholic Bible, four books in the Byzantine and Coptic Bibles, and 7 books in the Ethiopic Bible. Protestants consider these to be part of the Apocrypha, 15 or more books, which they consider to not be part of the Bible, and removed from their Bibles, even though the books of the Apocrypha were included in the King James Bible when it was originally published in 1611 AD, where the Apocrypha was positioned between the Old and New Testament. Testament means Witness, and the Bible says, “Things shall be proven on account of two or three witnesses.” (Deuteronomy 19:15 and 2 Corinthians 13:1) So it is by these two witnesses, The Old and New Testament, and further confirmed by this third witness, that the Bible is true.

Themes of Hanukkah

Therefore, as we recognise these Witnesses, knowing that The Bible is the true Word of God, let us Re-Dedicate ourselves during this Feast of Hanukkah, and dwell on its many important scriptural themes, such as:

1. Yahshua serves us and calls us to serve others, Galatians 5:13 says, “Brothers and sisters, you were called to freedom—only do not let your freedom become ‘an opportunity for the flesh (an excuse sin)’, but through love, serve one another.”
2. Throughout history followers of Yah have been persecuted: the Prophets, Yahshua, the Apostles, and martyrs, all suffered. Yet they did not let that stop them from preaching the message of the Kingdom and loving Elohim. They refused to conform to this world and stood up for Yah: Phinehas in Numbers 25:1-18, Joshua and Caleb’s report in the face of the other 10 spies in Numbers 13:1-14:45, Joshua’s standard of commitment to Yah in Joshua 24:14-15, Daniel refused to eat unclean meat in Daniel 1:8-16, and was thrown in the Lion’s den in Daniel Ch 6, but YHVH protected him.
3. Not Conforming to the world, being holy and acceptable to Yah: Micah 4:5, Romans 12:1-2
4. God is a miracle working God, as Psalm 77:15 says, “You are the God who works wonders. You have made Your power known among the peoples.”
5. God has delivered us. We have freedom because of Him, as Galatians 5:1 says, “For freedom, Messiah set us free—so stand firm (in following His Way/Instruction/Torah), and do not be burdened by ‘a yoke of slavery (sin)’ again.”
6. Yahshua is the light of the world. Our light is a reflection of Yahshua in our life, as Matthew 5:16 says, “In the same way, let your light shine before men so they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”
7. Women too can be strong and courages, standing up for God: Miriam, Deborah, Yael, Esther, Judith, and Mary.
8. We are the Temple of the Living Elohim – Dedicate yourselves to Yah: I Corinthians 3:16, 2 Corinthians 6:14-18
9. We dedicate our lives to God. Hanukkah means dedication and re-dedication! And Romans 12:1-2 says, “I urge you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice—holy, acceptable to God—which is your spiritual service. Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may know what is the will of God — that which is good, acceptable and perfect.”

Let Your Light Shine

It is tradition that the Hanukkiah menorah is to be placed either on a porch that is facing the street, or if the weather is windy or rainy, that the Hanukkiah is to be placed in the sill of a window which faces the street. Now one may ask, “Why can’t my family just place it in our kitchen or living room, so we can celebrate privately without advertising it to the neighbours?” The traditional Jewish reason is because we are not to hide the light of God, that would be the Wisdom and Word of God, which is kindled within, but we are to let it shine in a way so that others may see it, so that they too, in seeing our light, be inspired to follow God.

This is commanded by Yahshua in Luke 11:33 “No man, when he has lit a candle, puts it in a secret place, nor hides it under a bushel, but places it on a candlestick, that those who come in may see the light.” and Matthew 5:14-16 “You are the light of the world. It is impossible for a city to be hidden on a mountain. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it shines to all those in the house. Let your light so shine before men, so that they see your good works and praise your Father who is in the heavens.”

Introit Prayer

All gather around the hanukkiah menorah.

Father:

Come, let us worship the Lord who has brought victory to His people.

Shehechyanu Prayer

On the first night only, the Father also says the Shehechyanu prayer.

Father:

Baruch atah YHVH, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, shehechyanu ve'kiy'manu ve'higianu lazman ha-zeh.	Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has kept us alive, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this season.
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All: Amen.

Shamash Prayers

The Mother kindles the Shamash (Servant) candle (the highest one), and says the blessing.

Mother:

Baruch atah YHVH, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kidushanu b'mitzvotav vi'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Hanukkah	Blessed are You, Lord, our God, King of the universe, who sanctifies us with Your commandments and commands us to kindle the light of Hanukkah (Re-dedication).
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All: Amen.

On the **First Night** the Father adds:

Father:

Service is a high calling as described in Matthew 20:26-28: “But whoever wants to be great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you shall be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

We need to ask ourselves, “What does it mean to be a servant?” “Whom am I serving?” and “What can I do to become a better servant?”

Child:

Baruch atah YHVH, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, sheasah nisim la'avotenu ba'yamim ha-hem bazman ha-zeh	Blessed are You, Lord, our God, King of the universe, who wrought miracles for our fathers in days of old at this season.
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All: Amen.

The Mother gives the Shamash, to the Child who will light next the candle. The child lights the candle furthest to the right. Each night one additional candle is added from right to left. The Shamash is used to light all of the other candles. The newest candle is lit first by the Shamash, then the rest from left to right (newest to oldest). *Taking turns, each Child (or family member, etc) lights a candle, one on the first night, two on the second, etc.—and as they light the candle, they sing.*

Child:

On this night, Let us light,
One (or two, or three, etc.) little candle fire.
'Tis a sight, Oh so bright,
One little candle fire.

Candle Meditations

Then, depending on the night, the Father says:

1st Night

Father: Genesis 1:3-4 describes the creation of the first light: "Then God said, 'Let there be light!' and there was light. God saw that the light was good. So God distinguished the light from the darkness."

We need to ask ourselves, "Is this merely physical light and darkness, or can this simultaneously have other, more spiritual meanings? What are those possible meanings?"

2nd Night: Exodus 13:21-22 reveals that God is the source of Israel's light: "YHVH went before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead the way and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light. So they could travel both day and night. The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night never departed from the people."

We need to ask ourselves, "Is God the leader in my life? Am I following God day and night?"

3rd Night: King David reminds us in Psalms 27:1, that God Himself is the source of our own individual light; "YHVH is my light and my salvation: whom should I fear? YHVH is the stronghold of my life: whom should I dread?"

We need to ask ourselves, "What does it mean that The Lord is my light and my salvation? Have I allowed The Lord to be my light and salvation? Who or what in my life should I fear or honour?"

4th Night: Psalm 119:105 and Psalm 119:130 describe the light that comes from God's Word: "Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path". The unfolding of Your words gives light, giving understanding to the simple."

We need to ask ourselves, "What is The Path that God's Word illuminates?" "Where does that Path lead?" And "How can I better see this Light and follow The Path?"

5th Night: Messiah Yahshua is the greatest light of all. "Now this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you—that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all."-1 John 1:5 "Yahshua spoke to them again, saying, 'I am the light of the world. The one who follows Me will no longer walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'" -John 8:12

We need to ask ourselves, "What does it mean by light and darkness?" "In what way was Yahshua a light to the world?" and "How can I better follow that light, and carry it within me?"

6th Night: As we come to know Messiah, we are to be a source of light for the world. Messiah tells us in

Matthew 5:14-16: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on a lampstand so it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men so they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." In Isaiah 49:6 it says "indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the nations, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

We need to ask ourselves, "What does it mean to be a light to the world?" "Am I being a light to the world? Do I hide my light, or let it shine?" "How can that light burn within me, shining forth?" "How can I illuminate this dark world, bringing that light to others?"

7th Night: The prophet Isaiah speaks of the future glory of a restored Israel in Isaiah 60:1-3: "Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of YHVH has risen upon you. "For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; But YHVH will rise upon you and His glory will appear upon you. "Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising."

We need to ask ourselves, "What is the darkness that will cover all the earth and the people?" "Have I allowed the glory of the Lord to rise upon me?" and "What can I do to shine with His glorious light so that nations will be drawn to His brightness?"

8th Night: Revelation 21:22-24 gives us a description of our glorious eternal dwelling place in the New Jerusalem: "I saw no temple in her, for its Temple is YHVH Elohei-Tzva'ot (Lord God of Hosts) and the Lamb. And the city has no need for the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God lights it up, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it."

We need to ask ourselves, "What is the light of the Lamb?" "Am I walking in that light?" "Have I made it so that I no longer need the sun or moon for light?" and "Am I ready to enter into the New Jerusalem?"

Liturgy of The Word

If readings from the Books of Maccabees (or the Scroll of Antiochus), or the Book of Judith (or the Scroll of Yahudith), are to be read, those readings may take place here.

Blessing Before The Reading of The Haftarah

Prior to chanting the Haftarah (a reading from Prophets or Writings that varies weekly), the reader says:

Baruch atah, YHVH Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher bachar b'Nevi'im tovim, v'ratzah v'divreihem hane-emarim be-emet. Baruch atah, YHVH, ha-bocher baTorah uv'Moshe avdo, uv'Yisrael amo, uvi'Nevei-ei ha-emet vatzedek.	Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who has chosen faithful Prophets, messengers of truth whose teachings He has upheld. Blessed are You, Lord, for the revelation of the Torah, Your servant Moses, Your people Israel, and Your Prophets of truth and righteousness.
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Reader:

A reading from the book of N.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

Blessing After The Reading of The Haftarah

Upon finishing the chanting of the Haftarah, the reader says:

Baruch atah, YHVH Eloheinu, Melech ha-olam, tzur kol ha-olamim, tzaddik b'chol ha-dorot, Ha-El hane-eman, ha-omeir v'oseh, ham'dabeir um'kayeim, shekol d'varav emet vatzedek. Ne-eman ata hu, YHVH Eloheinu, v'ne-emanim d'varekha, v'davar echad mid'varekha, achor lo yashuv reikam, ki El Melekh ne-eman, v'rachaman ata. Barukh ata, YHVH, ha-El hane-eman b'chol d'varav, v'no-tain ha-Nevi'im.	Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, Rock of all eternities, righteous in all generations, The faithful God, Who says and does, Who speaks and makes it come to pass, all of Whose words are true and righteous. Faithful are You, Lord our God, and faithful are Your words, for not one of Your words is turned back unfulfilled, for You, O God, Rule faithful and compassionately. Blessed are You, Lord, the God Who is faithful in all His words, and giver of the Prophets.
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Concluding Prayers

Father: Let us give thanks to the Lord,

All: Who made heaven and earth.

Father: Let us proclaim His marvellous deeds.

All: And announce His glorious salvation.

Father: O Lord our God, we recall Your care for You children and the strength You give to those who defend Your Name. We pray that during this season of Hanukkah, You shall pour out Your mercy on the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Just as You have set us free in the past from tyranny, free us now from any spiritual bondage or blindness.

We ask this in the name of Yahshua, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Ruach haKodesh, one God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

The 7th Night of Hanukkah

Hag HaBanot: The Festival of the Daughters

The 7th night of Hanukkah has special significance for women, as it honours Judith, the heroine of the Book of Judith, one of Hanukkah's most proactive female heroes. More than that, Judith represents the heroism of women throughout history. Judith was frequently depicted on medieval menorahs. The seventh night of Hanukkah, Judith's night of triumph, was set aside as Hag haBanot, the Festival of the Daughters. Hag haBanot falls on the new moon of the Hebrew month of Tevet, which is the seventh night of Hanukkah. Rosh Hodesh, the celebration of the new month / new moon, is classically a women's festival. A variety of customs surround Hag haBanot. One tradition is that women come to the synagogue, touch the Torah, and pray for the health of their daughters. Mothers give their daughters gifts, and bridegrooms give gifts to their brides. Girls who were fighting were expected to reconcile on Hag haBanot. Old women and young women come together to dance. There may be a feast in honour of Judith, where participants eat cheese to remember Judith's subterfuge, for in the story Judith feeds the enemy general salty cheese to encourage his drinking of wine so that she can kill him once he has passed out.

Candle Lighting

On the seventh night of Hanukkah, hold a special candle-lighting ceremony in honor of the Festival of the Daughters. Women should say the blessings and light all of the candles on this night.

The standard opening blessings in feminine form and particularly honouring the feminine aspects of God:

Berukha Aht Ruach v'Hokmah v'Shekhinah eth'Yah Mekor Hahayim asher kidshatnu bemitzvoteyha vetzivatnu lehadlik ner shel Hanukkah.	Praised are You the Spirit, Wisdom, and Presence of God, Source of Life, who sanctifies us with Your commandments and commands us to kindle the light of Hanukkah (Rededication).
Berukha Aht Ruach v'Hokmah v'Shekhinah eth'Yah Mekor Hahayim she'astah nisim le'imoteynu vela'avoteynu bayamim hahem bazman hazeh.	Praised are You the Spirit, Wisdom, and Presence of God, Source of Life, who wrought miracles for our mothers in days of old at this season.
Berukha Aht Ruach v'Hokmah v'Shekhinah eth'Yah Mekor Hahayim shehekheyatnu vekiyematnu vehigi'atnu lazman hazeh.	Praised are You the Spirit, Wisdom, and Presence of God, Source of Life, who has kept us alive, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this season.

The women light the candles of the hanukiah menorah:

- Light the first candle in honour of Judith and all the women heroes throughout history.
- Light the second candle in honour of women heroes that you admire (name names).
- Light the third candle in honour of women teachers and spiritual leaders whom you know (again, name names, including relatives and friends).
- Light the fourth candle in honour of mothers and grandmothers, including your own.
- Light the fifth candle in honour of all girls.
- Light the sixth candle in honour of your family. (This candle can be especially for daughters, or you can have the candle represent the whole family, men and women, boys and girls.)
- Light the seventh candle in honour of the Ruach haKodash (The Holy Spirit), Hokmah (Wisdom of God), and Shekhinah (the indwelling Presence of God), that is in every person (All of those aspects of God are feminine).

Hag haBanot Gift Giving

While Hanukkah can be a time to give gifts, Hag haBanot is a time to give gifts of special significance to a wife, a daughter, a granddaughter, or another woman you wish to honour. Choose an heirloom you've been meaning to pass down, a gift of personal significance, a photograph of a female ancestor, or a spiritual gift such as a blessing or poem. You could also write a letter in which you talk about familial qualities or values you hope to pass on. Give the gift after candle lighting, with a spoken or written explanation of its significance.

Prayers for Health and Well-being

Hag haBanot is a time to pray for the health of women in your family: aunts, grandmothers, daughters, and mothers. After candle lighting and gift-giving, share any personal thoughts about what difficulties and struggles the women in your family face in the coming year and how you can help them.

Say the following healing prayer:

May the One who blessed Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah (and Bela and Zelpha), bless and heal (insert names) and grant them vitality and courage. May they be strengthened as the heroes of Hanukkah were strengthened. May they be granted the boldness of Judah, the fierce love of Hannah, and the wisdom and bravery of Judith. Send blessing on all the works of their hands, and show them kindness, peace, justice, and compassion. Amen.

Mi Shebeirach

You may also sing or say this blessing:

Mi shebeirach avoteinu
M'kor hab'racha l'imoteinu
May the source of strength
Who blessed the ones before us
Help us find the courage to make our lives a blessing
And let us say Amen

Mi shebeirach imoteinu
M'kor habrachah l'avoteinu
Bless those in need of healing with r'fuah sh'leimah
The renewal of body, the renewal of spirit
And let us say Amen

Mi shebeirach avoteinu
M'kor hab'racha l'imoteinu
May the source of strength
Who blessed the ones before us
Help us find the courage to make our lives a blessing
And let us say Amen

Mi shebeirach imoteinu
M'kor habrachah l'avoteinu
Bless those in need of healing with r'fuah sh'leimah
The renewal of body, the renewal of spirit
And let us say Amen

Readings

Study the story of Judith or the biblical stories of other women who persevered.

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After this you may have a special Hag haBanot meal with dairy foods in honour of the story of Judith. Recalling the custom that food at meals where words of Torah are spoken is especially blessed, discussion of the women in the Biblical readings should continue during the meal.

8th Night of Hanukkah

Seed Planted in The Dark

The seed is planted in the dark,
waiting in the dark of the year,
the seed is drawn towards the light.

Like the seed planted in the dark,
waiting for the warmth of the light,
we may, in the cold bleak winter,
begin to despair in the darkness,
and question whether
the season of light will return?

But God is the Light of The World,
and He is the gardener who planted that seed.
He will not forget us.

These lights in the darkness,
are reminders, helping us to recall,
that the season of light shall return,
that all is in readiness,
that we wait only for the warmth of light,
that even in the absence of light,
the work of creation is made ready.

When a lit candle is used to light other candles, that first candle's flame doesn't diminish; rather each flame becomes whole unto itself. When we kindle lights, we bring that light not only into our own physical spaces, but into our hearts and souls as well. It's then our task to take that light, that Divine spark, and send it out into the world.

On the shamash:

May this light nourish and replenish all those who work in the world to provide assistance to others.

On each of the candles:

- May this light be a torch for those who are lost and need to find their way out of the darkness.
- May this light bring warmth to those who feel the bitterness of the cold on their bodies, in their hearts, within their souls.
- May this light brighten the spirits of those who are sorrowful illuminating the path to hope and joy.
- May this light kindle the creativity of artists of all kinds who need inspiration.
- May this light bring clarity to places of confusion and reveal the truths that need to be known.
- May this light fuel the passions of those who wish to act to change their lives for the better or change the world to improve it for all.
- May this light illuminate the places of brokenness that need to be healed in ourselves, others, and the world, and be a beacon on the journey to wholeness.
- May this light shine peace upon those in conflict all over the planet, replacing ignorance, fear, and hatred with understanding, courage, and Love.

Blessed be YHVH,

We give thanks for the ones who offer prayers,
We give thanks for the ones who take action.
We cannot heal the world without both,
We must pray and we must do.

When so many people
Have vanished into the darkness
We light these candles
And say the blessings
And pray for those who have been injured or
killed or raped.
And pray for those who are worried and
homeless and hungry.
And pray for those who are lost to themselves.
May we all be joined in yearning holy
conversation
And pray when prayer is needed.
We must pray and we must do.

When so many people
Have vanished into the darkness
We light these candles
And bless those who are working so hard to
make things better.
May we join with those who when times are
hard,
Refuse to disappear,
Those who fight so hard for their communities
With food and advice and shelter
and organizing and work
and love and charity
and insistence and resistance.
May we all be joined in this holy struggle
And act when action is needed.
We must pray and we must do.

We give thanks for the ones who offer prayers.
We give thanks for the ones who take action.
We cannot heal the world without both.
Blessed is YHVH, the Source of Light!
We are Set-Apart when we speak goodness and
do good
As we light these candles
We will pray and we will do.
Amen

Modim anakhnu lakh
N'vareikh et Ruakh ha-Olam
Ha Meiyvi otanu mei-or la or, v'notein lanu koakh l'havi et ha-
or la-olam kulo

We give thanks to You
We bless the Eternal Spirit
Who brings us from light to light, gives us strength to bring
that light to the entire world.

May our light continue to shine out into the world during Hanukkah and all year.

Food

When it is time for the meal there are traditional foods. Because of the miracle of the oil, it is customary to eat foods cooked in oil, such as latkes (potato pancakes) and Sufganioth (Israeli doughnuts).

Sufganioth

A cross between a beignet and a jelly donut, sufganiyot are pillowy donuts that are eaten in Israel and around the world during Hanukah.

Servings: 24 | Prep Time: 30 Minutes | Cook Time: 15 Minutes | Total Time: 45 Minutes, plus 1 to 2 hours for the dough to rise

Ingredients:

- 1 cup warm water
- 1 tablespoon active dry yeast
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup sugar, plus more for coating
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 2 large egg yolks
- 2 tablespoons oil, plus about 2 quarts more for frying
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Optional Ingredients:

- 1 cup of filling (traditionally raspberry or strawberry jam, but can be any flavour of jam, or custard, chocolate, Nutella, pudding, pumpkin butter, apple butter, dulce de leche, etc.)

Directions:

Combine the water and yeast in a small bowl and let sit until foamy, about 5 minutes. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, salt, and nutmeg. Whisk to combine and set aside.

Add the egg yolks, 2 tablespoons of oil, and vanilla to the water/yeast mixture and whisk until combined.

Add the liquid mixture to the flour mixture and stir until the dough comes together. It should be a bit sticky. Cover the bowl and let the dough rise until doubled in size, 1 to 2 hours.

Line a baking sheet with a few layers of paper towels. Line another baking sheet with parchment paper and dust heavily with flour. Generously dust a clean countertop and your hands with flour. Scrape the dough out of the bowl onto the counter and dust the dough with flour. Pat the dough into ¼ inch-thick rectangle (it should be about 10 x 12-inches in size), making sure the bottom doesn't stick and adding more flour to the counter and your hands as needed. Cut the dough into 24 two-inch squares and transfer to the floured baking sheet, leaving a little space between the squares. Sprinkle the squares lightly with flour.

Add enough of oil to a large Dutch oven or heavy pot to measure about 2 inches deep and heat over medium heat to 350°F. (If you don't have a candy/deep-fry thermometer, drop a 1-in cube of bread in the oil; if it takes about 1 minute to get golden brown, the oil is at the right temperature.) Place 6 dough pieces in the oil and fry until golden brown, about 3 minutes, flipping halfway through frying. Adjust the heat, if necessary, to maintain the oil temperature between 325°F and 350°F. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the donuts to the paper towel-lined baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining donuts.

When the donuts are cool enough to handle, use a paring knife to puncture the side of each to form a pocket in the centre. Place the tip of a squeeze bottle or piping bag into the pocket and squeeze 1 to 2 teaspoons of filling inside. (Alternatively, if you don't have the right tools or just don't want to bother, serve the filling on the side.)

Using a fine sieve, dust the donuts generously with sugar. Serve warm.

Silan - Date Honey

Silan is a sweet honey-like syrup made from dates.

Ingredients:

- Dates
- Water

Directions:

Place dates and water in a saucepan or pot and bring to a boil.

Once boiling, reduce to a low simmer and cook for 2 hours or until the dates are very soft and starting to dissolve.

If the mixture begins to look dry, add a little more water; the dates should be mostly covered by liquid throughout the process. By the end of cooking the liquid should be thick and brown.

Let cool to room temperature.

Pour the liquid through a strainer lined with cheesecloth into a large mixing bowl.

Add small batches of dates, about 1 cup at a time, to the cheesecloth and squeeze firmly, extracting as much liquid as possible.

Remove the pulp and repeat with the remaining dates.

Pour the strained date liquid back into the saucepan or pot.

Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for another 30 minutes or until the liquid thickens enough to coat the back of a cold spoon, about the consistency of thick maple syrup. Remove from heat.

The Silan Date Honey will continue to thicken as it cools.

Once it reaches room temperature, it should be the consistency of honey.

If it isn't thick enough, place back into the pan or pot and re-simmer for a bit.

Latkes – Potato Pancakes

‘Latke’ is the Yiddish word for a ‘Levivoth’ a potato pancake fried in oil.

Yield 3 dozen | Time 45 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1 pound of potatoes
- 1 large onion
- 2 large eggs
- oil, for frying

Optional Ingredients:

- ½ cup matzo meal (or potato starch, or all-purpose flour), for smooth consistency
- If savoury is desired:
 - 2 teaspoons coarse kosher salt (or 1 teaspoon fine sea salt), plus more for sprinkling
 - ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
 - ½ teaspoon garlic
 - ½ teaspoon cumin
 - If Cheesey: 1 1/2 cups cheddar, shredded
- If sweet is desired:
 - 2 teaspoons sugar, honey, or maple syrup
 - ½ cup fruit or berries, chopped or crushed
 - 1 tablespoon rosewater or orange blossom water
 - If Cheesey: 1 cup ricotta

Directions:

Shred the potatoes and onion.

Place shredded potatoes and onion into a large bowl and mix in the eggs, and any desired optional ingredients.

Pour about ¼ inch of oil into a medium pan, and set over medium-high heat, until the oil is hot (a drop of batter placed in the pan should sizzle).

With your hands, form the mixture into patties.

Placing each latke patty onto a spatula (or turner), gently lower it into the hot oil.

When the edges of the latkes are brown and crispy, about 5 minutes, flip.

Cook until the second side is deeply browned, about another 5 minutes.

Transfer the latkes to a paper towel-lined plate to drain and sprinkle with salt while still warm.

Repeat with the remaining batter.

Garnish with apple sauce, or sour cream.

Biblical Lekakh Honey Cake

Ingredients:

- 3 cups flour
- 1 cup honey
- ½ cup olive oil
- ½ cup milk, dairy or plant-based

Optional Ingredients:

- ½ cup raisins
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon ground mace

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350°.

Line the bottom of a 9” round cake pan with parchment paper and oil the interior.

Mix together the flour and honey.

Mix in the olive oil.

If desired, add in the optional ingredients.

Add the milk, and mix thoroughly.

Spread the batter into the pan, smoothing with a spatula.

Bake for 40 minutes.

Ashishim Red Lentil Pancakes

Ashishim is mentioned in the Torah, the Song of Songs, and the Mishnah. The Jerusalem Talmud even contains a detailed recipe for making Ashishim.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups red split lentils
- 1 cup flour
- 2 eggs
- 5/6 cup sesame seeds
- 1/6 cup coriander seeds
- olive oil, for frying
- honey or Silan

Directions:

Rinse the red split lentils until the water runs clear.

Add the lentils into a pot, and cover with about four cups of water. Place on medium-high heat and let cook them for 20 minutes, stirring periodically to prevent sticking to the bottom of the pot. Strain into a bowl and let cool.

When the lentils have cooled, mash them using a wooden spoon or a food processor, until they form a fairly smooth paste.

Place into a large bowl.

Mix into the lentils the flour, forming a smooth batter.

Mix in the sesame seeds, coriander seeds, and eggs, thoroughly mixing the batter together until it is well combined. Add the olive oil into a frying pan.

Heat the pan on medium-high heat until the olive oil starts to simmer.

Using a tablespoon, or by pouring, form the batter into small pancakes, about the size of your palm, and about as thick as your finger.

Let cook for about 5 minutes, flip and cook the other side, about another 5 minutes.

Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate to drain.

Repeat with the remaining batter.

Once all of the batter has been cooked into pancakes, transfer the cakes onto plates and drizzle with honey.

Judith's Cheese Pastries

These pastries symbolize the cheese cakes that Judith served to Holofernes.

Prep: 1 hr 45 min | Chill: Overnight | Cook: 25-30 min | Yield 30pcs

Cheese pastry dough Ingredients:

- 2½ cups flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 sticks (1 cup) cold unsalted butter, cut into 16 pieces
- 1 cup ricotta
- 2 teaspoons finely minced lemon zest
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Filling Ingredients:

- ½ pound cream cheese
- ½ pound ricotta
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 1 teaspoon finely minced lemon zest
- 1 egg
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- Pinch of salt

Topping Ingredients:

- 4 tablespoons melted butter
- Powdered sugar

Directions:

1. For the dough, sift the dry ingredients together in a large bowl; cut in the butter until the mixture resembles small crumbs. Blend in the ricotta to make a soft dough; then the lemon zest, lemon juice and vanilla. Knead on a lightly floured board to form a smooth ball. Wrap the dough in plastic, and refrigerate overnight.
2. For the filling, cream the cream cheese, ricotta and sugar together in a bowl until blended. Stir in remaining ingredients to make a thick filling. Refrigerate until ready to use.
3. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. On a lightly floured surface, divide the chilled dough in half and roll each half into a 9-by-12-inch rectangle. Lightly brush each rectangle with 1 tablespoon melted butter.
5. Spread half of the cheese filling on each rectangle, leaving a 1-inch plain border all around. Fold in the 2 shorter ends on each rectangle. Beginning with the longer side, roll each piece into a log but stop halfway. Cut off the remaining half of each piece and repeat, making another log. Each portion of dough will make 2 narrow logs.
6. Brush the tops of the 4 logs with the remaining 2 tablespoons melted butter. Chill, 10 to 15 minutes.
7. Remove logs from the fridge; cut them into 2-inch pastries. Place the pastries on the baking sheets. Bake until tops are golden brown, 25 to 30 minutes. Cool slightly, then dust with powdered sugar.

Hanukkah Poutine

Serves 4 | Preparation 25min | Cooking 30min

Mini-Latkes Ingredients:

- 4 large potatoes,
- 1 onion
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1½ tablespoon matzo meal
- 2 teaspoon coarse kosher salt
- freshly ground black pepper, to season
- oil, for frying

Parmesan gravy Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 3 teaspoon plain flour
- 1 cup vegetable stock
- 2 teaspoon soy sauce
- 1½ tablespoon grated kosher parmesan
- salt and pepper, to taste

Toppings:

- 1 ball fresh kosher mozzarella, cubed

Directions:

Mini-Latkes:

Shred the potatoes and onion. Place in bowl and add the eggs, matzo meal, salt and pepper, and stir to combine. Fill a large frypan ½ inch deep with the oil and heat over medium heat. Working in batches, form silver dollar sized latke patties and place them into pan. Cook, turning, for 5 minutes or until golden brown all over. Drain on paper towels and keep warm.

Parmesan Gravy:

To make the parmesan gravy, melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute or until softened and fragrant, but not browned. Add the flour and stir continuously until deep golden. Whisking continuously, gradually add the stock, and continue to whisk until the mixture comes to a boil. Add the soy sauce and parmesan, reduce heat to medium-low and cook, whisking constantly, for 5–10 minutes or until smooth and thickened. Season with salt and pepper. Keep warm.

Topping:

Place the mini potato latkes on a platter, then scatter over the cubed mozzarella and drizzle generously with the warm gravy to serve.

Pumpkin Rugelach

Sweet pumpkin crescents.

Prep: 40 min. + chilling | Bake: 20 min./batch + cooling

Ingredients:

- 2 cups butter, softened
- 1½ cups cream cheese, softened
- 3¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 can (1¾ cups) pumpkin
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons plus 1 cup sugar, divided
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 4½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon milk

Icing Ingredients:

- 1½ cups cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- ⅔ cup milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions:

In a large bowl, cream butter, cream cheese, and salt until blended. Gradually beat in flour. Divide dough into 3 portions. Shape each into a disk; wrap and refrigerate 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a small bowl, combine pumpkin, 3 tablespoons sugar, honey and vanilla. Mix cinnamon and remaining 1 cup sugar. On a lightly floured surface, roll each portion of dough into a 14-in. circle. Spread each with a third of the pumpkin mixture and sprinkle with ¼ cup sugar mixture.

Cut dough into 12 wedges. Roll up from wide ends; place 2 in. apart on parchment-lined baking sheets, point side down. Whisk together egg and milk; brush over pastries. Sprinkle with remaining sugar mixture.

Bake until bottoms are browned, 20 minutes. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool completely. In a small bowl, beat icing ingredients; drizzle over pastries. Let stand until set.

Cheese Blintzes

Cream cheese filled pancakes.

Blintzes Ingredients:

- 4 large eggs, at room temperature, beaten
- ½ cup water
- ½ cup milk
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup butter, for frying

Filling Ingredients:

- 1 pound ricotta
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted
- 1 large egg yolk, at room temperature
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- ¼ cup sugar (or more to taste)
- Fruit toppings, fresh or canned, garnish

Directions:

Make the Blintzes

In a medium bowl, beat together 4 eggs, water, milk, salt, and flour until well-mixed. Don't over-beat. It's okay if small particles of flour remain as they will be absorbed during the resting period.

Let the batter rest for 30 minutes.

Heat a small skillet (about 7 inches in diameter) and add a pat of butter.

Whisk the batter until smooth.

Pour about 1/4 cup batter into the pan and swirl it around, pouring off excess. Make sure not to let it brown.

Flip and cook the other side for a few seconds.

Then, turn the blintz out onto a towel.

Repeat with remaining batter and pats of butter, staggering the crepes one on top of each other.

Make the Filling and Assemble

In a large bowl, mix together ricotta, melted butter, 1 egg yolk, vanilla, and sugar until well-incorporated.

To assemble, place one blintz on a work surface and place 1 to 2 tablespoons of filling in a line close to the edge nearest to you. Fold the ends of the blintz and roll it up.

Repeat with remaining blintzes and filling.

Fry the filled blintzes in butter until golden brown.

Serve with optional fresh or canned fruit toppings.

Cheese Sambusak

Savory turnovers stuffed with sharp and salty cheeses.

Prep Time 45 min | Cook Time 35 min | Total Time 1 hr 20 min

Servings 24 pastries

Dough Ingredients:

- ½ cup oil
- ½ cup water
- 1 egg
- 1½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour

Filling Ingredients:

- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- ½ cup parmesan cheese, grated
- 2 eggs
- ½ tsp onion powder, optional
- ¼ tsp sea (kosher) salt
- ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper

Directions:

Make the dough:

In a large bowl, whisk together the oil, water, egg, and salt until well combined and foamy.

Stir in the flour, a little at a time, until a soft dough forms.

Fold in the sesame seeds.

Form the dough into a disc, wrap with plastic wrap, and let sit at room temperature while making the filling.

Make the filling:

In a food processor, combine the feta, parmesan, eggs, onion powder (if using), salt, and pepper, and pulse until a thick paste forms.

Assemble the turnovers:

Pinch off a walnut-size piece of dough and roll it into a ball. Working on a lightly floured surface, roll it out into a 4-inch round. Place a heaping tablespoon of the filling into the middle of the round. Fold one side of the round over to the other to make a half-moon, pinching it tightly to seal the filling inside. Repeat with the remaining dough and filling.

Frying the sambusak:

Line a large plate with two layers of paper towel.

In a large saucepan, heat 2 inches oil over medium heat. Gently slip the turnovers into the hot oil in batches of 4 or 5 and fry until golden brown, flipping once halfway through, 5 minutes.

Transfer the fried sambusak to the paper towels to drain.

Fried Mozzarella Sticks

Time 30-60 Minutes

Ingredients:

- 10 mozzarella sticks
- 1 egg, beaten
- ¼ cup flour
- ½ cup flavored Panko crumbs
- Oil for frying
- Marinara sauce for dipping, optional

Directions:

Coat each cheese stick in flour, then dip in egg and coat with the crumbs.

Place the coated cheese sticks on a tray or plate lined with wax or parchment paper. Freeze for 30 minutes.

Heat the oil to medium, then drop 2–3 sticks in the oil. Cook until brown on one side, then gently flip and cook until the other side is lightly browned. Remove from pan and place on a piece of paper towel.

Serve immediately, with warm marinara sauce for dipping optional.

Sweet Noodle Kugel

Kugel is a baked noodle pudding that can be either sweet or savory.

Yields: 8 servings | Prep: 10 mins | Total Time: 1 hr 20 mins

Ingredients:

Butter, for greasing the pan

2 cups wide egg noodles

5 large eggs

½ cup butter, melted

2 cups sour cream

1 cup ricotta

¾ cup granulated sugar

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 9"x13" baking dish.

In a large pot of boiling water, cook pasta until al dente, 5 minutes. Drain.

In a large bowl mix together eggs, butter, sour cream, ricotta, sugar, and cinnamon, then stir in noodles. Pour into prepared dish and bake until set, 1 hour.

Boyos

Pumpkin and Cheese Coiled Pastries.

Pumpkin and Cheese Filling Ingredients: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2¼ pounds pumpkin, peeled, seeded, cut into 2 inch cubes• 1 teaspoon sugar• ½ teaspoon salt• 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon• ½ teaspoon ground cloves• 1 cup grated parmesan cheese• ½ cup grated feta cheese• 2 tablespoons olive oil, for brushing		Dough Ingredients: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ¼ teaspoon active dry yeast• 1 teaspoon sugar• 1 cup warm water• 3¼ cups all-purpose flour, or as needed• pinch of salt• 2 teaspoons unsalted butter• ½ cup warm water
Brushing Ingredients: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ½ cup melted butter• ½ cup oil	Sprinkling Ingredients: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ½ cup flour• 1 tablespoon grated parmesan cheese	Topping Ingredient: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ½ cup grated parmesan cheese

Directions:

Prepare the Pumpkin and Cheese Filling

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit.

Brush baking tray with oil. Put the pumpkin on the tray. Toss to coat lightly in the oil and bake for 1 hour or until soft. Put the cooked pumpkin in a bowl and mash. Add the sugar, salt, spices, cheeses and mix thoroughly.

Prepare the Dough

Prepare the starter: Dissolve the yeast in the warm water with the sugar in a small bowl. Stir and let stand for 10 minutes, until frothy.

Put 2½ cups flour with the salt in a large bowl. Work the butter into the flour with your fingertips. Make a well in the centre of the flour and add the proofed yeast. Add the warm water and mix well until a sticky dough mass begins to form. Transfer the dough onto a lightly floured surface. Knead the dough for 10 minutes until smooth and elastic, adding a little flour if still sticky.

Divide the dough and form it into twenty 1-inch smooth balls, and immerse in the prepared dish of oil. Turn balls over once to coat well and let sit in the oil.

Take one ball at a time, and press between your palms to flatten. With the fingertips of both hands press the dough outwards as much as possible. Then working around the flattened dough gently lift and stretch the edges outwards with your fingertips until paper thin and about 12 inches in diameter. Brush lightly with the melted butter and oil mixture over the stretched dough and cut off any thick edges with a sharp knife and discard. Sprinkle with a little of the prepared flour and cheese mixture.

Shape and Fill the Dough

Spread about three tablespoons of filling evenly along the long edge of the stretched dough and roll gently into one long cylinder about three and a half centimeters (one and a half inches) in diameter. Then coil the roll into a spiral shape with the seam-side down. Repeat until all the pastry and filling are used up.

Brush the tops lightly with the melted butter and oil mixture and sprinkle with cheese.

Bake

Preheat the oven to 190 degrees Celsius (375 degrees Fahrenheit). Line two baking trays with Gefen Easy Baking Paper.

Transfer the filled pastries to the baking trays, leaving a little space between them. Bake for about 30-40 minutes, until crisp and golden brown. Transfer to a wire rack. Serve hot.

Sabeye b'Lebeh

Sweet Ricotta-Filled Phyllo Triangle Pastries.

Serves 20 (about 81 pastires)

Pasty Ingredients:

- 1 cup milk
- 1/4 cup Cream of Rice cereal
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 cups ricotta
- 1½ Tablespoons rose water
- ½ pound phyllo dough, thawed
- 6 Tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 6 Tablespoons oil
- Ground cinnamon

Rose-Water Syrup Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup cold water
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 Tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons rose water
- 1 Tablespoon lemon juice

Directions:

Bring the milk to a boil in a medium-size saucepan. Add the cereal and mix well with a spoon. Remove from the heat, add the sugar and stir for 30 seconds to dissolve. Cover and let stand for 3 minutes, allowing the cereal to thicken.

Place the ricotta and rose water in a large bowl and combine well with the cereal mixture. Set aside.

Unroll the phyllo dough on a countertop and gently smooth out with dry hands. With a kitchen scissors or very sharp knife, cut the phyllo in half widthwise – along the short end. Reroll one half and securely wrap in a plastic bag, plastic wrap, or aluminum foil (phyllo will keep up to 1 week in the refrigerator; do not refreeze).

Cut the remaining half lengthwise into 3 equal strips 3 inches wide and about 12 inches long. Place the strips on top of each other to form one stack and cover with a damp towel to keep moist.

Preheat the oven to 300 degrees for 15 minutes. Combine the butter and oil.

Working with one strip of dough at a time, gently peel off a single layer of phyllo and place it vertically before you on a clean work surface. Re-cover the stack of phyllo with a damp towel. Using a pastry brush, coat the entire strip lightly with the butter-oil mixture.

In the bottom left corner, about half an inch from the left and bottom, place 1 teaspoon of the ricotta filling. Fold the bottom right corner over the filling to the leftmost side to form your first triangle shape. Continue to fold the triangle onto itself until you reach the end, brushing with the butter-oil mixture if the phyllo appears dry and cracks while folding.

Brush the surface and loose edge with the butter-oil mixture. (You may freeze the triangles at this point for up to 3 weeks by gently placing them in a large tin or tightly sealed plastic container in layers, separated by plastic wrap or wax paper. The frozen triangles can be placed directly in the oven.) Place the triangles on an ungreased baking sheet about 1 inch apart.

Bake until slightly brown and crisp, 12-15 minutes (15-20 minutes for frozen triangles). Serve warm or at room temperature on a large platter, sprinkled with cinnamon and drizzled with syrup. These will keep, refrigerated, for up to 3 days. Reheat in the oven for 3 to 4 minutes before serving.

Rose-Water Syrup

Because the rose water syrup should be ice-cold when served over Syrian pastries, it must be prepared five to six hours ahead of time or the night before to allow enough time to chill in the refrigerator.

Combine the water and sugar in a medium-size saucepan. Bring to a bubbling simmer over medium heat. Reduce the heat to medium-low and cook, uncovered, for 12 to 15 minutes, stirring occasionally (the liquid will thicken slightly). Remove from heat. Immediately stir in the rose water and lemon juice.

Let cool slightly, then pour into a glass jar. Refrigerate for at least 5 hours or overnight until completely chilled. Serve very cold in a pitcher or drizzled over various desserts in this chapter. This syrup will remain fresh in a jar in the refrigerator for months.

Dreydel Game

Another reminder of the miracle of this holiday is the game of dreydels. These wooden or plastic tops have different Hebrew letters on each of their four sides: Nun, Gimel, Hey, and Shin standing for the phrase Nes Gadol Hayah Sham (A Great Miracle Happened There)

There is an interesting story behind the dreydel. It is said that the children of Judea during the Maccabean period wanted to study Torah (first 5 books of Moses), but the anti-Semitic policies of the Syrians made this difficult. They came up with a creative answer: They would study the scrolls in the streets until a foreign soldier came. Then they would quickly hide the scroll, bring out the dreydels, and pretend to be engrossed in a game of tops. When the soldier left, the Torah study would begin again.



Shin
for Shekel (Coin)
Add one to the pot



Hey
for Half
Win half of what's in the pot



Gimel
for Give me everything!
Win everything in the pot



Nun
for None
You get nothing!

How To Play The Dreydel Game

1. Give each person the same amount of candy, nuts, or Hanukkah gelt (chocolate money), etc.
2. Each player puts one piece in the pot.
3. The first player spins the dreydel and does what the dreydel says.
4. After a player gets a gimel, everyone adds one piece to the pot.
5. Everyone gets a turn. When you are finished playing, enjoy your candy, nuts or chocolate.

The Dreydel Song

While the Dreydel is spinning, you can sing this song.

I have a little dreydel, I made it out of clay.
And when it's dry and ready, then dreydel I shall play
O dreydel, dreydel, dreydel, I made it out of clay
O dreydel, dreydel, dreydel, now dreydel I shall play
It has a lovely body, with leg so short and thin;
And when my dreydel's tired, it drops and then I win.
O dreydel, dreydel, dreydel, with leg so short and thin;
O dreydel, dreydel, dreydel, it drops and then I win
My dreydel is always playful. It loves to dance and spin;
A happy game of dreydel, come play, now let's begin.
O dreydel, dreydel, dreydel, it loves to dance and spin
O dreydel, dreydel, dreydel, come play, now let's begin.

Readings

During Hanukkah, it is traditional to read the stories of the victories of the Hasmoneans, that being the stories of the Maccabees and of Judith. Jews and Christians have passed down different written accounts of these stories:

- Jewish
 - Megillat Antiochus (the Scroll of Antiochus) – telling the story of the Maccabees
 - Megillat Yahudith (the Scroll of Judith) – telling the story of Judith
- Christian
 - 1st Book of Maccabees – in the Catholic, Byzantine, and Coptic Bibles
 - 2nd Book of Maccabees – in the Catholic, Byzantine, and Coptic Bibles
 - 3rd Book of Maccabees – in the Byzantine, and Coptic Bibles
 - 4th Book of Maccabees – in the Byzantine, and Coptic Bibles
 - 5th Book of Maccabees – in the Ethiopic Bible
 - 6th Book of Maccabees – in the Ethiopic Bible
 - 7th Book of Maccabees – in the Ethiopic Bible
 - Book of Judith – telling the story of Judith

Within this document I will be including only the most widely accepted accounts:

- Megillat Antiochus (the Scroll of Antiochus)
- 1st Book of Maccabees
- 2nd Book of Maccabees
- Book of Judith
- Megillat Yahudith (the Scroll of Judith)

The remaining books of Maccabees, which I will be leaving out, veer quite a bit from the main stories, some not even mentioning the Maccabees at all, but telling other stories of times the Judaeans fought off pagan conquerors; the reason for naming the books “Maccabees” being because that word means “War-hammer”, and is thus a fitting title for any book telling the story of God’s people rising up, and with YHVH as their shield and stronghold, defeating pagan invaders. However, because those stories do not pertain to The Hasmoneans, they are not directly related to Hanukkah, and thus I have left them out.

I have ordered the books in the above listed order, as an indication of my reading recommendations for each subject. If one desires to only read one account of each story, I recommend reading the Megillat Antiochus and the Book of Judith. Megillat Antiochus because it is the only one which contains the ‘Miracle of The Oil’ so deeply associated with Hanukkah, and because at only 2 pages long, it is far shorter than the joint 31 chapters of 1st and 2nd Maccabees. I recommend the Book of Judith as although it is twice as long as Megillat Yahudith, it is still relatively short, and historically has been considered the more reliable narrative. That being said, if you Prefer the Jewish narratives, you know which ones to read, and if you prefer the Christian narratives, you also know which ones to read, and that is why I am including both sets of narratives. If one chooses to read on each night of Hanukkah, I recommend reading all of the narratives, so that they and their possible congregation may become well versed in all of the written accounts related to Hanukkah and Hag HaBanut.

I hope you, your family, and your community find these readings to be inspiring, enlightening, and entertaining.

Megillat Antiochus

The Jewish scroll telling the story of Hanukkah

The Greek monarch Antiochus was a powerful ruler; all the kings heeded him. He subdued many provinces and mighty sovereigns; he destroyed their castles, burned their palaces and imprisoned their men. Since the reign of Alexander there had never been a king like him beyond the Euphrates. He erected a large city on the seacoast to serve as his royal residence, and called it "Antioch" after his own name. Opposite it his governor Bagris founded another city, and called it "City of Bagris" after himself. Such are their names to this day.

In the twenty-third year of his reign, the two hundred and thirteenth year after the Temple had been rebuilt, Antiochus determined to march on Jerusalem. He said to his officers: "You are aware that the Jews of Jerusalem are in our midst. They neither offer sacrifices to our gods nor observe our laws; they abandon the king's laws to practice their own. They hope moreover for the day when kings and tyrants shall be crushed, saying: 'O that our own king might reign over us, that we might rule the sea and the land, so that the entire world would be ours.' It is indeed a disgrace for the royal government to let them remain on the face of the earth. Come now, let us attack them and abolish the covenant made with them: Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh and circumcision." The proposal pleased his officers and all his host.

Immediately king Antiochus dispatched his governor Nicanor with a large body of troops. He came to the Jewish, city of Jerusalem and massacred many people; he set up a heathen altar in the Temple, concerning which the G-d of Israel had said to his faithful prophets: "There will I establish my residence forever." In that very place they slaughtered a swine and brought its blood into the holy court. When Yochanan ben Matityahu heard of this deed, he was filled with rage and his face changed color. In his heart he drew a plan of action. He then made himself a dagger, two spans long and one span wide, and concealed it under his clothes. He came to Jerusalem and stood at the royal gate, calling to the gate-keepers: "I am Yochanan ben Matityahu; I have come to appear before Nicanor." The guards informed Nicanor that the high priest of the Jews was standing at the door. "Let him enter!" Nicanor said.

Yochanan was admitted to Nicanor, who said: "You are one of the rebels who-rebel against the king and do not care for the welfare of his government!" Yochanan replied: "My lord, I have come to you; whatever you demand I will do." "If you wish to do as I please," said Nicanor, "then take a swine and sacrifice it upon the altar. You shall wear royal clothes and ride the king's own horse; you shall be counted among the king's close friends." To this, Yochanan answered: "My lord, I am afraid of the Israelites; if they hear that I have done such a thing they will stone me. Let everyone leave your presence, so as not to inform them." Immediately Nicanor ordered everybody out.

At that moment Yochanan ben Matityahu raised his eyes to heaven and prayed; "My G-d and G-d of my fathers Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, do not hand me over to this heathen; for if he kills me, he will boast in the temple of Dagon that his god has handed me over to him." He advanced three steps toward Nicanor, thrust the dagger into his heart, and flung him fatally wounded into the court of the Temple. "My G-d," Yochanan prayed, "do not count it a sin that I killed this heathen in the Sanctuary; punish thus all the foes who came with him to persecute Judea and Jerusalem." On that day Yochanan set out and fought the enemy, inflicting heavy slaughter on them. The number of those who were slain by him on that day totaled two thousand seven hundred. Upon returning, he erected a column with the inscription: "Maccabee, Destroyer of Tyrants."

When king Antiochus heard that his governor Nicanor had been slain, he was bitterly distressed. He sent for wicked Bagris, the deceiver of his people, and told him: "Do you not know, have you not heard, what the Israelites did to me? They massacred my troops and ransacked my camps! Can you now be sure of your wealth? Will your homes remain yours? Come, let us move against them and abolish the covenant which their G-d made with them: Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh, and circumcision." Then wicked Bagris and his hosts invaded Jerusalem, murdering the population and proclaiming an absolute decree against Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh, and circumcision. So drastic was the king's edict that when a man was discovered to have circumcised his son, he and his wife were hanged along with the child. A woman gave birth to a son after her husband's death and had him circumcised when he was eight days old. With the child in her arms, she went up on top of the wall of Jerusalem and cried out: "We say to you, wicked Bagris: This covenant of our fathers which you intend to destroy shall never cease from us nor from our children's children." She cast her son down to the ground and flung herself after him so that they died together. Many Israelites of that period did the same, refusing to renounce the covenant of their fathers.

Some of the Jews said to one another: "Come, let us keep Shabbat in a cave lest we violate it." When they were betrayed to Bagris, he dispatched armed men who sat down at the entrance of the cave and said: "You Jews, surrender to us! Eat of our bread, drink of our wine, and do what we do!" But the Jews said to one another: "We remember what we were commanded on Mount Sinai: 'Six days you shall labor and do all your work; on the seventh day you shall rest.' It is better for us to die than to desecrate Shabbat." When the Jews failed to come out, wood was brought and set on fire at the entrance of the cave. About a thousand men and women died there. Later the five sons of Matityahu, Yochanan and his four brothers, set out and routed the hostile forces, whom they drove to the coast; for they trusted in the G-d of heaven.

Wicked Bagris, accompanied by those who had escaped the sword, boarded a ship and fled to king Antiochus. "O king," he said, "you have issued a decree abolishing Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh, and circumcision in Judea, and now there is complete rebellion there. The five sons of Matityahu cannot be defeated unless they are attacked by all the combined forces; they are stronger than lions, swifter than eagles, braver than bears. Be pleased to accept my advice, and do not fight them with this small army lest you be disgraced in the sight of all the kings. Send letters to all your royal provinces; let all the army officers without exception come with armored elephants." This pleased king Antiochus. He sent letters to all his royal domains, and the chieftains of various clans arrived with armored elephants. Wicked Bagris invaded Jerusalem for the second time. He broke through the wall, shattered the gateway, made thirteen breaches in the Temple, and ground the stones to dust. He thought to himself: "This time they shall not defeat me; my army is numerous, my hand is mighty." However, the G-d of heaven did not think so.

The five sons of Matityahu went to Mizpeh in Gilead, where the house of Israel had been saved in the days of Shmuel Hanavi. They fasted, sat in ashes and prayed to the G-d of heaven for mercy; then a good plan came to their mind. These were their names: Yehudah, the firstborn; Shimon, the second; Yochanan, the third; Yonatan, the fourth; Elazar, the fifth. Their father blessed them, saying: "Yehudah my son, I compare you to Yehudah the son of Yaakov who was likened to a lion. Shimon my son, I compare, you to Shimon the son of Yaakov who slew the men of Shchem. Yochanan my son, I compare you to Avner the son of Ner, general of Israel's army. Yonatan my son, I compare you to Yonatan the son of Shaul who defeated the Philistines. Elazar my son, I compare you to Pinchas the son of Elazar, who was zealous for his G-d and rescued the Israelites." Soon afterwards the five sons of Matityahu attacked the pagan forces, inflicting severe losses upon them. One of the brothers, Yehudah, was killed.

When the sons of Matityahu discovered that Yehudah had been slain, they returned to their father who asked: "Why did you come back?" They replied: "Our brother Yehudah, who alone equaled all of us, has been killed." "I will join you in the battle against the heathen," Matityahu said, "lest they destroy the house of Israel; why be so dismayed over your brother?" He joined his sons that same day and waged war against the enemy. The G-d of heaven delivered into their hands all swordsmen and archers, army officers and high officials. None of these survived. Others were compelled to seek refuge in the coastal cities. In attacking the elephants, Elazar was engulfed in their dung. His brothers searched for him among the living and the dead, and could not find him. Eventually, however, they did find him.

The Jews rejoiced over the defeat of their enemies, some of whom were burned, while others were hanged on the gallows. Wicked Bagris was included among those who were burned to death. When king Antiochus heard that his governor Bagris and the army officers had been killed, he boarded a ship and fled to the coastal cities. Wherever he came the people rebelled and called him "The Fugitive," so he drowned himself in the sea.

The Hasmoneans entered the Sanctuary, rebuilt the gates, closed the breaches, and cleansed the Temple court from the slain and the impurities. They looked for pure olive oil to light the Menorah, and found only one bottle with the seal of the Kohen Gadol so that they were sure of its purity. Though its quantity seemed sufficient only for one day's lighting, it lasted for eight days owing to the blessing of the G-d of heaven who had established His Name there. Hence, the Hasmoneans and all the Jews alike instituted these eight days as a time of feasting and rejoicing, like any festival prescribed in the Torah, and of kindling lights to commemorate the victories G-d had given them. Mourning and fasting are forbidden on Chanukah, except in the case of an individual's vow which must be discharged. Nevertheless, the Hasmoneans did not prohibit work on this holiday.

From that time on the Greek government was stripped of its renown. The Hasmoneans and their descendants ruled for two hundred and six years, until the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash.

And so the Jews everywhere observe this festival for eight days, beginning on the twenty-fifth of Kislev. These days, instituted by Kohanim, Levites and Sages of Temple times, shall be celebrated by their descendants forever.

The Al-mighty Who performed for them a miracle and wonder, may He perform for us miracles and wonders. And we should see the fulfillment of what is written (Michah 7:15) "As in the days when you left the land of Egypt I will show it wonders."

1st Book of Machabees

Chapter 1: The reign of Alexander and his successors: Antiochus rifles and profanes the temple of God: and persecutes unto death all that will not forsake the law of God, and the religion of their fathers.

[1] Now it came to pass, after that Alexander the son of Philip the Macedonian, who first reigned in Greece, coming out of the land of Cethim, had overthrown Darius king of the Persians and Medes: [2] He fought many battles, and took the strong holds of all, and slew the kings of the earth: [3] And he went through even to the ends of the earth, and took the spoils of many nations: and the earth was quiet before him. [4] And he gathered a power, and a very strong army: and his heart was exalted and lifted up. [5] And he subdued countries of nations, and princes: and they became tributaries to him.

[6] And after these things, he fell down upon his bed, and knew that he should die. [7] And he called his servants the nobles that were brought up with him from his youth: and he **divided his kingdom** among them, while he was yet alive. [8] And Alexander reigned twelve years, and he died. [9] And his servants made themselves kings every one in his place: [10] And they all put crowns upon themselves after his death, and their sons after them many years, and evils were multiplied in the earth.

[7] "**Divided his kingdom**": This is otherwise related by Q. Curtius; though he acknowledges that divers were of that opinion, and that it had been delivered by some authors, lib. 10. But here we find from the sacred text, that he was in error.

[11] And there came out of them a wicked root, **Antiochus the Illustrious**, the son of king Antiochus, who had been a hostage at Rome: and he reigned in the hundred and thirty-seventh year **of the kingdom of the Greeks**. [12] In those days there went out of Israel wicked men, and they persuaded many, saying: Let us go, and make a covenant with the heathens that are round about us: for since we departed from them, many evils have befallen us. [13] And the word seemed good in their eyes. [14] And some of the people determined to do this, and went to the king: and he gave them license to do after the ordinances of the heathens. [15] And they built a place of exercise in Jerusalem, according to the laws of the nations:

[11] "**Antiochus the Illustrious**": Epiphanes, the younger son of Antiochus the Great, who usurped the kingdom, to the prejudice of his nephew Demetrius, son of his elder brother Seleucus Philopater.-- Ibid.

[11] "**Of the kingdom of the Greeks**": Counting, not from the beginning of the reign of Alexander, but from the first year of Seleucus Nicator.

[16] And they made themselves prepuces, and departed from the holy covenant, and joined themselves to the heathens, and were sold to do evil. [17] And the kingdom was established before Antiochus, and he had a mind to reign over the land of Egypt, that he might reign over two kingdoms. [18] And he entered into Egypt with a great multitude, with chariots and elephants, and horsemen, and a great number of ships: [19] And he made war against Ptolemee king of Egypt, but Ptolemee was afraid at his presence, and fled, and many were wounded unto death. [20] And he took the strong cities in the land of Egypt: and he took the spoils of the land of Egypt.

[21] And after Antiochus had ravaged Egypt in the hundred and forty-third year, he returned and went up against Israel. [22] And he went up to Jerusalem with a great multitude. [23] And he proudly entered into the sanctuary, and took away the golden altar, and the candlestick of light, and all the vessels thereof, and the table of proposition, and the pouring vessels, and the vials, and the little mortars of gold, and the veil, and the crowns, and the golden ornament that was before the temple: and he broke them all in pieces. [24] And he took the silver and gold, and the precious vessels: and he took the hidden treasures which he found: and when he had taken all away he departed into his own country. [25] And he made a great slaughter of men, and spoke very proudly.

[26] And there was great mourning in Israel, and in every place where they were. [27] And the princes, and the ancients mourned, and the virgins and the young men were made feeble, and the beauty of the women was changed. [28] Every bridegroom took up lamentation: and the bride that sat in the marriage bed, mourned: [29] And the land was moved for the inhabitants thereof, and all the house of Jacob was covered with confusion. [30] And after two full years the king sent **the chief collector** of his tributes to the cities of Juda, and he came to Jerusalem with a great multitude.

[30] "**The chief collector**": Apollonius.

[31] And he spoke to them peaceable words in deceit: and they believed him. [32] And he fell upon the city suddenly, and struck it with a great slaughter, and destroyed much people in Israel. [33] And he took the spoils of the city, and burnt it with fire, and threw down the houses thereof, and the walls thereof round about: [34] And they took the women captive, and the children, and the cattle they possessed. [35] And they built **the city of David** with a great and strong wall, and with strong towers, and made it a fortress for them:

[35] "**The city of David**": That is, the castle of Sion.

[36] And they placed there a sinful nation, wicked men, and they fortified themselves therein: and they stored up armour, and victuals, and gathered together the spoils of Jerusalem; [37] And laid them up there: and they became a great snare. [38] And this was a place to lie in wait against the sanctuary, and **an evil devil** in Israel. [39] And they shed innocent blood round about the sanctuary, and defiled the holy place. [40] And the inhabitants of Jerusalem fled away by reason of them, and the city was made the habitation of strangers, and she became a stranger to her own seed, and her children forsook her.

[38] "**An evil devil**": That is, an adversary watching constantly to do harm, as the evil spirit is always watching and seeking whom he may devour.

[41] Her sanctuary was desolate like a wilderness, her festival days were turned into mourning, her sabbaths into reproach, her honours were brought to nothing. [42] Her dishonour was increased according to her glory, and her excellency was turned into mourning. [43] And king Antiochus wrote to all his kingdom, that all the people should be one: and every one should leave his own law. [44] And all nations consented according to the word of king Antiochus. [45] And many of Israel consented to his service, and they sacrificed to idols, and profaned the sabbath.

[46] And the king sent letters by the hands of messengers to Jerusalem, and to all the cities of Juda: that they should follow the law of the nations of the earth, [47] And should forbid holocausts and sacrifices, and atonements to be made in the temple of God. [48] And should prohibit the sabbath, and the festival days, to be celebrated. [49] And he commanded the holy places to be profaned, and the holy people of Israel. [50] And he commanded altars to be built, and temples, and idols, and swine's flesh to be immolated, and unclean beasts.

[51] And that they should leave their children uncircumcised, and let their souls be defiled with all uncleannesses, and abominations, to the end that they should forget the law, and should change all the justifications of God. [52] And that whosoever would not do according to the word of king Antiochus should be put to death. [53] According to all these words he wrote to his whole kingdom, and he appointed rulers over the people that should force them to do these things. [54] And they commanded the cities of Juda to sacrifice. [55] Then many of the people were gathered to them that had forsaken the law of the Lord: and they committed evils in the land:

[56] And they drove away the people of Israel into lurking holes, and into the secret places of fugitives. [57] On the fifteenth day of the month Casleu, in the hundred and forty-fifth year, king Antiochus set up **the abominable idol** of desolation upon the altar of God, and they built altars throughout all the cities of Juda round about: [58] And they burnt incense, and sacrificed at the doors of the houses, and in the streets. [59] And they cut in pieces, and burnt with fire the books of the law of God: [60] And every one with whom the books of the testament of the Lord were found, and whosoever observed the law of the Lord, they put to death, according to the edict of the king.

[57] "**The abominable idol**": Viz., the statue of Jupiter Olympius.

[61] Thus by their power did they deal with the people of Israel, that were found in the cities month after month. [62] And on the five and twentieth day of the month they sacrificed upon the altar of the idol that was over against the altar of God. [63] Now the women that circumcised their children, were slain according to the commandment of king Antiochus. [64] And they hanged the children about their necks in all their houses: and those that had circumcised them, they put to death. [65] And many of the people of Israel determined with themselves, that they would not eat unclean things: and they chose rather to die than to be defiled with unclean meats.

[66] And they would not break the holy law of God, and they were put to death: [67] And there was very great wrath upon the people.

Chapter 2: The zeal and success of Mathathias. His exhortation to his sons at his death.

[1] In those days arose Mathathias the son of John, the son of Simeon, a priest of the sons of Joarib, from Jerusalem, and he abode in the mountain of Modin. [2] And he had five sons: John who was surnamed Gaddis: [3] And Simon, who was surnamed Thasi: [4] And Judas, who was called Machabeus: [5] And Eleazar, who was surnamed Abaron: and Jonathan, who was surnamed Apphus.

[6] These saw the evils that were done in the people of Juda, and in Jerusalem. [7] And Mathathias said: Woe is me, wherefore was I born to see the ruin of my people, and the ruin of the holy city, and to dwell there, when it is given into the hands of the enemies? [8] The holy places are come into the hands of strangers: her temple is become as a man without honour. [9] The vessels of her glory are carried away captive: her old men are murdered in the streets, and her young men are fallen by the sword of the enemies. [10] What nation hath not inherited her kingdom, and gotten of her spoils?

[11] All her ornaments are taken away. She that was free is made a slave. [12] And behold our sanctuary, and our beauty, and our glory is laid waste, and the Gentiles have defiled them. [13] To what end then should we live any longer? [14] And Mathathias and his sons rent their garments, and they covered themselves with haircloth, and made great lamentation. [15] And they that were sent from king Antiochus came thither, to compel them that were fled into the city of Modin, to sacrifice, and to burn incense, and to depart from the law of God.

[16] And many of the people of Israel consented, and came to them: but Mathathias and his sons stood firm. [17] And they that were sent from Antiochus, answering, said to Mathathias: Thou art a ruler, and an honourable, and great man in this city, and adorned with sons, and brethren. [18] Therefore come thou first, and obey the king's commandment, as all nations have done, and the men of Juda, and they that remain in Jerusalem: and thou, and thy sons, shall be in the number of the king's friends, and enriched with gold, and silver, and many presents. [19] Then Mathathias answered, and said with a loud voice: Although all nations obey king Antiochus, so as to depart every man from the service of the law of his fathers, and consent to his commandments: [20] I and my sons, and my brethren will obey the law of our fathers.

[21] God be merciful unto us: it is not profitable for us to forsake the law, and the justices of God: [22] We will not hearken to the words of king Antiochus, neither will we sacrifice, and transgress the commandments of our law, to go another way. [23] Now as he left off speaking these words, there came a certain Jew in the sight of all to sacrifice to the idols upon the altar in the city of Modin, according to the king's commandment. [24] And Mathathias saw and was grieved, and his reins trembled, and his wrath was kindled according to the judgment of the law, and running upon him he slew him upon the altar: [25] Moreover the man whom king Antiochus had sent, who compelled them to sacrifice, he slew at the same time, and pulled down the altar.

[26] And shewed zeal for the law, as Phinees did by Zamri the son of Salomi. [27] And Mathathias cried out in the city with a loud voice, saying: Every one that hath zeal for the law, and maintaineth the testament, let him follow me. [28] So he, and his sons fled into the mountains, and left all that they had in the city. [29] Then many that sought after judgment, and justice, went down into the desert: [30] And they abode there, they and their children, and their wives, and their cattle: because afflictions increased upon them.

[31] And it was told to the king's men, and to the army that was in Jerusalem in the city of David, that certain men who had broken the king's commandment, were gone away into the secret places in the wilderness, and that many were gone after them. [32] And forthwith they went out towards them, and made war against them on the sabbath day, [33] And they said to them: Do you still resist? come forth, and do according to the edict of king Antiochus, and you shall live. [34] And they said: We will not come forth, neither will we obey the king's edict, to profane the sabbath day. [35] And they made haste to give them battle.

[36] But they answered them not, neither did they cast a stone at them, nor stopped up the secret places, [37] Saying: Let us all die in our innocency: and heaven and earth shall be witnesses for us, that you put us to death wrongfully. [38] So they gave them battle on the sabbath: and they were slain with their wives, and their children, and their cattle, to the number of a thousand persons. [39] And Mathathias and his friends heard of it, and they mourned for them exceedingly. [40] And every man said to his neighbour: If we shall all do as our brethren have done, and not fight against the heathens for our lives, and our justifications: they will now quickly root us out of the earth.

[41] And they determined in that day, saying: Whosoever shall come up against us to fight on the sabbath day, we will fight against him: and we will not all die, as our brethren that were slain in the secret places. [42] Then was assembled to them the congregation of **the Assideans**, the stoutest of Israel, every one that had a good will for the law. [43] And all they that fled from the evils, joined themselves to them, and were a support to them. [44] And they gathered an army, and slew the sinners in their wrath, and the wicked men in their indignation: and the rest fled to the nations for safety. [45] And Mathathias and his friends went round about, and they threw down the altars:

[42] "**The Assideans**": A set of men that led a religious life; and were zealous for the law and worship of God.

[46] And they circumcised all the children whom they found in the confines of Israel that were uncircumcised: and they did valiantly. [47] And they pursued after the children of pride, and the work prospered in their hands: [48] And they recovered the law out of the hands of the nations, and out of the hands of the kings: and **they yielded not the horn** to the sinner. [49] Now the days drew near that Mathathias should die, and he said to his sons: Now hath pride and chastisement gotten strength, and the time of destruction, and the wrath of indignation: [50] Now therefore, O my sons, be ye zealous for the law, and give your lives for the covenant of your fathers.

[48] "**They yielded not the horn**": That is, they suffered not the power of Antiochus, that man of sin, to abolish the law and religion of God.

[51] And call to remembrance the works of the fathers, which they have done in their generations: and you shall receive great glory, and an everlasting name. [52] Was not Abraham found faithful in temptation, and it was reputed to him unto justice? [53] Joseph in the time of his distress kept the commandment, and he was made lord of Egypt. [54] Phinees our father, by being fervent in the zeal of God, received the covenant of an everlasting priesthood. [55] **Jesus**, whilst he fulfilled the word, was made ruler in Israel.

[55] "**Jesus**": That is, Joshua.

[56] Caleb, for bearing witness before the congregation, received an inheritance. [57] David by his mercy obtained the throne of an everlasting kingdom. [58] Elias, while he was full of zeal for the law, was taken up into heaven. [59] Ananias and Azarias and Misael by believing, were delivered out of the flame. [60] Daniel in his innocency was delivered out of the mouth of the lions.

[61] And thus consider through all generations: that none that trust in him fail in strength. [62] And fear not the words of a sinful man, for his glory is dung, and worms: [63] Today he is lifted up, and tomorrow he shall not be found, because he is returned into his earth; and his thought is come to nothing. [64] You therefore, my sons, take courage, and behave manfully in the law: for by it you shall be glorious. [65] And behold, I know that your brother Simon is a man of counsel: give ear to him always, and he shall be a father to you.

[66] And Judas Machabeus who is valiant and strong from his youth up, let him be the leader of your army, and he shall manage the war of the people. [67] And you shall take to you all that observe the law: and revenge ye the wrong of your people. [68] Render to the Gentiles their reward, and take heed to the precepts of the law. [69] And he blessed them, and was joined to his fathers. [70] And he died in the hundred and forty-sixth year: and he was buried by his sons in the sepulchres of his fathers in Modin, and all Israel mourned for him with great mourning.

Chapter 3: Judas Machabeus succeeds his father, and overthrows Apollonius and Seron. A great army is sent against him out of Syria. He prepares his people for battle by fasting and prayer.

[1] Then his son Judas, called Machabeus, rose up in his stead. [2] And all his brethren helped him, and all they that had joined themselves to his father, and they fought with cheerfulness the battle of Israel. [3] And he got his people great honour, and put on a breastplate as a giant, and girt his warlike armour about him in battles, and protected the camp with his sword. [4] In his acts he was like a lion, and like a lion's whelp roaring for his prey. [5] And he pursued the wicked and sought them out, and them that troubled his people he burnt with fire:

[6] And his enemies were driven away for fear of him, and all the workers of iniquity were troubled: and salvation prospered in his hand. [7] And he grieved many kings, and made Jacob glad with his works, and his memory is blessed for ever. [8] And he went through the cities of Juda, and destroyed the wicked out of them, and turned away wrath from Israel. [9] And he was renowned even to the utmost part of the earth, and he gathered them that were perishing. [10] And Apollonius gathered together the Gentiles, and a numerous and great army from Samaria, to make war against Israel.

[11] And Judas understood it, and went forth to meet him: and he overthrew him, and killed him: and many fell down slain, the rest fled away. [12] And he took their spoils, and Judas took the sword of Apollonius, and fought with it all his lifetime. [13] And Seron captain of the army of Syria heard that Judas had assembled a company of the faithful, and a congregation with him, [14] And he said: I will get me a name, and will be glorified in the kingdom, and will overthrow Judas, and those that are with him, that have despised the edict of the king. [15] And he made himself ready: and the host of the wicked went up with him, strong succours, to be revenged of the children of Israel.

[16] And they approached even as far as Bethoron: and Judas went forth to meet him, with a small company. [17] But when they saw the army coming to meet them, they said to Judas: How shall we, being few, be able to fight against so great a multitude and so strong, and we are ready to faint with fasting today? [18] And Judas said: It is an easy matter for many to be shut up in the hands of a few: and there is no difference in the sight of the God of heaven to deliver with a great multitude, or with a small company: [19] For the success of war is not in the multitude of the army, but strength cometh from heaven. [20] They come against us with an insolent multitude, and with pride, to destroy us, and our wives, and our children, and to take our spoils.

[21] But we will fight for our lives and our laws: [22] And the Lord himself will overthrow them before our face: but as for you, fear them not. [23] And as soon as he had made an end of speaking, he rushed suddenly upon them: and Seron and his host were overthrown before him: [24] And he pursued him by the descent of Bethoron even to the plain, and there fell of them eight hundred men, and the rest fled into the land of the Philistines. [25] And the fear of Judas and of his brethren, and the dread of them fell upon all the nations round about them.

[26] And his fame came to the king, and all nations told of the battles of Judas. [27] Now when king Antiochus heard these words, he was angry in his mind: and he sent and gathered the forces of all his kingdom, an exceeding strong army. [28] And he opened his treasury, and gave out pay to the army for a year: and he commanded them, that they should be ready for all things. [29] And he perceived that the money of his treasures failed, and that the tributes of the country were small because of the dissension, and the evil that he had brought upon the land, that he might take away the laws of old times: [30] And he feared that he should not have as formerly enough, for charges and gifts, which he had given before with a liberal hand: for he had abounded more than the kings that had been before him.

[31] And he was greatly perplexed in mind, and purposed to go into Persia, and to take tributes of the countries, and to gather much money. [32] And he left Lysias, a nobleman of the blood royal, to oversee the affairs of the kingdom, from the river Euphrates even to the river of Egypt: [33] And to bring up his son Antiochus, till he came again. [34] And he delivered to him half the army, and the elephants: and he gave him charge concerning all that he would have done, and concerning the inhabitants of Judea, and Jerusalem: [35] And that he should send an army against them, to destroy and root out the strength of Israel, and the remnant of Jerusalem, and to take away the memory of them from that place:

[36] And that he should settle strangers to dwell in all their coasts, and divide their land by lot. [37] So the king took the half of the army that remained, and went forth from Antioch the chief city of his kingdom, in the hundred and forty-seventh year: and he passed over the river Euphrates, and went through the higher countries. [38] Then Lysias chose Ptolemee the son of Dorymenus, and Nicanor, and Gorgias, mighty men of the king's friends. [39] And he sent with them forty thousand men, and seven thousand horsemen: to go into the land of Juda, and to destroy it according to the king's orders. [40] So they went forth with all their power, and came, and pitched near Emmaus in the plain country.

[41] And the merchants of the countries heard the fame of them: and they took silver and gold in abundance, and servants: and they came into the camp, to buy the children of Israel for slaves: and there were joined to them the forces of Syria, and of the land of the strangers. [42] And Judas and his brethren saw that evils were multiplied, and that the armies approached to their borders: and they knew the orders the king had given to destroy the people and utterly abolish them. [43] And they said every man to his neighbour: Let us raise up the low condition of our people, and let us fight for our people, and our sanctuary. [44] And the assembly was gathered that they might be ready for battle: and that they might pray, and ask mercy and compassion. [45] Now Jerusalem was not inhabited, but was like a desert: there was none of her children that went in or out: and the sanctuary was trodden down: and the children of strangers were in the castle, there was the habitation of the Gentiles: and joy was taken away from Jacob, and the pipe and harp ceased there.

[46] And they assembled together, and came to Maspha over against Jerusalem: for in Maspha was a place of prayer heretofore in Israel. [47] And they fasted that day, and put on haircloth, and put ashes upon their heads: and they rent their garments: [48] And they laid open the books of the law, in which the Gentiles searched for the likeness of their idols: [49] And they brought the priestly ornaments, and the firstfruits and tithes, and stirred up the Nazarites that had fulfilled their days: [50] And they cried with a loud voice toward heaven, saying: What shall we do with these, and whither shall we carry them?

[51] For thy holies are trodden down, and are profaned, and thy priests are in mourning, and are brought low. [52] And behold the nations are come together against us to destroy us: thou knowest what they intend against us. [53] How shall we be able to stand before their face, unless thou, O God, help us? [54] Then they sounded with trumpets, and cried out with a loud voice. [55] And after this Judas appointed captains over the people, over thousands, and over hundreds, and over fifties, and over tens.

[56] And he said to them that were building houses, or had betrothed wives, or were planting vineyards, or were fearful, that they should return every man to his house, according to the law. [57] So they removed the camp, and pitched on the south side of Emmaus. [58] And Judas said: Gird yourselves, and be valiant men, and be ready against the morning, that you may fight with these nations that are assembled against us to destroy us and our sanctuary. [59] For it is better for us to die in battle, than to see the evils of our nation, and of the holies: [60] Nevertheless as it shall be the will of God in heaven so be it done.

Chapter 4: Judas routs the king's army. Gorgias flies before him. Lysias comes against him with a great army, but is defeated. Judas cleanses the temple, sets up a new altar, and fortifies the sanctuary.

[1] Then Gorgias took five thousand men, and a thousand of the best horsemen: and they removed out of the camp by night. [2] That they might come upon the camp of the Jews, and strike them suddenly: and the men that were of the castle were their guides. [3] And Judas heard of it, and rose up, he and the valiant men, to attack the king's forces that were in Emmaus. [4] For as yet **the army was dispersed** from the camp. [5] And Gorgias came by night into the camp of Judas, and found no man, and he sought them in the mountains: for he said: These men flee from us.

[4] **"The army was dispersed": That is, in different divisions, not altogether encamped.**

[6] And when it was day, Judas shewed himself in the plain with three thousand men only, **who neither had armour nor swords**. [7] And they saw the camp of the Gentiles that it was strong, and the men in breastplates, and the horsemen round about them, and these were trained up to war. [8] And Judas said to the men that were with him: Fear ye not their multitude, neither be ye afraid of their assault. [9] Remember in what manner our fathers were saved in the Red Sea, when Pharaoh pursued them with a great army. [10] And now let us cry to heaven: and the Lord will have mercy on us, and will remember the covenant of our fathers, and will destroy this army before our face this day:

[6] **"Who neither had armour nor swords": Such as they wished for.**

[11] And all nations shall know that there is one that redeemeth and delivereth Israel. [12] And the strangers lifted up their eyes, and saw them coming against them. [13] And they went out of the camp to battle, and they that were with Judas sounded the trumpet. [14] And they joined battle: and the Gentiles were routed, and fled into the plain. [15] But all the hindmost of them fell by the sword, and they pursued them as far as Gezeron, and even to the plains of Idumea, and of Azotus, and of Jamnia: and there fell of them to the number of three thousand men.

[16] And Judas returned again with his army that followed him, [17] And he said to the people: Be not greedy of the spoils: for there is war before us: [18] And Gorgias and his army are near us in the mountain: but stand ye now against our enemies, and overthrow them, and you shall take the spoils afterwards with safety. [19] And as Judas was speaking these words, behold part of them appeared looking forth from the mountain. [20] And Gorgias saw that his men were put to flight, and that they had set fire to the camp: for the smoke that was seen declared what was done.

[21] And when they had seen this, they were seized with great fear, seeing at the same time Judas and his army in the plain ready to fight. [22] So they all fled away into the land of the strangers. [23] And Judas returned to take the spoils of the camp, and they got much gold, and silver, and blue silk, and purple of the sea, and great riches. [24] And returning home they sung a hymn, and blessed God in heaven, because he is good, because his mercy endureth for ever. [25] So Israel had a great deliverance that day.

[26] And such of the strangers as escaped, went and told Lysias all that had happened. [27] And when he heard these things, he was amazed and discouraged: because things had not succeeded in Israel according to his mind, and as the king had commanded. [28] So the year following Lysias gathered together threescore thousand chosen men, and five thousand horsemen, that he might subdue them. [29] And they came into Judea, and pitched their tents in Bethoron, and Judas met them with ten thousand men. [30] And they saw that the army was strong, and he prayed, and said: Blessed art thou, O Saviour of Israel, who didst break the violence of the mighty by the hand of thy servant David, and didst deliver up the camp of the strangers into the hands of Jonathan the son of Saul and of his armourbearer.

[31] Shut up this army in the hands of thy people Israel, and let them be confounded in their host and their horsemen. [32] Strike them with fear, and cause the boldness of their strength to languish, and let them quake at their own destruction. [33] Cast them down with the sword of them that love thee: and let all that know thy name, praise thee with hymns. [34] And they joined battle: and there fell of the army of Lysias five thousand men. [35] And when Lysias saw that his men were put to flight, and how bold the Jews were, and that they were ready either to live, or to die manfully, he went to Antioch, and chose soldiers, that they might come again into Judea with greater numbers.

[36] Then Judas, and his brethren said: Behold our enemies are discomfited: let us go up now to cleanse the holy places and to repair them. [37] And all the army assembled together, and they went up into mount Sion. [38] And they saw the sanctuary desolate, and the altar profaned, and the gates burnt, and shrubs growing up in the courts as in a forest, or on the mountains, and the chambers joining to the temple thrown down. [39] And they rent their garments, and made great lamentation, and put ashes on their heads: [40] And they fell face down to the ground on their faces, and they sounded with the trumpets of alarm, and they cried towards heaven.

[41] Then Judas appointed men to fight against them that were in the castle, till they had cleansed the holy places. [42] And he chose priests without blemish, whose will was set upon the law of God: [43] And they cleansed the holy places, and took away the stones that had been defiled into an unclean place. [44] And he considered about the altar of holocausts that had been profaned, what he should do with it. [45] And a good counsel came into their minds, to pull it down: lest it should be a reproach to them, because the Gentiles had defiled it; so they threw it down.

[46] And they laid up the stones in the mountain of the temple in a convenient place, till there should come a prophet, and give answer concerning them. [47] Then they took whole stones according to the law, and built a new altar according to the former: [48] And they built up the holy places, and the things that were within the temple: and they sanctified the temple, and the courts. [49] And they made new holy vessels, and brought in the candlestick, and the altar of incense, and the table into the temple. [50] And they put incense upon the altar, and lighted up the lamps that were upon the candlestick, and they gave light in the temple.

[51] And they set the loaves upon the table, and hung up the veils, and finished all the works that they had begun to make. [52] And they arose before the morning on the five and twentieth day of the ninth month (which is the month of Casleu) in the hundred and forty-eighth year. [53] And they offered sacrifice according to the law upon the new altar of holocausts which they had made. [54] According to the time, and according to the day wherein the heathens had defiled it, in the same was it dedicated anew with canticles, and harps, and lutes, and cymbals. [55] And all the people fell upon their faces, and adored, and blessed up to heaven, him that had prospered them.

[56] And they kept the dedication of the altar eight days, and they offered holocausts with joy, and sacrifices of salvation, and of praise. [57] And they adorned the front of the temple with crowns of gold, and escutcheons, and they renewed the gates, and the chambers, and hanged doors upon them. [58] And there was exceeding great joy among the people, and the reproach of the Gentiles was turned away. [59] And Judas, and his brethren, and all the church of Israel decreed, that the day of the dedication of the altar should be kept in its season from year to year for eight days, from the five and twentieth day of the month of Casleu, with joy and gladness. [60] They built up also at that time mount Sion, with high walls, and strong towers round about, lest the Gentiles should at any time come, and tread it down as they did before.

[61] And he placed a garrison there to keep it, and he fortified it to secure Bethsura, that the people might have a defence against Idumea.

Chapter 5: Judas and his brethren attack the enemies of their country, and deliver them that were distressed. Josephus and Azarius, attempting contrary to order to fight against their enemies, are defeated.

[1] Now it came to pass, when the nations round about heard that the altar and the sanctuary were built up as before, that they were exceeding angry. [2] And they thought to destroy the generation of Jacob that were among them, and they began to kill some of the people, and to persecute them. [3] Then Judas fought against the children of Esau in Idumea, and them that were in Acrabathane: because they beset the Israelites around about, and he made a great slaughter of them. [4] And he remembered the malice of the children of Ben: who were a snare and a stumblingblock to the people, by lying in wait for them in the way. [5] And they were shut up by him in towers, and he set upon them, and devoted them to utter destruction, and burnt their towers with fire, and all that were in them.

[6] Then he passed over to the children of Ammon, where he found a mighty power, and much people, and Timotheus was their captain: [7] And he fought many battles with them, and they were discomfited in their sight, and he smote them: [8] And he took the city of Gazer and her towns, and returned into Judea. [9] And the Gentiles that were in Galaad, assembled themselves together against the Israelites that were in their quarters to destroy them: and they fled into the fortress of Datheman. [10] And they sent letters to Judas and his brethren, saying, The heathens that are round about are gathered together against us, to destroy us:

[11] And they are preparing to come, and to take the fortress into which we are fled: and Timotheus is the captain of their host. [12] Now therefore come, and deliver us out of their hands, for many of us are slain. [13] And all our brethren that were in the places of Tubin, are killed: and they have carried away their wives, and their children, captives, and taken their spoils, and they have slain there almost a thousand men. [14] And while they were yet reading these letters, behold there came other messengers out of Galilee with their garments rent, who related according to these words: [15] Saying, that they of Ptolemais, and of Tyre, and of Sidon, were assembled against them, and all Galilee is filled with strangers, in order to consume us.

[16] Now when Judas and all the people heard these words, a great assembly met together to consider what they should do for their brethren that were in trouble, and were assaulted by them. [17] And Judas said to Simon his brother: Choose thee men, and go, and deliver thy brethren in Galilee: and I, and my brother Jonathan will go into the country of Galaad. [18] And he left Joseph the son of Zacharias, and Azarias captains of the people with the remnant of the army in Judea to keep it: [19] And he commanded them, saying: Take ye the charge of this people: but make no war against the heathens, till we return. [20] Now three thousand men were allotted to Simon, to go into Galilee: and eight thousand to Judas to go into the land of Galaad.

[21] And Simon went into Galilee, and fought many battles with the heathens: and the heathens were discomfited before his face, and he pursued them even to the gate of Ptolemais. [22] And there fell of the heathens almost three thousand men, and he took the spoils of them, [23] And he took with him those that were in Galilee and in Arbatis with their wives, and children, and all that they had, and he brought them into Judea with great joy. [24] And Judas Machabeus, and Jonathan his brother passed over the Jordan, and went three days' journey through the desert. [25] And the Nabutheans met them, and received them in a peaceable manner, and told them all that happened to their brethren in the land of Galaad,

[26] And that many of them were shut up in Barasa, and in Bosor, and in Alima, and in Casphor, and in Mageth, and in Carnaim: all these strong and great cities. [27] Yea, and that they were kept shut up in the rest of the cities of Galaad, and that they had appointed to bring their army on the morrow near to these cities, and to take them and to destroy them all in one day. [28] Then Judas and his army suddenly turned their march into the desert, to Bosor, and took the city: and he slew every male by the edge of the sword, and took all their spoils, and burnt it with fire. [29] And they removed from thence by night, and went till they came to the fortress. [30] And it came to pass that early in the morning, when they lifted up their eyes, behold there were people without number, carrying ladders and engines to take the fortress, and assault them.

[31] And Judas saw that the fight was begun, and the cry of the battle went up to heaven like a trumpet, and a great cry out of the city: [32] And he said to his host: Fight ye today for your brethren. [33] And he came with three companies behind them, and they sounded their trumpets, and cried out in prayer. [34] And the host of Timotheus understood that it was Machabeus, and they fled away before his face: and they made a great slaughter of them: and there fell of them in that day almost eight thousand men. [35] And Judas turned aside to Maspha, and assaulted, and took it, and he slew every male thereof, and took the spoils thereof, and burnt it with fire.

[36] From thence he marched, and took Casbon, and Mageth, and Bosor, and the rest of the cities of Galaad. [37] But after this Timotheus gathered another army, and camped over against Raphon beyond the torrent. [38] And Judas sent men to view the army: and they brought him word, saying: All the nations, that are round about us, are assembled unto him an army exceeding great: [39] And they have hired the Arabians to help them, and they have pitched their tents beyond the torrent, ready to come to fight against thee. And Judas went to meet them. [40] And Timotheus said to the captains of his army: When Judas and his army come near the torrent of water, if he pass over unto us first, we shall not be able to withstand him: for he will certainly prevail over us.

[41] But if he be afraid to pass over, and camp on the other side of the river, we will pass over to them and shall prevail against him. [42] Now when Judas came near the torrent of water, he set the scribes of the people by the torrent, and commanded them, saying: Suffer no man to stay behind: but let all come to the battle. [43] And he passed over to them first, and all the people after him, and all the heathens were discomfited before them, and they threw away their weapons, and fled to the temple that was in Carnaim. [44] And he took that city, and the temple he burnt with fire, with all things that were therein: and Carnaim was subdued, and could not stand against the face of Judas. [45] And Judas gathered together all the Israelites that were in the land of Galaad, from the least even to the greatest, and their wives, and children, and an army exceeding great, to come into the land of Juda.

[46] And they came as far as Ephron: now this was a great city situate in the way, strongly fortified, and there was no means to turn from it on the right hand or on the left, but the way was through the midst of it. [47] And they that were in the city, shut themselves in, and stopped up the gates with stones: and Judas sent to them with peaceable words, [48] Saying: Let us pass through your land, to go into our country: and no man shall hurt you: we will only pass through on foot. But they would not open to them. [49] Then Judas commanded proclamation to be made in the camp, that they should make an assault every man in the place where he was. [50] And the men of the army drew near, and he assaulted that city all the day, and all the night, and the city was delivered into his hands:

[51] And they slew every male with the edge of the sword, and he razed the city, and took the spoils thereof, and passed through all the city over them that were slain. [52] Then they passed over the Jordan to the great plain that is over against Bethsan. [53] And Judas gathered together the hindmost, and he exhorted the people all the way through, till they came into the land of Juda. [54] And they went up to mount Sion with joy and gladness, and offered holocausts, because not one of them was slain, till they had returned in peace. [55] Now in the days that Judas and Jonathan were in the land of Galaad, and Simon his brother in Galilee before Ptolemais,

[56] Joseph the son of Zacharias, and Azarias captain of the soldiers, heard of the good success, and the battles that were fought. [57] And he said: Let us also get us a name, and let us go fight against the Gentiles that are round about us. [58] And he gave charge to them that were in his army, and they went towards Jamnia. [59] And Gorgias and his men went out of the city, to give them battle. [60] And Joseph and Azarias were put to flight, and were pursued unto the borders of Judea: and there fell, on that day, of the people of Israel about two thousand men, and there was a great overthrow of the people:

[61] Because they did not hearken to Judas, and his brethren, thinking that they should do manfully. [62] But they were not of the seed of those men by whom salvation was brought to Israel. [63] And the men of Juda were magnified exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and of all the nations where their name was heard. [64] And people assembled to them with joyful acclamations. [65] Then Judas and his brethren went forth and attacked the children of Esau, in the land toward the south, and he took Chebron, and her towns: and he burnt the walls thereof and the towers all round it.

[66] And he removed his camp to go into the land of the aliens, and he went through Samaria. [67] In that day some priests fell in battle, while desiring to do manfully they went out unadvisedly to fight. [68] And Judas turned to Azotus into the land of the strangers, and he threw down their altars, and he burnt the statues of their gods with fire: and he took the spoils of the cities, and returned into the land of Juda.

Chapter 6: The fruitless repentance and death of Antiochus. His son comes against Judas with a formidable army. He besieges Sion: but at last makes peace with the Jews.

[1] Now king Antiochus was going through the higher countries, and he heard that the city of Elymais in Persia was greatly renowned, and abounding in silver and gold. [2] And that there was in it a temple, exceeding rich: and coverings of gold, and breastplates, and shields which king Alexander, son of Philip the Macedonian that reigned first in Greece, had left there. [3] Lo, he came, and sought to take the city and to pillage it: But he was not able, because the design was known to them that were in the city. [4] And they rose up against him in battle, and he fled away from thence, and departed with great sadness, and returned towards Babylonia. [5] And whilst he was in Persia, there came one that told him, how the armies that were in the land of Juda were put to flight:

[6] And that Lysias went with a very great power, and was put to flight before the face of the Jews, and that they were grown strong by the armour, and power, and store of spoils, which they had gotten out of the camps which they had destroyed: [7] And that they had thrown down the abomination which he had set up upon the altar in Jerusalem, and that they had compassed about the sanctuary with high walls as before, and Bethsura also his city. [8] And it came to pass when the king heard these words, that he was struck with fear, and exceedingly moved: and he laid himself down upon his bed, and fell sick for grief, because it had not fallen out to him as he imagined. [9] And he remained there many days: for great grief came more and more and more upon him, and he made account that he should die. [10] And he called for all his friends, and said to them: Sleep is gone from my eyes, and I am fallen away, and my heart is cast down for anxiety.

[11] And I said in my heart: Into how much tribulation am I come, and into what floods of sorrow, wherein now I am: I that was pleasant and beloved in my power! [12] But now I remember the evils that I have done in Jerusalem, from whence also I took away all the spoils of gold, and of silver that were in it, and I sent to destroy the inhabitants of Juda without cause. [13] I know therefore that for this cause these evils have found me: and behold I perish with great grief in a strange land. [14] Then he called Philip, one of his friends, and he made him regent over all his kingdom. [15] And he gave him the crown, and his robe, and his ring, that he should go to Antiochus his son, and should bring him up for the kingdom.

[16] So king Antiochus died there in the year one hundred and forty-nine. [17] And Lysias understood that the king was dead, and he set up Antiochus his son to reign, whom he brought up young: and he called his name Eupator. [18] Now they that were in the castle, had shut up the Israelites round about the holy places: and they were continually seeking their hurt, and to strengthen the Gentiles. [19] And Judas purposed to destroy them: and he called together all the people, to besiege them. [20] And they came together, and besieged them in the year one hundred and fifty, and they made battering slings and engines.

[21] And some of the besieged got out: and some wicked men of Israel joined themselves unto them. [22] And they went to the king, and said: How long dost thou delay to execute the judgment, and to revenge our brethren? [23] We determined to serve thy father and to do according to his orders, and obey his edicts: [24] And for this they of our nation are alienated from us, and have slain as many of us as they could find, and have spoiled our inheritances. [25] Neither have they put forth their hand against us only, but also against all our borders.

[26] And behold they have approached this day to the castle of Jerusalem to take it, and they have fortified the stronghold of Bethsura: [27] And unless thou speedily prevent them, they will do greater things than these, and thou shalt not be able to subdue them. [28] Now when the king heard this, he was angry: and he called together all his friends, and the captains of his army, and them that were over the horsemen. [29] There came also to him from other realms, and from the islands of the sea hired troops. [30] And the number of his army was an hundred thousand footmen, and twenty thousand horsemen, and thirty-two elephants, trained to battle.

[31] And they went through Idumea, and approached to Bethsura, and fought many days, and they made engines: **but they sallied forth** and burnt them with fire, and fought manfully. [32] And Judas departed from the castle, and removed the camp to Bethzacharam, over against the king's camp. [33] And the king rose before it was light, and made his troops march on fiercely towards the way of Bethzacharam: and the armies made themselves ready for the battle, and they sounded the trumpets: [34] And they shewed the elephants the blood of grapes, and mulberries to provoke them to fight. [35] And they distributed the beasts by the legions: and there stood by every elephant a thousand men in coats of mail, and with helmets of brass on their heads: and five hundred horsemen set in order were chosen for every beast.

[31] **"But they sallied forth": That is, the citizens of Bethsura sallied forth and burnt them, that is, burnt the engines of the besiegers.**

[36] **These before the time** wheresoever the beast was, they were there: and withersoever it went, they went, and they departed not from it. [37] And upon the beast, there were strong wooden towers, which covered every one of them: and engines upon them: and upon every one thirty-two valiant men, who fought from above; and an Indian to rule the beast. [38] And the rest of the horsemen he placed on this side and on that side at the two wings, with trumpets to stir up the army, and to hasten them forward that stood thick together in the legions thereof. [39] Now when the sun shone upon the shields of gold, and of brass, the mountains glittered therewith, and they shone like lamps of fire. [40] And part of the king's army was distinguished by the high mountains, and the other part by the low places: and they marched on warily and orderly.

[36] **"These before the time": That is, these were ready for every occasion.**

[41] And all the inhabitants of the land were moved at the noise of their multitude, and the marching of the company, and the rattling of the armour, for the army was exceeding great and strong. [42] And Judas and his army drew near for battle: and there fell of the king's army six hundred men. [43] And Eleazar the son of Saura saw one of the beasts harnessed with the king's harness: and it was higher than the other beasts: and it seemed to him that the king was on it: [44] And he exposed himself to deliver his people and to get himself an everlasting name. [45] And he ran up to it boldly in the midst of the legion, killing on the right hand, and on the left, and they fell by him on this side and that side.

[46] And he went between the feet of the elephant, and put himself under it: and slew it, and it fell to the ground upon him, and he died there. [47] Then they seeing the strength of the king and the fierceness of his army, turned away from them. [48] But the king's army went up against them to Jerusalem: and the king's army pitched their tents against Judea and mount Sion. [49] And he made peace with them that were in Bethsura: and they came forth out of the city, because they had no victuals, being shut up there, for it was the year of rest to the land. [50] And the king took Bethsura: and he placed there a garrison to keep it.

[51] And he turned his army against the sanctuary for many days: and he set up there battering slings, and engines and instruments to cast fire, and engines to cast stones and javelins, and pieces to shoot arrows, and slings. [52] And they also made engines against their engines, and they fought for many days. [53] But there were no victuals in the city, because it was the seventh year: and such as had stayed in Judea of them that came from among the nations, had eaten the residue of all that which had been stored up. [54] And there remained in the holy places but a few, for the famine had prevailed over them: and they were dispersed every man to his own place. [55] Now Lysias heard that Philip, whom king Antiochus while he lived had appointed to bring up his son Antiochus, and to reign, to be king,

[56] Was returned from Persia, and Media, with the army that went with him, and that he sought to take upon him the affairs of the kingdom: [57] Wherefore he made haste to go, and say to the king and to the captains of the army: We decay daily, and our provision of victuals is small, and the place that we lay siege to is strong, and it lieth upon us to take order for the affairs of the kingdom. [58] Now therefore let us come to an agreement with these men, and make peace with them and with all their nation. [59] And let us covenant with them, that they may live according to their own laws as before. For because of our despising their laws, they have been provoked, and have done all these things. [60] And the proposal was acceptable in the sight of the king, and of the princes: and he sent to them to make peace: and they accepted of it.

[61] And the king and the princes swore to them: and they came out of the stronghold. [62] Then the king entered into mount Sion, and saw the strength of the place: and he quickly broke the oath that he had taken, and gave commandment to throw down the wall round about. [63] And he departed in haste, and returned to Antioch, where he found Philip master of the city: and he fought against him, and took the city.

Chapter 7: Demetrius is made king, and sends Bacchides and Alcimus the priest into Judea, and after them Nicanor, who is slain by Judas with all his army.

[1] In the hundred and fifty-first year Demetrius the son of Seleucus departed from the city of Rome, and came up with a few men into a city of the sea coast, and reigned there. [2] And it came to pass, as he entered into the house of the kingdom of his fathers, that the army seized upon Antiochus, and Lysias, to bring them unto him. [3] And when he knew it, he said: Let me not see their face. [4] So the army slew them. And Demetrius sat upon the throne of his kingdom: [5] And there came to him the wicked and ungodly men of Israel: And Alcimus was at the head of them, who desired to be made high priest.

[6] And they accused the people to the king, saying: Judas and his brethren have destroyed all thy friends, and he hath driven us out of our land. [7] Now therefore send some man whom thou trustest, and let him go, and see all the havock he hath made amongst us, and in the king's lands: and let him punish all his friends and their helpers. [8] Then the king chose Bacchides, one of his friends that ruled beyond the great river in the kingdom, and was faithful to the king: and he sent him, [9] To see the havock that Judas had made: and the wicked Alcimus he made high priest, and commanded him to take revenge upon the children of Israel. [10] And they arose, and came with a great army into the land of Juda: and they sent messengers, and spoke to Judas and his brethren with peaceable words deceitfully.

[11] But they gave no heed to their words: for they saw that they were come with a great army. [12] Then there assembled to Alcimus and Bacchides a company of the scribes to require things that are just: [13] And first the Assideans that were among the children of Israel, and they sought peace of them. [14] For they said: One that is a priest of the seed of Aaron is come, he will not deceive us. [15] And he spoke to them peaceably: and he swore to them, saying: We will do you no harm nor your friends.

[16] And they believed him. And he took threescore of them, and slew them in one day, according to the word that is written: [17] The flesh of thy saints, and the blood of them they have shed round about Jerusalem, and there was none to bury them. [18] Then fear and trembling fell upon all the people: for they said: There is no truth, nor justice among them: for they have broken the covenant, and the oath which they made. [19] And Bacchides removed the camp from Jerusalem, and pitched in Bethzecha: and he sent, and took many of them that were fled away from him, and some of the people he killed, and threw them into a great pit. [20] Then he committed the country to Alcimus, and left with him troops to help him. So Bacchides went away to the king:

[21] But Alcimus did what he could to maintain his chief priesthood. [22] And they that disturbed the people resorted to him, and they got the land of Juda into their power, and did much hurt in Israel. [23] And Judas saw all the evils that Alcimus, and they that were with him, did to the children of Israel, much more than the Gentiles. [24] And he went out into all the coasts of Juda round about, and took vengeance upon the men that had revolted, and they ceased to go forth any more into the country. [25] And Alcimus saw that Judas, and they that were with him prevailed: and he knew that he could not stand against them, and he went back to the king, and accused them of many crimes.

[26] And the king sent Nicanor one of his principal lords, who was a great enemy to Israel: and he commanded him to destroy the people. [27] And Nicanor came to Jerusalem with a great army, and he sent to Judas and to his brethren deceitfully with friendly words, [28] Saying: Let there be no fighting between me and you: I will come with a few men to see your faces with peace. [29] And he came to Judas, and they saluted one another peaceably: and the enemies were prepared to take away Judas by force. [30] And the thing was known to Judas that he was come to him with deceit: and he was much afraid of him, and would not see his face any more.

[31] And Nicanor knew that his counsel was discovered: and he went out to fight against Judas near Capharsalama. [32] And there fell of Nicanor's army almost five thousand men, and they fled into the city of David. [33] And after this Nicanor went up into mount Sion: and some of the priests and the people came out to salute him peaceably, and to shew him the holocausts that were offered for the king. [34] But he mocked them and despised them, and abused them: and he spoke proudly, [35] And swore in anger, saying: Unless Judas and his army be delivered into my hands, as soon as ever I return in peace, I will burn this house. And he went out in a great rage.

[36] And the priests went in, and stood before the face of the altar and the temple: and weeping, they said: [37] Thou, O Lord, hast chosen this house for thy name to be called upon therein, that it might be a house of prayer and supplication for thy people. [38] Be avenged of this man, and his army, and let them fall by the sword: remember their blasphemies, and suffer them not to continue any longer. [39] Then Nicanor went out from Jerusalem, and encamped near to Bethoron: and an army of Syria joined him. [40] But Judas pitched in Adarsa with three thousand men: and Judas prayed, and said:

[41] O Lord, when they that were sent by king Sennacherib blasphemed thee, an angel went out, and slew of them a hundred and eighty-five thousand: [42] Even so destroy this army in our sight today, and let the rest know that he hath spoken ill against thy sanctuary: and judge thou him according to his wickedness. [43] And the armies joined battle on the thirteenth day of the month Adar: and the army of Nicanor was defeated, and he himself was first slain in the battle. [44] And when his army saw that Nicanor was slain, they threw away their weapons, and fled: [45] And they pursued after them one day's journey from Adazer, even till ye come to Gazara, and they sounded the trumpets after them with signals.

[46] And they went forth out of all the towns of Judea round about, and they pushed them with the horns, and they turned again to them, and they were all slain with the sword, and there was not left of them so much as one. [47] And they took the spoils of them for a booty, and they cut off Nicanor's head, and his right hand, which he had proudly stretched out, and they brought it, and hung it up over against Jerusalem. [48] And the people rejoiced exceedingly, and they spent that day with great joy. [49] And he ordained that this day should be kept every year, being the thirteenth of the month of Adar. [50] And the land of Juda was quiet for a short time.

Chapter 8: Judas hears of the great character of the Romans: he makes a league with them.

[1] Now Judas heard of the fame of the Romans, that they are powerful and strong, and willingly agree to all things that are requested of them: and that whosoever have come to them, they have made amity with them, and that they are mighty in power. [2] And **they heard** of their battles, and their noble acts, which they had done in Galatia, how they conquered them, and brought them under tribute: [3] And how great things they had done in the land of Spain, and that they had brought under their power the mines of silver and of gold that are there, and had gotten possession of all the place by their counsel and patience: [4] And had conquered places that were very far off from them, and kings that came against them from the ends of the earth, and had overthrown them with great slaughter: and the rest pay them tribute every year. [5] And that they had defeated in battle Philip, and Perses the king of the **Ceteans**, and the rest that had borne arms against them, and had conquered them:

[2] "They heard": What is here set down of the history and character of the ancient Romans, is not an assertion, or affirmation of the sacred writer: but only a relation of what Judas had heard of them.

[5] "Ceteans": That is, the Macedonians.

[6] And how Antiochus the great king of Asia, who went to fight against them, having a hundred and twenty elephants, with horsemen, and chariots, and a very great army, was routed by them: [7] And how they took him alive, and appointed to him, that both he and they that should reign after him, should pay a great tribute, and that he should give hostages, and that which was agreed upon, [8] And the country of the Indians, and of the Medes, and of the Lydians, some of their best provinces: and those which they had taken from them they gave to king **Eumenes**. [9] And that they who were in Greece had a mind to go and to destroy them: and they had knowledge thereof, [10] And they sent a general against them, and fought with them, and many of them were slain, and they carried away their wives and their children captives, and spoiled them, and took possession of their land, and threw down their walls, and brought them to be their servants unto this day.

[8] "Eumenes": King of Pergamus.

[11] And the other kingdoms, and islands, that at any time had resisted them, they had destroyed and brought under their power. [12] But with their friends, and such as relied upon them, they kept amity, and had conquered kingdoms that were near, and that were far off: for all that heard their name, were afraid of them. [13] That whom they had a mind to help to a kingdom, those reigned: and whom they would, they deposed from a kingdom: and they were greatly exalted. [14] And none of all these wore a crown, or was clothed in purple, to be magnified thereby. [15] And that they made themselves a senate house, and consulted daily three hundred and twenty men, that sat in council always for the people, that they might do the things that were right.

[16] And that they committed their government **to one man** every year, to rule over all their country, and they all obey one, and there is **no envy**, nor jealousy amongst them. [17] So Judas chose Eupolemus the son of John, the son of Jacob, and Jason the son of Eleazar, and he sent them to Rome to make a league of amity and confederacy with them. [18] And that they might take off from them the yoke of the Grecians, for they saw that they oppressed the kingdom of Israel with servitude. [19] And they went to Rome, a very long journey, and they entered into the senate house, and said: [20] Judas Machabeus, and his brethren, and the people of the Jews have sent us to you, to make alliance and peace with you, and that we may be registered your confederates and friends.

[16] "To one man": There were two consuls: but one only ruled at one time, each in his day.-- Ibid.

[16] "No envy": So Judas had heard: and it was so far true, with regard to the ancient Romans, that as yet no envy or jealousy had divided them into such open factions and civil wars, as they afterwards experienced in the time of Marius and Sylla, etc.

[21] And the proposal was pleasing in their sight. [22] And this is the copy of the writing that they wrote back again, graven in tables of brass, and sent to Jerusalem, that it might be with them there for a memorial of the peace and alliance. [23] GOOD SUCCESS BE TO THE ROMANS, and to the people of the Jews, by sea and by land for ever: and far be the sword and enemy from them. [24] But if there come first any war upon the Romans, or any of their confederates, in all their dominions: [25] The nation of the Jews shall help them according as the time shall direct, with all their heart:

[26] Neither shall they give them, whilst they are fighting, or furnish them with wheat, or arms, or money, or ships, as it hath seemed good to the Romans: and they shall obey their orders, without taking any thing of them. [27] In like manner also if war shall come first upon the nation of the Jews, the Romans shall help them with all their heart, according as the time shall permit them. [28] And there shall not be given to them that come to their aid, either wheat, or arms, or money, or ships, as it hath seemed good to the Romans: and they shall observe their orders without deceit. [29] According to these articles did the Romans covenant with the people of the Jews. [30] And if after this one party or the other shall have a mind to add to these articles, or take away anything, they may do it at their pleasure: and whatsoever they shall add, or take away, shall be ratified.

[31] Moreover concerning the evils that Demetrius the king hath done against them, we have written to him, saying: Why hast thou made thy yoke heavy upon our friends, and allies, the Jews? [32] If therefore they come again to us complaining of thee, we will do them justice, and will make war against thee by sea and land.

Chapter 9: Bacchides is sent again into Judea: Judas fights against him with eight hundred men and is slain. Jonathan succeeds him and revenges the murder of his brother John. He fights against Bacchides. Alcimus dies miserably. Bacchides besieges Bethbessen. He is forced to raise the siege and leave the country.

[1] In the mean time when Demetrius heard that Nicanor and his army were fallen in battle, he sent again Bacchides and Alcimus into Judea; and the right wing of his army with them. [2] And they took the road that leadeth to Galgal, and they camped in Masaloth, which is in Arabella: and they made themselves masters of it, and slew many people. [3] In the first month of the hundred and fifty-second year they brought the army to Jerusalem: [4] And they arose, and went to Berea with twenty thousand men, and two thousand horsemen. [5] Now Judas had pitched his tents in Laisa, and three thousand chosen men with him:

[6] And they saw the multitude of the army that they were many, and they were seized with great fear: and many withdrew themselves out of the camp, and there remained of them no more than eight hundred men. [7] And Judas saw that his army slipped away, and the battle pressed upon him, and his heart was cast down: because he had not time to gather them together, and he was discouraged. [8] Then he said to them that remained: Let us arise, and go against our enemies, if we may be able to fight against them. [9] But they dissuaded him, saying: We shall not be able, but let us save our lives now, and return to our brethren, and then we will fight against them: for we are but few. [10] Then Judas said: God forbid we should do this thing, and flee away from them: but if our time be come, let us die manfully for our brethren, and let us not stain our glory.

[11] And the army removed out of the camp, and they stood over against them: and the horsemen were divided into two troops, and the slingers, and the archers went before the army, and they that were in the front were all men of valour. [12] And Bacchides was in the right wing, and the legion drew near on two sides, and they sounded the trumpets: [13] And they also were on Judas' side, even they also cried out, and the earth shook at the noise of the armies: and the battle was fought from morning even unto the evening. [14] And Judas perceived that the stronger part of the army of Bacchides was on the right side, and all the stout of heart came together with him: [15] And the right wing was discomfited by them, and he pursued them even to the mount Azotus.

[16] And they that were in the left wing saw that the right wing was discomfited, and they followed after Judas, and them that were with him, at their back: [17] And the battle was hard fought, and there fell many wounded of the one side and of the other. [18] And Judas was slain, and the rest fled away. [19] And Jonathan and Simon took Judas their brother, and buried him in the sepulchre of their fathers in the city of Modin. [20] And all the people of Israel bewailed him with great lamentation, and they mourned for him many days.

[21] And said: How is the mighty man fallen, that saved the people of Israel! [22] But the rest of the words of the wars of Judas, and of the noble acts that he did, and of his greatness, are not written: for they were very many. [23] And it came to pass after the death of Judas, that the wicked began to put forth their heads in all the confines of Israel, and all the workers of iniquity rose up. [24] In those days there was a very great famine, and they and all their country yielded to Bacchides. [25] And Bacchides chose the wicked men, and made them lords of the country:

[26] And they sought out, and made diligent search after the friends of Judas, and brought them to Bacchides, and he took vengeance of them, and abused them. [27] And there was a great tribulation in Israel, such as was not since the day, that there was no prophet seen in Israel. [28] And all the friends of Judas came together, and said to Jonathan: [29] Since thy brother Judas died, there is not a man like him to go forth against our enemies, Bacchides, and them that are the enemies of our nation. [30] Now therefore we have chosen thee this day to be our prince, and captain in his stead to fight our battles.

[31] So Jonathan took upon him the government at that time, and rose up in the place of Judas his brother. [32] And Bacchides had knowledge of it, and sought to kill him. [33] And Jonathan and Simon his brother, knew it, and all that were with them: and they fled into the desert of Thecua, and they pitched by the water of the lake of Asphar, [34] And Bacchides understood it, and he came himself with all his army over the Jordan on the sabbath day. [35] And Jonathan sent his brother a captain of the people, to desire the Nabutheans his friends, that they would lend them their equipage, which was copious.

[36] And the children of Jambri came forth out of Madaba, and took John, and all that he had, and went away with them. [37] After this it was told Jonathan, and Simon his brother, that the children of Jambri made a great marriage, and were bringing the bride out of Madaba, the daughter of one of the great princes of Chanaan, with great pomp. [38] And they remembered the blood of John their brother: and they went up, and hid themselves under the covert of the mountain. [39] And they lifted up their eyes, and saw: and behold a tumult, and great preparation: and the bridegroom came forth, and his friends, and his brethren to meet them with timbrels, and musical instruments, and many weapons. [40] And they rose up against them from the place where they lay in ambush, and slew them, and there fell many wounded, and the rest fled into the mountains, and they took all their spoils:

[41] And the marriage was turned into mourning, and the noise of their musical instruments into lamentation. [42] And they took revenge for the blood of their brother: and they returned to the bank of the Jordan. [43] And Bacchides heard it, and he came on the sabbath day even to the bank of the Jordan with a great power. [44] And Jonathan said to his company: Let us arise, and fight against our enemies: for it is not now as yesterday, and the day before. [45] And behold the battle is before us, and the water of the Jordan on this side and on that side, and banks, and marshes, and woods: and there is no place for us to turn aside.

[46] Now therefore cry ye to heaven, that ye may be delivered from the hand of your enemies. And they joined battle. [47] And Jonathan stretched forth his hand to strike Bacchides, but he turned away from him backwards. [48] And Jonathan, and they that were with him leaped into the Jordan, and swam over the Jordan to them: [49] And there fell of Bacchides' side that day a thousand men: and they returned to Jerusalem, [50] And they built strong cities in Judea, the fortress that was in Jericho, and in Ammaus, and in Bethoron, and in Bethel, and Thamnata, and Phara, and Thopo, with high walls, and gates, and bars.

[51] And he placed garrisons in them, that they might wage war against Israel: [52] And he fortified the city of Bethsura, and Gazara, and the castle, and set garrisons in them, and provisions of victuals: [53] And he took the sons of the chief men of the country for hostages, and put them in the castle in Jerusalem in custody. [54] Now in the year one hundred and fifty-three, the second month, Alcimus commanded the walls of the inner court of the sanctuary to be thrown down, and the works of the prophets to be destroyed: and he began to be destroyed: and he began to destroy. [55] At that time Alcimus was struck: and his works were hindered, and his mouth was stopped, and he was taken with a palsy, so that he could no more speak a word, nor give order concerning his house.

[56] And Alcimus died at that time in great torment. [57] And Bacchides saw that Alcimus was dead: and he returned to the king, and the land was quiet for two years. [58] And all the wicked held a council, saying: Behold Jonathan, and they that are with him, dwell at ease, and without fear: now therefore let us bring Bacchides hither, and he shall take them all in one night. [59] So they went, and gave him counsel. [60] And he arose to come with a great army: and he sent secretly letters to his adherents that were in Judea, to seize upon Jonathan, and them that were with him: but they could not, for their design was known to them.

[61] And he apprehended of the men of the country, that were the principal authors of the mischief, fifty men, and slew them. [62] And Jonathan, and Simon, and they that were with him retired into Bethbessen, which is in the desert: and he repaired the breaches thereof, and they fortified it. [63] And when Bacchides knew it, he gathered together all his multitude: and sent word to them that were of Judea. [64] And he came, and camped above Bethbessen, and fought against it many days, and made engines. [65] But Jonathan left his brother Simon in the city, and went forth into the country: and came with a number of men.

[66] And struck Odares, and his brethren, and the children of Phaseron in their tents, and he began to slay, and to increase in forces. [67] But Simon and they that were with him, sallied out of the city, and burnt the engines. [68] And they fought against Bacchides, and he was discomfited by them: and they afflicted him exceedingly, for his counsel, and his enterprise was in vain. [69] And he was angry with the wicked men that had given him counsel to come into their country, and he slew many of them: and he purposed to return with the rest into their country. [70] And Jonathan had knowledge of it, and he sent ambassadors to him to make peace with him, and to restore to him the prisoners.

[71] And he accepted it willingly, and did according to his words, and swore that he would do him no harm all the days of his life. [72] And he restored to him the prisoners which he before had taken out of the land of Juda: and he returned and went away into his own country, and he came no more into their borders. [73] So the sword ceased from Israel: and Jonathan dwelt in Machmas, and Jonathan began there to judge the people, and he destroyed the wicked out of Israel.

Chapter 10: Alexander Bales sets himself up for king: both he and Demetrius seek to make Jonathan their friend. Alexander kills Demetrius in battle, and honours Jonathan. His victory over Apollonius.

[1] Now in the hundred and sixtieth year Alexander the son of Antiochus, surnamed the Illustrious, came up and took Ptolemais, and they received him, and he reigned there. [2] And king Demetrius heard of it, and gathered together an exceeding great army, and went forth against him to fight. [3] And Demetrius sent a letter to Jonathan with peaceable words, to magnify him. [4] For he said: Let us first make a peace with him, before he make one with Alexander against us. [5] For he will remember all the evils that we have done against him, and against his brother, and against his nation.

[6] And he gave him authority to gather together an army, and to make arms, and that he should be his confederate: and the hostages that were in the castle, he commanded to be delivered to him. [7] And Jonathan came to Jerusalem, and read the letters in the hearing of all the people, and of them that were in the castle. [8] And they were struck with great fear, because they heard that the king had given him authority to gather together an army. [9] And the hostages were delivered to Jonathan, and he restored them to their parents. [10] And Jonathan dwelt in Jerusalem, and began to build, and to repair the city.

[11] And he ordered workmen to build the walls, and mount Sion round about with square stones for fortification: and so they did. [12] And the strangers that were in the strong holds, which Bacchides had built, fled away. [13] And every man left his place, and departed into his own country: [14] Only in Bethsura there remained some of them, that had forsaken the law, and the commandments of God: for this was a place of refuge for them. [15] And king Alexander heard of the promises that Demetrius had made Jonathan: and they told him of the battles, and the worthy acts that he, and his brethren had done, and the labours that they had endured.

[16] And he said: Shall we find such another man? now therefore we will make him our friend and our confederate. [17] So he wrote a letter, and sent it to him according to these words, saying: [18] King Alexander to his brother Jonathan, greeting. [19] We have heard of thee, that thou art a man of great power, and fit to be our friend: [20] Now therefore we make thee this day high priest of thy nation, and that thou be called the king's friend, (and he sent him a purple robe, and a crown of gold,) and that thou be of one mind with us in our affairs, and keep friendship with us.

[21] Then Jonathan put on the holy vestment in the seventh month, in the year one hundred and threescore, at the feast day of the tabernacles: and he gathered together an army, and made a great number of arms. [22] And Demetrius heard these words, and was exceeding sorry, and said: [23] What is this that we have done, that Alexander hath prevented us to gain the friendship of the Jews to strengthen himself? [24] I also will write to them words of request, and offer dignities, and gifts: that they may be with me to aid me. [25] And he wrote to them in these words: King Demetrius to the nation of the Jews, greeting.

[26] Whereas you have kept covenant with us, and have continued in our friendship, and have not joined with our enemies, we have heard of it, and are glad. [27] Wherefore now continue still to keep fidelity towards us, and we will reward you with good things, for what you have done in our behalf. [28] And we will remit to you many charges, and will give you gifts. [29] And now I free you, and all the Jews from tributes, and I release you from the customs of salt, and remit the crowns, and the thirds of the seed: [30] And the half of the fruit of trees, which is my share, I leave to you from this day forward, so that it shall not be taken of the land of Juda, and of the three cities that are added thereto out of Samaria and Galilee, from this day forth and for ever:

[31] And let Jerusalem be holy and free, with the borders thereof: and let the tenths, and tributes be for itself. [32] I yield up also the power of the castle that is in Jerusalem, and I give it to the high priest, to place therein such men as he shall choose to keep it. [33] And every soul of the Jews that hath been carried captive from the land of Juda in all my kingdom, I set at liberty freely, that all be discharged from tributes even of their cattle. [34] And I will that all the feasts, and the sabbaths, and the new moons, and the days appointed, and three days before the solemn day, and three days after the solemn day, be all days of immunity and freedom, for all the Jews that are in my kingdom: [35] And no man shall have power to do any thing against them, or to molest any of them, in any cause.

[36] And let there be enrolled in the king's army to the number of thirty thousand of the Jews: and allowance shall be made them as is due to all the king's forces, and certain of them shall be appointed to be in the fortresses of the great king: [37] And some of them shall be set over the affairs of the kingdom, that are of trust, and let the governors be taken from among themselves, and let them walk in their own laws, as the king hath commanded in the land of Juda. [38] And the three cities that are added to Judea, out of the country of Samaria, let them be accounted with Judea: that they may be under one, and obey no other authority but that of the high priest: [39] Ptolemais, and the confines thereof, I give as a free gift to the holy places, that are in Jerusalem, for the necessary charges of the holy things. [40] And I give every year fifteen thousand sicles of silver out of the king's accounts, of what belongs to me:

[41] And all that is above, which they that were over the affairs the years before, had not paid, from this time they shall give it to the works of the house. [42] Moreover the five thousand sicles of silver which they received from the account of the holy places, every year, shall also belong to the priests that execute the ministry. [43] And whosoever shall flee into the temple that is in Jerusalem, and in all the borders thereof, being indebted to the king for any matter, let them be set at liberty, and all that they have in my kingdom, let them have it free. [44] For the building also, or repairing the works of the holy places, the charges shall be given out of the king's revenues: [45] For the building also of the walls of Jerusalem, and the fortifying thereof round about, the charges shall be given out of the king's account, as also for the building of the walls in Judea.

[46] Now when Jonathan, and the people heard these words, they gave no credit to them nor received them: because they remembered the great evil that he had done in Israel, for he had afflicted them exceedingly. [47] And their inclinations were towards Alexander, because he had been the chief promoter of peace in their regard, and him they always helped. [48] And king Alexander gathered together a great army, and moved his camp near to Demetrius. [49] And the two kings joined battle, and the army of Demetrius fled away, and Alexander pursued after him, and pressed them close. [50] And the battle was hard fought till the sun went down: and Demetrius was slain that day.

[51] And Alexander sent ambassadors to **Ptoleeme** king of Egypt, with words to this effect, saying: [52] Forasmuch as I am returned into my kingdom, and am set in the throne of my ancestors and have gotten the dominion, and have overthrown Demetrius, and possessed our country, [53] And have joined battle with him, and both he and his army have been destroyed by us, and we are placed in the throne of his kingdom: [54] Now therefore let us make friendship one with another: and give me now thy daughter to wife, and I will be thy son in law, and I will give both thee and her gifts worthy of thee. [55] And king Ptoleeme answered, saying: Happy is the day wherein thou didst return to the land of thy fathers, and satest in the throne of their kingdom.

[51] "**Ptoleeme**": Surnamed **Philometer**.

[56] And now I will do to thee as thou hast written: but meet me at Ptolemais, that we may see one another, and I may give her to thee as thou hast said. [57] So Ptoleeme went out of Egypt, with Cleopatra his daughter, and he came to Ptolemais in the hundred and sixty-second year. [58] And king Alexander met him, and he gave him his daughter Cleopatra: and he celebrated her marriage at Ptolemais, with great glory, after the manner of kings. [59] And king Alexander wrote to Jonathan, that he should come and meet him. [60] And he went honourably to Ptolemais, and he met there the two kings, and he gave them much silver, and gold, and presents: and he found favour in their sight.

[61] And some pestilent men of Israel, men of a wicked life, assembled themselves against him to accuse him: and the king gave no heed to them. [62] And he commanded that Jonathan's garments should be taken off, and that he should be clothed with purple: and they did so. And the king made him sit by himself. [63] And he said to his princes: Go out with him into the midst of the city, and make proclamation, that no man complain against him of any matter, and that no man trouble him for any manner of cause. [64] So when his accusers saw his glory proclaimed, and him clothed with purple, they all fled away. [65] And the king magnified him, and enrolled him amongst his chief friends, and made him governor and partaker of his dominion.

[66] And Jonathan returned into Jerusalem with peace and joy. [67] In the year one hundred and sixty-five Demetrius the son of Demetrius came from Crete into the land of his fathers. [68] And king Alexander heard of it, and was much troubled, and returned to Antioch. [69] And king Demetrius made Apollonius his general, who was governor of Celesyria: and he gathered together a great army, and came to Jamnia: and he sent to Jonathan the high priest, [70] Saying: Thou alone standest against us, and I am laughed at, and reproached, because thou shewest thy power against us in the mountains.

[71] Now therefore if thou trustest in thy forces, come down to us into the plain, and there let us try one another: for with me is the strength of war. [72] Ask, and learn who I am, and the rest that help me, who also say that your foot cannot stand before our face, for thy fathers have twice been put to flight in their own land: [73] And now how wilt thou be able to abide the horsemen, and so great an army in the plain, where there is no stone, nor rock, nor place to flee to? [74] Now when Jonathan heard the words of Apollonius, he was moved in his mind: and he chose ten thousand men, and went out of Jerusalem, and Simon his brother met him to help him. [75] And they pitched their tents near Joppe, but they shut him out of the city: because a garrison of Apollonius was in Joppe, and he laid siege to it.

[76] And they that were in the city being affrighted, opened the gates to him: so Jonathan took Joppe. [77] And Apollonius heard of it, and he took three thousand horsemen, and a great army. [78] And he went to Azotus as one that was making a journey, and immediately he went forth into the plain: because he had a great number of horsemen, and he trusted in them. And Jonathan followed after him to Azotus, and they joined battle. [79] And Apollonius left privately in the camp a thousand horsemen behind them. [80] And Jonathan knew that there was an ambush behind him, and they surrounded his army, and cast darts at the people from morning till evening.

[81] But the people stood still, as Jonathan had commanded them: and so their horses were fatigued. [82] Then Simon drew forth his army, and attacked the legion: for the horsemen were wearied: and they were discomfited by him, and fled. [83] And they that were scattered about the plain, fled into Azotus, and went into Bethdagon their idol's temple, there to save themselves. [84] But Jonathan set fire to Azotus, and the cities that were around it, and took the spoils of them, and the temple of Dagon: and all them that were fled into it, he burnt with fire. [85] So they that were slain by the sword, with them that were burnt, were almost eight thousand men.

[86] And Jonathan removed his army from thence, and camped against Ascalon: and they went out of the city to meet him with great honour. [87] And Jonathan returned into Jerusalem with his people, having many spoils. [88] And it came to pass: When Alexander the king heard these words, that he honoured Jonathan yet more. [89] And he sent him a buckle of gold, as the custom is, to be given to such as are of the royal blood. And he gave him Accaron and all the borders thereof in possession.

Chapter 11: Ptolemee invades the kingdom of Alexander: the latter is slain: and the former dies soon after. Demetrius honours Jonathan, and is rescued by the Jews from his own subjects in Antioch. Antiochus the younger favours Jonathan. His exploits in divers places.

[1] And the king of Egypt gathered together an army, like the sand that lieth upon the sea shore, and many ships: and he sought to get the kingdom of Alexander by deceit, and join it to his own kingdom. [2] And he went out into Syria with peaceable words, and they opened to him the cities, and met him: for king Alexander had ordered them to go forth to meet him, because he was his father in law. [3] Now when Ptolemee entered into the cities, he put garrisons of soldiers in every city. [4] And when he came near to Azotus, they shewed him the temple of Dagon that was burnt with fire, and Azotus, and the suburbs thereof that were destroyed, and the bodies that were cast abroad, and the graves of them that were slain in the battle, which they had made near the way. [5] And they told the king that Jonathan had done these things, to make him odious: but the king held his peace.

[6] And Jonathan came to meet the king at Joppe with glory, and they saluted one another, and they lodged there. [7] And Jonathan went with the king as far as the river, called Eleutherus: and he returned into Jerusalem. [8] And king Ptolemee got the dominion of the cities by the sea side, even to Seleucia, and he devised evil designs against Alexander. [9] And he sent ambassadors to Demetrius, saying: Come, let us make a league between us, and I will give thee my daughter whom Alexander hath, and thou shalt reign in the kingdom of thy father. [10] For I repent that I have given him my daughter: for he hath sought to kill me.

[11] And he slandered him, because he coveted his kingdom. [12] And he took away his daughter, and gave her to Demetrius, and alienated himself from Alexander, and his enmities were made manifest. [13] And Ptolemee entered into Antioch, and set two crowns upon his head, that of Egypt, and that of Asia. [14] Now king Alexander was in Cilicia at that time: because they that were in those places had rebelled. [15] And when Alexander heard of it, he came to give him battle, and king Ptolemee brought forth his army, and met him with a strong power, and put him to flight.

[16] And Alexander fled into Arabia, there to be protected: and king Ptolemee was exalted. [17] And Zabdiel the Arabian took off Alexander's head, and sent it to Ptolemee. [18] And king Ptolemee died the third day after: and they that were in the strong holds were destroyed by them that were within the camp. [19] And Demetrius reigned in the hundred and sixty-seventh year. [20] In those days Jonathan gathered together them that were in Judea, to take the castle that was in Jerusalem: and they made many engines of war against it.

[21] Then some wicked men that hated their own nation, went away to king Demetrius, and told him that Jonathan was besieging the castle. [22] And when he heard it, he was angry: and forthwith he came to Ptolemais, and wrote to Jonathan, that he should not besiege the castle, but should come to him in haste, and speak to him. [23] But when Jonathan heard this, he bade them besiege it still: and he chose some of the ancients of Israel, and of the priests, and put himself in danger. [24] And he took gold, and silver, and raiment, and many other presents, and went to the king to Ptolemais, and he found favour in his sight. [25] And certain wicked men of his nation made complaints against him.

[26] And the king treated him as his predecessor had done before: and he exalted him in the sight of all his friends. [27] And he confirmed him in the high priesthood, and all the honours he had before, and he made him the chief of his friends. [28] And Jonathan requested of the king that he would make Judea free from tribute, and the three governments, and Samaria, and the confines thereof: and he promised him three hundred talents. [29] And the king consented: and he wrote letters to Jonathan of all these things to this effect. [30] King Demetrius to his brother Jonathan, and to the nation of the Jews, greeting.

[31] We send you here a copy of the letter, which we have written to Lasthenes our parent concerning you, that you might know it. [32] King Demetrius to Lasthenes his parent, greeting. [33] We have determined to do good to the nation of the Jews who are our friends, and keep the things that are just with us, for their good will which they bear towards us. [34] We have ratified therefore unto them all the borders of Judea, and the three cities, **Apherema**, Lydda, and Ramatha, which are added to Judea, out of Samaria, and all their confines, to be set apart to all them that sacrifice in Jerusalem, instead of the payments which the king received of them every year, and for the fruits of the land, and of the trees. [35] And as for other things that belonged to us of the tithes, and of the tributes, from this time we discharge them of them: the salt pans also, and the crowns that were presented to us.

[34] "Apherema": is found only in the Greek version.

[36] We give all to them, and nothing hereof shall be revoked from this time forth and for ever. [37] Now therefore see that thou make a copy of these things, and let it be given to Jonathan, and set upon the holy mountain, in a conspicuous place. [38] And king Demetrius seeing that the land was quiet before him, and nothing resisted him, sent away all his forces, every man to his own place, except the foreign army, which he had drawn together from the islands of the nations: so all the troops of his fathers hated him. [39] Now there was one Tryphon who had been of Alexander's party before: who seeing that all the army murmured against Demetrius, went to Emalchuel the Arabian, who brought up Antiochus the son of Alexander. [40] And he pressed him much to deliver him to him, that he might be king in his father's place: and he told him all that Demetrius had done, and how his soldiers hated him. And he remained there many days.

[41] And Jonathan sent to king Demetrius, desiring that he would cast out them that were in the castle in Jerusalem, and those that were in the strong holds: because they fought against Israel. [42] And Demetrius sent to Jonathan, saying: I will not only do this for thee, and for thy people, but I will greatly honour thee, and thy nation, when opportunity shall serve. [43] Now therefore thou shalt do well if thou send me men to help me: for all my army is gone from me. [44] And Jonathan sent him three thousand valiant men to Antioch: and they came to the king, and the king was very glad of their coming. [45] And they that were of the city assembled themselves together, to the number of a hundred and twenty thousand men, and would have killed the king.

[46] And the king fled into the palace, and they of the city kept the passages of the city, and began to fight. [47] And the king called the Jews to his assistance: and they came to him all at once, and they all dispersed themselves through the city. [48] And they slew in that day a hundred thousand men, and they set fire to the city, and got many spoils that day, and delivered the king. [49] And they that were of the city saw that the Jews had got the city as they would: and they were discouraged in their minds, and cried to the king, making supplication, and saying: [50] Grant us peace, and let the Jews cease from assaulting us, and the city.

[51] And they threw down their arms, and made peace, and the Jews were glorified in the sight of the king, and in the sight of all that were in his realm, and were renowned throughout the kingdom, and returned to Jerusalem with many spoils. [52] So king Demetrius sat in the throne of his kingdom: and the land was quiet before him. [53] And he falsified all whatsoever he had said, and alienated himself from Jonathan, and did not reward him according to the benefits he had received from him, but gave him great trouble. [54] And after this Tryphon returned, and with him Antiochus the young boy, who was made king, and put on the diadem. [55] And there assembled unto him all the hands which Demetrius had sent away, and they fought against Demetrius, who turned his back and fled.

[56] And Tryphon took the elephants, and made himself master of Antioch. [57] And young Antiochus wrote to Jonathan, saying: I confirm thee in the high priesthood, and I appoint thee ruler over the four cities, and to be one of the king's friends. [58] And he sent him vessels of gold for his service, and he gave him leave to drink in gold, and to be clothed in purple, and to wear a golden buckle: [59] And he made his brother Simon governor from the borders of Tyre even to the confines of Egypt. [60] Then Jonathan went forth and passed through the cities beyond the river: and all the forces of Syria gathered themselves to him to help him, and he came to Ascalon, and they met him honourably out of the city.

[61] And he went from thence to Gaza: and they that were in Gaza shut him out: and he besieged it, and burnt all the suburbs round about, and took the spoils. [62] And the men of Gaza made supplication to Jonathan, and he gave them the right hand: and he took their sons for hostages, and sent them to Jerusalem: and he went through the country as far as Damascus. [63] And Jonathan heard that the generals of Demetrius were come treacherously to Cades, which is in Galilee, with a great army, purposing to remove him from the affairs of the kingdom: [64] And he went against them: but left his brother Simon in the country. [65] And Simon encamped against Bethsura, and assaulted it many days, and shut them up.

[66] And they desired him to make peace, and he granted it them: and he cast them out from thence, and took the city, and placed a garrison in it. [67] And Jonathan, and his army encamped by the water of Genesar, and before it was light they were ready in the plain of Asor. [68] And behold the army of the strangers met him in the plain, and they laid an ambush for him in the mountains: but he went out against them. [69] And they that lay in ambush arose out of their places, and joined battle. [70] And all that were on Jonathan's side fled, and none was left of them, but Mathathias the son of Absalom, and Judas the son of Calphi, chief captain of the army.

[71] And Jonathan rent his garments, and cast earth upon his head, and prayed. [72] And Jonathan turned again to them to battle, and he put them to flight, and they fought. [73] And they of his part that fled saw this, and they turned again to him, and they all with him pursued the enemies even to Cades to their own camp, and they came even thither. [74] And there fell of the aliens in that day three thousand men: and Jonathan returned to Jerusalem.

Chapter 12: Jonathan renews his league with the Romans and Lacedaemonians. The forces of Demetrius flee away from him. He is deceived and made prisoner by Tryphon.

[1] And Jonathan saw that the time served him, and he chose certain men and sent them to Rome, to confirm and to renew the amity with them: [2] And he sent letters to the Spartans, and to other places according to the same form. [3] And they went to Rome, and entered into the senate house, and said: Jonathan the high priest, and the nation of the Jews have sent us to renew the amity, and alliance as it was before. [4] And they gave them letters to their governors in every place, to conduct them into the land of Juda with peace. [5] And this is a copy of the letters which Jonathan wrote to the Spartans:

[6] Jonathan the high priest, and the ancients of the nation, and the priests, and the rest of the people of the Jews, to the Spartans, their brethren, greeting. [7] There were letters sent long ago to Onias the high priest from Arius who reigned then among you, to signify that you are our brethren, as the copy here underwritten doth specify. [8] And Onias received the ambassador with honour: and received the letters wherein there was mention made of the alliance, and amity. [9] We, though we needed none of these things, having for our comfort the holy books that are in our hands, [10] Chose rather to send to you to renew the brotherhood and friendship, lest we should become strangers to you altogether: for there is a long time passed since you sent to us.

[11] We therefore at all times without ceasing, both in our festivals, and other days, wherein it is convenient, remember you in the sacrifices that we offer, and in our observances, as it is meet, and becoming to remember brethren. [12] And we rejoice at your glory. [13] But we have had many troubles and wars on every side, and the kings that are round about us, have fought against us. [14] But we would not be troublesome to you, nor the rest of our allies and friends in these wars. [15] For we have had help from heaven, and we have been delivered, and our enemies are humbled.

[16] We have chosen therefore Numenius the son of Antiochus, and Antipater the son of Jason, and have sent them to the Romans to renew with them the former amity and alliance. [17] And we have commanded them to go also to you, and to salute you, and to deliver you our letters, concerning the renewing of our brotherhood. [18] And now you shall do well to give us an answer hereto. [19] And this is the copy of the letter which he had sent to Onias: [20] Arius king of the Spartans to Onias the high priest, greeting.

[21] It is found in writing concerning the Spartans, and the Jews, that they are brethren, and that they are of the stock of Abraham. [22] And now since this is come to our knowledge, you do well to write to us of your prosperity. [23] And we also have written back to you: That our cattle, and our possessions are yours: and yours, ours. We therefore have commanded that these things should be told you. [24] Now Jonathan heard that the generals of Demetrius were come again with a greater army than before to fight against him. [25] So he went out from Jerusalem, and met them in the land of Amath: for he gave them no time to enter into his country.

[26] And he sent spies into their camp, and they came back and brought him word that they designed to come upon them in the night. [27] And when the sun was set, Jonathan commanded his men to watch, and to be in arms all night long ready to fight, and he set sentinels round about the camp. [28] And the enemies heard that Jonathan and his men were ready for battle, and they were struck with fear, and dread in their heart: and they kindled fires in their camp. [29] But Jonathan and they that were with him knew it not till the morning: for they saw the lights burning. [30] And Jonathan pursued after them, but overtook them not: for they had passed the river Eleutherus.

[31] And Jonathan turned upon the Arabians that are called Zabadeans: and he defeated them, and took the spoils of them. [32] And he went forward, and came to Damascus, and passed through all that country. [33] Simon also went forth, and came as far as Ascalon, and the neighbouring fortresses, and he turned aside to Joppe, and took possession of it, [34] (For he heard that they designed to deliver the hold to them that took part with Demetrius,) and he put a garrison there to keep it. [35] And Jonathan came back, and called together the ancients of the people, and he took a resolution with them to build fortresses in Judea,

[36] And to build up walls in Jerusalem, and raise a mount between the castle and the city, to separate it from the city, that so it might have no communication, and that they might neither buy nor sell. [37] And they came together to build up the city: for the wall that was upon the brook towards the east was broken down, and he repaired that which is called Caphetetha: [38] And Simon built Adiada in Sephela, and fortified it, and set up gates and bars. [39] Now when Tryphon had conceived a design to make himself king of Asia, and to take the crown, and to stretch out his hand against king Antiochus: [40] Fearing lest Jonathan would not suffer him, but would fight against him: he sought to seize upon him, and to kill him. So he rose up and came to Bethsan.

[41] And Jonathan went out to meet him with forty thousand men chosen for battle, and came to Bethsan. [42] Now when Tryphon saw that Jonathan came with a great army, he durst not stretch forth his hand against him, [43] But received him with honour, and commended him to all his friends, and gave him presents: and he commanded his troops to obey him, as himself. [44] And he said to Jonathan: Why hast thou troubled all the people, whereas we have no war? [45] Now therefore send them back to their own houses: and choose thee a few men that may be with thee, and come with me to Ptolemais, and I will deliver it to thee, and the rest of the strong holds, and the army, and all that have any charge, and I will return and go away: for this is the cause of my coming.

[46] And Jonathan believed him, and did as he said: and sent away his army, and they departed into the land of Juda: [47] But he kept with him three thousand men: of whom he sent two thousand into Galilee, and one thousand went with him. [48] Now as soon as Jonathan entered into Ptolemais, they of Ptolemais shut the gates of the city, and took him: and all them that came in with him they slew with the sword. [49] Then Tryphon sent an army and horsemen into Galilee, and into the great plain to destroy all Jonathan's company. [50] But they, when they understood that Jonathan and all that were with him were taken and slain, encouraged one another, and went out ready for battle.

[51] Then they that had come after them, seeing that they stood for their lives, returned back. [52] Whereupon they all came peaceably into the land of Juda. And they bewailed Jonathan, and them that had been with him, exceedingly: and Israel mourned with great lamentation. [53] Then all the heathens that were round about them, sought to destroy them. For they said: [54] They have no prince, nor any to help them: now therefore let us make war upon them, and take away the memory of them from amongst men.

Chapter 13: Simon is made captain general in the room of his brother. Jonathan is slain by Tryphon. Simon is favoured by Demetrius: he taketh Gaza, and the castle of Jerusalem.

[1] Now Simon heard that Tryphon was gathering together a very great army, to invade the land of Juda, and to destroy it. [2] And seeing that the people was in dread, and in fear, he went up to Jerusalem, and assembled the people: [3] And exhorted them, saying: You know what great battles I and my brethren, and the house of my father, have fought for the laws, and the sanctuary, and the distresses that we have seen: [4] By reason whereof all my brethren have lost their lives for Israel's sake, and I am left alone. [5] And now far be it from me to spare my life in any time of trouble: for I am not better than my brethren.

[6] I will avenge then my nation and the sanctuary, and our children, and wives: for all the heathens are gathered together to destroy us out of mere malice. [7] And the spirit of the people was enkindled as soon as they heard these words. [8] And they answered with a loud voice, saying: Thou art our leader in the place of Judas, and Jonathan thy brother. [9] Fight thou our battles, and we will do whatsoever thou shalt say to us. [10] So gathering together all the men of war, he made haste to finish all the walls of Jerusalem, and he fortified it round about.

[11] And he sent Jonathan the son of Absalom, and with him a new army into Joppe, and he cast out them that were in it, and himself remained there. [12] And Tryphon removed from Ptolemais with a great army, to invade the land of Juda, and Jonathan was with him in custody. [13] But Simon pitched in Addus, over against the plain. [14] And when Tryphon understood that Simon was risen up in the place of his brother Jonathan, and that he meant to join battle with him, he sent messengers to him, [15] Saying: We have detained thy brother Jonathan for the money that he owed in the king's account, by reason of the affairs which he had the management of.

[16] But now send a hundred talents of silver, and his two sons for hostages, that when he is set at liberty he may not revolt from us, and we will release him. [17] Now Simon knew that he spoke deceitfully to him, nevertheless he ordered the money, and the children to be sent: lest he should bring upon himself a great hatred of the people of Israel, who might have said: [18] Because he sent not the money, and the children, therefore is he lost. [19] So he sent the children, and the hundred talents: and he lied, and did not let Jonathan go. [20] And after this Tryphon entered within the country, to destroy it: and they went about by the way that leadeth to Ador: and Simon and his army marched to every place **whithersoever they went**.

[20] "**Whithersoever they went**": That is, **whithersoever Tryphon and his horsemen went in order to oppose them.**

[21] And they that were in the castle, sent messengers to Tryphon, that he should make haste to come through the desert, and send them victuals. [22] And Tryphon made ready all his horsemen to come that night: but there fell a very great snow, and he came not into the country of Galaad. [23] And when he approached to Bascama, he slew Jonathan and his sons there. [24] And Tryphon returned, and went into his own country. [25] And Simon sent, and took the bones of Jonathan his brother, and buried them in Modin, in the city of his fathers.

[26] And all Israel bewailed him with great lamentation: and they mourned for him many days. [27] And Simon built over the sepulchre of his father and of his brethren, a building lofty to the sight, of polished stone behind and before: [28] And he set up seven pyramids one against another for his father and his mother, and his four brethren: [29] And round about these he set great pillars: and upon the pillars arms for a perpetual memory: and by the arms ships carved, which might be seen by all that sailed on the sea. [30] This is the sepulchre that he made in Modin even unto this day.

[31] But Tryphon when he was upon a journey with the young king Antiochus, treacherously slew him. [32] And he reigned in his place, and put on the crown of Asia: and brought great evils upon the land. [33] And Simon built up the strong holds of Judea, fortifying them with high towers, and great walls, and gates, and bars: and he stored up victuals in the fortresses. [34] And Simon chose men and sent to king Demetrius, to the end that he should grant an immunity to the land: for all that Tryphon did was to spoil. [35] And king Demetrius in answer to this request, wrote a letter in this manner:

[36] King Demetrius to Simon the high priest, and friend of kings, and to the ancients, and to the nation of the Jews, greeting. [37] The golden crown, and the palm, which you sent, we have received: and we are ready to make a firm peace with you, and to write to the king's chief officers to release you the things that we have released. [38] For all that we have decreed in your favour, shall stand in force. The strong holds that you have built, shall be your own. [39] And as for any oversight or fault committed unto this day, we forgive it, and the crown which you owed: and if any other thing were taxed in Jerusalem, now let it not be taxed. [40] And if any of you be fit to be enrolled among ours, let them be enrolled, and let there be peace between us.

[41] In the year one hundred and seventy the yoke of the Gentiles was taken off from Israel. [42] And the people of Israel began to write in the instruments, and public records, The first year under Simon the high priest, the great captain and prince of the Jews. [43] In those days Simon besieged Gaza, and camped round about it, and he made engines, and set them to the city, and he struck one tower, and took it. [44] And they that were within the engine leaped into the city: and there was a great uproar in the city. [45] And they that were in the city went up with their wives and children upon the wall, with their garments rent, and they cried with a loud voice, beseeching Simon to grant them peace.

[46] And they said: Deal not with us according to our evil deeds, but according to thy mercy. [47] And Simon being moved, did not destroy them: but yet he cast them out of the city, and cleansed the houses wherein there had been idols, and then he entered into it with hymns, blessing the Lord. [48] And having cast out of it all uncleanness, he placed in it men that should observe the law: and he fortified it, and made it his habitation. [49] But they that were in the castle of Jerusalem were hindered from going out and coming into the country, and from buying and selling: and they were straitened with hunger, and many of them perished through famine. [50] And they cried to Simon for peace, and he granted it to them: and he cast them out from thence, and cleansed the castle from uncleannesses.

[51] And they entered into it the three and twentieth day of the second month, in the year one hundred and seventy-one, with thanksgiving, and branches of palm trees, and harps, and cymbals, and psalteries, and hymns, and canticles, because the great enemy was destroyed out of Israel. [52] And he ordained that these days should be kept every year with gladness. [53] And he fortified the mountain of the temple that was near the castle, and he dwelt there himself, and they that were with him. [54] And Simon saw that John his son was a valiant man for war: and he made him captain of all the forces: and he dwelt in Gazara.

Chapter 14: Demetrius is taken by the king of Persia. Judea flourishes under the government of Simon.

[1] In the year one hundred and seventy-two, king Demetrius assembled his army, and went into Media to get him succours to fight against Tryphon. [2] And Arsaces the king of Persia and Media heard that Demetrius was entered within his borders, and he sent one of his princes to take him alive, and bring him to him. [3] And he went and defeated the army of Demetrius: and took him, and brought him to Arsaces, and he put him into custody. [4] And all the land of Juda was at rest all the days of Simon, and he sought the good of his nation: and his power, and his glory pleased them well all his days. [5] And with all his glory he took Joppe for a haven, and made an entrance to the isles of the sea.

[6] And he enlarged the bounds of his nation, and made himself master of the country. [7] And he gathered together a great number of captives, and had the dominion of Gazara, and of Bethsura, and of the castle: and took away all uncleanness out of it and there was none that resisted him. [8] And every man tilled his land with peace: and the land of Juda yielded her increase, and the trees of the fields their fruit. [9] The ancient men sat all in the streets, and treated together of the good things of the land, and the young men put on them glory, and the robes of war. [10] And he provided victuals for the cities, and he appointed that they should be furnished with ammunition, so that the fame of his glory was renowned even to the end of the earth.

[11] He made peace in the land, and Israel rejoiced with great joy. [12] And every man sat under his vine, and under his fig tree: and there was none to make them afraid. [13] There was none left in the land to fight against them: kings were discomfited in those days. [14] And he strengthened all those of his people that were brought low, and he sought the law, and took away every unjust and wicked man. [15] He glorified the sanctuary, and multiplied the vessels of the holy places.

[16] And it was heard at Rome, and as far as Sparta, that Jonathan was dead: and they were very sorry. [17] But when they heard that Simon his brother was made high priest in his place, and was possessed of all the country, and the cities therein: [18] They wrote to him in tables of brass, to renew the friendship and alliance which they had made with Judas, and with Jonathan his brethren. [19] And they were read before the assembly in Jerusalem. And this is the copy of the letters that the Spartans sent. [20] The princes and the cities of the Spartans to Simon the high priest, and to the ancients, and the priests, and the rest of the people of the Jews their brethren, greeting.

[21] The ambassadors that were sent to our people, have told us of your glory, and honour, and joy: and we rejoice at their coming. [22] And we registered what was said by them in the councils of the people in this manner: Numenius the son of Antiochus, and Antipater the son of Jason, ambassadors of the Jews, came to us to renew the former friendship with us. [23] And it pleased the people to receive the men honourably, and to put a copy of their words in the public records, to be a memorial to the people of the Spartans. And we have written a copy of them to Simon the high priest. [24] And after this Simon sent Numenius to Rome, with a great shield of gold the weight of a thousand pounds, to confirm the league with them. And when the people of Rome had heard [25] These words, they said: What thanks shall we give to Simon, and his sons?

[26] For he hath restored his brethren, and hath driven away in fight the enemies of Israel from them: and they decreed him liberty, and registered it in tables of brass, and set it upon pillars in mount Sion. [27] And this is a copy of the writing: The eighteenth day of the month Elul, in the year one hundred and seventy-two, being the third year under Simon the high priest at Asaramel, [28] In a great assembly of the priests, and of the people, and the princes of the nation, and the ancients of the country, these things were notified: Forasmuch as there have often been wars in our country, [29] And Simon the son of Mathathias of the children of Jarib, and his brethren have put themselves in danger, and have resisted the enemies of their nation, for the maintenance of their holy places, and the law: and have raised their nation to great glory. [30] And Jonathan gathered together his nation, and was made their high priest, and he was laid to his people.

[31] And their enemies desired to tread down and destroy their country, and to stretch forth their hands against their holy places. [32] Then Simon resisted and fought for his nation, and laid out much of his money, and armed the valiant men of his nation, and gave them wages: [33] And he fortified the cities of Judea, and Bethsura that lieth in the borders of Judea, where the armour of the enemies was before: and he placed there a garrison of Jews. [34] And he fortified Joppe which lieth by the sea: and Gazara, which bordereth upon Azotus, wherein the enemies dwelt before, and he placed Jews here: and furnished them with all things convenient for their reparation. [35] And the people seeing the acts of Simon, and to what glory he meant to bring his nation, made him their prince, and high priest, because he had done all these things, and for the justice, and faith, which he kept to his nation, and for that he sought by all means to advance his people.

[36] And in his days things prospered in his hands, so that the heathens were taken away out of their country, and they also that were in the city of David in Jerusalem in the castle, out of which they issued forth, and profaned all places round about the sanctuary, and did much evil to its purity. [37] And he placed therein Jews for the defence of the country, and of the city, and he raised up the walls of Jerusalem. [38] And king Demetrius confirmed him in the high priesthood. [39] According to these things he made him his friend, and glorified him with great glory. [40] For he had heard that the Romans had called the Jews their friends, and confederates, and brethren, and that they had received Simon's ambassadors with honour:

[41] And that the Jews, and their priests, had consented that he should be their prince, and high priest for ever, till there should arise a faithful prophet: [42] And that he should be chief over them, and that he should have the charge of the sanctuary, and that he should appoint rulers over their works, and over the country, and over the armour, and over the strong holds. [43] And that he should have care of the holy places: and that he should be obeyed by all, and that all the writings in the country should be made in his name: and that he should be clothed with purple, and gold: [44] And that it should not be lawful for any of the people, or of the priests, to disannul any of these things, or to gainsay his words, or to call together an assembly in the country without him: or to be clothed with purple, or to wear a buckle of gold: [45] And whosoever shall do otherwise, or shall make void any of these things shall be punished.

[46] And it pleased all the people to establish Simon, and to do according to these words. [47] And Simon accepted thereof, and was well pleased to execute the office of the high priesthood, and to be captain, and prince of the nation of the Jews, and of the priests, and to be chief over all. [48] And they commanded that this writing should be put in tables of brass, and that they should be set up within the compass of the sanctuary, in a conspicuous place: [49] And that a copy thereof should be put in the treasury, that Simon and his sons may have it.

Chapter 15: Antiochus son of Demetrius honours Simon. The Romans write to divers nations in favour of the Jews. Antiochus quarrels with Simon, and sends troops to annoy him.

[1] And king Antiochus the son of Demetrius sent letters from the isles of the sea to Simon the priest, and prince of the nation of the Jews, and to all the people: [2] And the contents were these: King Antiochus to Simon the high priest, and to the nation of the Jews, greeting. [3] Forasmuch as certain pestilent men have usurped the kingdom of our fathers, and my purpose is to challenge the kingdom, and to restore it to its former estate: and I have chosen a great army, and have built ships of war. [4] And I design to go through the country that I may take revenge of them that have destroyed our country, and that have made many cities desolate in my realm. [5] Now therefore I confirm unto thee all the oblations which all the kings before me remitted to thee, and what other gifts soever they remitted to thee:

[6] And I give thee leave to coin thy own money in thy country: [7] And let Jerusalem be holy and free, and all the armour that hath been made, and the fortresses which thou hast built, and which thou keepest in thy hands, let them remain to thee. [8] And all that is due to the king, and what should be the king's hereafter, from this present and for ever, is forgiven thee. [9] And when we shall have recovered our kingdom, we will glorify thee, and thy nation, and the temple with great glory, so that your glory shall be made manifest in all the earth. [10] In the year one hundred and seventy-four Antiochus entered into the land of his fathers, and all the forces assembled to him, so that few were left with Tryphon.

[11] And king Antiochus pursued after him, and he fled along by the sea coast and came to Dora. [12] For he perceived that evils were gathered together upon him, and his troops had forsaken him. [13] And Antiochus camped above Dora with a hundred and twenty thousand men of war, and eight thousand horsemen: [14] And he invested the city, and the ships drew near by sea: and they annoyed the city by land, and by sea, and suffered none to come in, or to go out. [15] And Numenius, and they that had been with him, came from the city of Rome, having letters written to the kings, and countries, the contents whereof were these:

[16] Lucius the consul of the Romans, to king **Ptolemee**, greeting. [17] The ambassadors of the Jews our friends came to us, to renew the former friendship and alliance, being sent from Simon the high priest, and the people of the Jews. [18] And they brought also a shield of gold of a thousand pounds. [19] It hath seemed good therefore to us to write to the kings, and countries, that they should do them no harm, nor fight against them, their cities, or countries: and that they should give no aid to them that fight against them. [20] And it hath seemed good to us to receive the shield of them.

[16] "**Ptolemee**": Surnamed **Physeon**, brother and successor to **Philometer**.

[21] If therefore any pestilent men are fled out of their country to you, deliver them to Simon the high priest, that he may punish them according to their law. [22] These same things were written to king Demetrius, and to **Attalus**, and to Ariarathes, and to Arsaces, [23] And to all the countries; and to Lampsacus, and to the Spartans, and to Delus, and Myndus, and Sicyon, and Caria, and Samus, and Pamphylia, and Lycia, and Alicarnassus, and Cos, and Side, and Aradus, and Rhodes, and Phaselis, and Gortyna, and Gnidus, and Cyprus, and Cyrene. [24] And they wrote a copy thereof to Simon the high priest, and to the people of the Jews. [25] But king Antiochus moved his camp to Dora the second time, assaulting it continually, and making engines: and shut up Tryphon, that he could not go out.

[22] "**Attalus**": **Attalus** was king of Pergamus; **Ariarathes** was king of Cappadocia; and **Arsaces** was king of the Parthians.

[26] And Simon sent to him two thousand chosen men to aid him, silver also, and gold, and abundance of furniture. [27] And he would not receive them, but broke all the covenant that he had made with him before, and alienated himself from him. [28] And he sent to him Athenobius one of his friends, to treat with him, saying: You hold Joppe, and Gazara, and the castle that is in Jerusalem, which are cities of my kingdom: [29] Their borders you have wasted, and you have made great havock in the land, and have got the dominion of many places in my kingdom. [30] Now therefore deliver up the cities that you have taken, and the tributes of the places whereof you have gotten the dominion without the borders of Judea.

[31] But if not, give me for them five hundred talents of silver, and for the havock that you have made, and the tributes of the cities other five hundred talents: or else we will come and fight against you. [32] So Athenobius the king's friend came to Jerusalem, and saw the glory of Simon and his magnificence in gold, and silver, and his great equipage, and he was astonished, and told him the king's words. [33] And Simon answered him, and said to him: We have neither taken other men's land, neither do we hold that which is other men's: but the inheritance of our fathers, which was for some time unjustly possessed by our enemies. [34] But we having opportunity claim the inheritance of our fathers. [35] And as to thy complaints concerning Joppe and Gazara, they did great harm to the people, and to our country: yet for these we will give a hundred talents. And Athenobius answered him not a word:

[36] But returning in a rage to the king, made report to him of these words, and of the glory of Simon, and of all that he had seen, and the king was exceeding angry. [37] And Tryphon fled away by ship to Orthosias. [38] And the king appointed Cendebeus captain of the sea coast, and gave him an army of footmen and horsemen. [39] And he commanded him to march with his army towards Judea: and he commanded him to build up Gedor, and to fortify the gates of the city, and to war against the people. But the king himself pursued after Tryphon. [40] And Cendebeus came to Jamnia, and began to provoke the people, and to ravage Judea, and to take the people prisoners, and to kill, and to build Gedor.

[41] And he placed there horsemen, and an army: that they might issue forth, and make incursions upon the ways of Judea, as the king had commanded him.

Chapter 16: The sons of Simon defeat the troops of Antiochus. Simon with two of his sons are treacherously murdered by Ptolemee his son in law.

[1] Then **John** came up from Gazara, and told Simon his father what Cendebeus had done against their people. [2] And Simon called his two eldest sons, Judas and John, and said to them: I and my brethren, and my father's house, have fought against the enemies of Israel from our youth even to this day: and things have prospered so well in our hands that we have delivered Israel oftentimes. [3] And now I am old, but be you instead of me, and my brethren, and go out, and fight for our nation: and the help from heaven be with you. [4] Then he chose out of the country twenty thousand fighting men, and horsemen, and they went forth against Cendebeus: and they rested in Modin. [5] And they arose in the morning, and went into the plain: and behold a very great army of footmen and horsemen came against them, and there was a running river between them.

[1] "**John**": He was afterwards surnamed Hircanus, and succeeded his father in both his dignities of high priest and prince. He conquered the Edomites, and obliged them to a conformity with the Jews in religion; and destroyed the schismatical temple of the Samaritans.

[6] And John and his people pitched their camp over against them, and he saw that the people were afraid to go over the river, so he went over first: then the men seeing him, passed over after him. [7] And he divided the people, and set the horsemen in the midst of the footmen: but the horsemen of the enemies were very numerous. [8] And they sounded the holy trumpets: and Cendebeus and his army were put to flight: and there fell many of them wounded, and the rest fled into the strong hold. [9] At that time Judas John's brother was wounded: but John pursued after them, till he came to **Cedron**, which he had built: [10] And they fled even to the towers that were in the fields of Azotus, and he burnt them with fire. And there fell of them two thousand men, and he returned into Judea in peace.

[9] "**Cedron**": Otherwise called Gedon, the city that Cendebeus was fortifying.

[11] Now Ptolemee the son of Abobus was appointed captain in the plain of Jericho, and he had abundance of silver and gold, [12] For he was son in law of the high priest. [13] And his heart was lifted up, and he designed to make himself master of the country, and he purposed treachery against Simon, and his sons, to destroy them. [14] Now Simon, as he was going through the cities that were in the country of Judea, and taking care for the good ordering of them, went down to Jericho, he and Mathathias and Judas his sons, in the year one hundred and seventy-seven, the eleventh month: the same is the month Sabath. [15] And the son of Abobus received them deceitfully into a little fortress, that is called Doch which he had built: and he made them a great feast, and hid men there.

[16] And when Simon and his sons had drunk plentifully, Ptolemee and his men rose up and took their weapons, and entered into the banqueting place, and slew him, and his two sons, and some of his servants. [17] And he committed a great treachery in Israel, and rendered evil for good. [18] And Ptolemee wrote these things and sent to the king that he should send him an army to aid him, and he would deliver him the country, and their cities, and tributes. [19] And he sent others to Gazara to kill John: and to the tribunes he sent letters to come to him, and that he would give them silver, and gold, and gifts. [20] And he sent others to take Jerusalem, and the mountain of the temple.

[21] Now one running before, told John in Gazara, that his father and his brethren were slain, and that he hath sent men to kill thee also. [22] But when he heard it he was exceedingly afraid: and he apprehended the men that came to kill him, and he put them to death: for he knew that they sought to take him away. [23] And as concerning the rest of the acts of John, and his wars, and the worthy deeds, which he bravely achieved, and the building of the walls, which he made, and the things that he did: [24] Behold these are written in the book of the days of his priesthood, from the time he was made high priest after his father.

2nd Book of Machabees

Chapter 1: Letters of the Jews of Jerusalem to them that were in Egypt. They give thanks for their delivery from Antiochus: and exhort their brethren to keep the feast of the dedication of the altar, and of the miraculous fire.

[1] To the brethren the Jews that are throughout Egypt, the brethren, the Jews that are in Jerusalem, and in the land of Judea, send health, and good peace. [2] May God be gracious to you, and remember his covenant that he made with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, his faithful servants: [3] And give you all a heart to worship him, and to do his will with a great heart, and a willing mind. [4] May he open your heart in his law, and in his commandments, and send you peace. [5] May he hear your prayers, and be reconciled unto you, and never forsake you in the evil time.

[6] And now here we are praying for you. [7] When Demetrius reigned, in the year one hundred and sixty-nine, we Jews wrote to you, in the trouble, and violence, that came upon us in those years, after Jason withdrew himself from the holy land, and from the kingdom. [8] They burnt the gate, and shed innocent blood: then we prayed to the Lord, and were heard, and we offered sacrifices, and fine flour, and lighted the lamps, and set forth the loaves. [9] And now celebrate ye the days of **Scenopogia** in the month of Casleu. [10] In the year one hundred and eighty-eight, the people that is at Jerusalem, and in Judea, and the senate, and Judas, to Aristobolus, the preceptor of king Ptolemee, who is of the stock of the anointed priests, and to the Jews that are in Egypt, health and welfare.

[9] "**Scenopogia**": Viz., the Encenia, or feast of the dedication of the altar, called here Scenopogia, or feast of tabernacles, from being celebrated with the like solemnity.

[11] Having been delivered by God out of great dangers, we give him great thanks, forasmuch as we have been in war with **such a king**. [12] For he made numbers of men swarm out of Persia that have fought against us, and the holy city. [13] For when the leader himself was in Persia, and with him a very great army, he fell in the temple of **Nanea**, being deceived by the counsel of the priests of Nanea. [14] For Antiochus, with his friends, came to the place as though he would marry her, and that he might receive great sums of money under the title of a dowry. [15] And when the priests of Nanea had set it forth, and he with a small company had entered into the compass of the temple, they shut the temple,

[11] "**Such a king**": Viz., Antiochus Sidetes, who began to make war upon the Jews, whilst Simon was yet alive. 1 Mac. 15. 39. And afterwards besieged Jerusalem under John Hircanus. So that the Judas here mentioned, ver. 10, is not Judas Machabeus, who was dead long before the year 188 of the kingdom of the Greeks, for he died in the year 146 of that epoch, (see above 1 Mac. chap. 2., ver. 70, also the note on chap. 1, ver. 2,) but either Judas the eldest son of John Hircanus, or Judas the Essene, renowned for the gift of prophecy, who flourished about that time.

[13] "**Nanea**": A Persian goddess, which some have taken for Diana, others for Venus.

[16] When Antiochus was come in: and opening a secret entrance of the temple, they cast stones and slew the leader, and them that were with him, and hewed them in pieces, and cutting off their heads they threw them forth. [17] Blessed be God in all things, who hath delivered up the wicked. [18] Therefore whereas we purpose to keep the purification of the temple on the five and twentieth day of the month of Casleu, we thought it necessary to signify it to you: that you also may keep the day of Scenopogia, and the day of the fire, that was given when Nehemias offered sacrifice, after the temple and the altar was built. [19] For when our fathers were led into **Persia**, the priests that then were worshippers of God took privately the fire from the altar, and hid it in a valley where there was a deep pit without water, and there they kept it safe, so that the place was unknown to all men. [20] But when many years had passed, and it pleased God that Nehemias should be sent by the king of Persia, he sent some of the posterity of those priests that had hid it, to seek for the fire: and as they told us, they found no fire, but thick water.

[19] "**Persia**": Babylonia, called here Persia, from being afterwards a part of the Persian empire.

[21] Then he bade them draw it up, and bring it to him: and the priest Nehemias commanded the sacrifices that were laid on, to be sprinkled with the same water, both the wood, and the things that were laid upon it. [22] And when this was done, and the time came that the sun shone out, which before was in a cloud, there was a great fire kindled, so that all wondered. [23] And all the priests made prayer, while the sacrifice was consuming, Jonathan beginning, and the rest answering. [24] And the prayer of Nehemias was after this manner: O Lord God, Creator of all things, dreadful and strong, just and merciful, who alone art the good king, [25] Who alone art gracious, who alone art just, and almighty, and eternal, who deliverest Israel from all evil, who didst choose the fathers and didst sanctify them:

[26] Receive the sacrifice for all thy people Israel, and preserve thy own portion, and sanctify it. [27] Gather together our scattered people, deliver them that are slaves to the Gentiles, and look upon them that are despised and abhorred: that the Gentiles may know that thou art our God. [28] Punish them that oppress us, and that treat us injuriously with pride. [29] Establish thy people in thy holy place, as Moses hath spoken. [30] And the priests sung hymns till the sacrifice was consumed.

[31] And when the sacrifice was consumed, Nehemias commanded the water that was left to be poured out upon the great stones. [32] Which being done, there was kindled a flame from them: but it was consumed by the light that shined from the altar. [33] And when this matter became public, it was told to the king of Persia, that in the place where the priests that were led away, had hid the fire, there appeared water, with which Nehemias and they that were with him had purified the sacrifices. [34] And the king considering, and diligently examining the matter, made a temple for it, that he might prove what had happened. [35] And when he had proved it, he gave the priests many goods, and divers presents, and he took and distributed them to them with his own hand.

[34] "A temple": That is, an enclosure, or a wall round about the place where the fire was hid, to separate it from profane uses, to the end that it might be respected as a holy place.

[36] And Nehemias called this place Nephthar, which is interpreted purification. But many call it Nephi.

Chapter 2: A continuation of the second letter. Of Jeremias' hiding the ark at the time of the captivity. The author's preface.

[1] Now it is found in the descriptions of Jeremias the prophet, that he commanded them that went into captivity, to take the fire, as it hath been signified, and how he gave charge to them that were carried away into captivity. [2] And how he gave them the law that they should not forget the commandments of the Lord, and that they should not err in their minds, seeing the idols of gold, and silver, and the ornaments of them. [3] And with other such like speeches, he exhorted them that they would not remove the law from their heart. [4] It was also contained in the same writing, how the prophet, being warned by God, commanded that the tabernacle and the ark should accompany him, till he came forth to the mountain where Moses went up, and saw the inheritance of God. [5] And when Jeremias came thither he found a hollow cave: and he carried in thither the tabernacle, and the ark, and the altar of incense, and so stopped the door.

[1] "The descriptions": That is, the records or memoirs of Jeremias, a work that is now lost.

[6] Then some of them that followed him, came up to mark the place: but they could not find it. [7] And when Jeremias perceived it, he blamed them, saying: The place shall be unknown, till God gather together the congregation of the people, and receive them to mercy. [8] And then the Lord will shew these things, and the majesty of the Lord shall appear, and there shall be a cloud as it was also shewed to Moses, and he shewed it when Solomon prayed that the place might be sanctified to the great God. [9] For he treated wisdom in a magnificent manner: and like a wise man, he offered the sacrifice of the dedication, and of the finishing of the temple. [10] And as Moses prayed to the Lord and fire came down from heaven, and consumed the holocaust: so Solomon also prayed, and fire came down from heaven and consumed the holocaust.

[11] And Moses said: Because the sin offering was not eaten, it was consumed. [12] So Solomon also celebrated the dedication eight days. [13] And these same things were set down in the memoirs and commentaries of Nehemias: and how he made a library, and gathered together out of the countries, the books both of the prophets, and of David, and the epistles of the kings. and concerning the holy gifts. [14] And in like manner Judas also gathered together all such things as were lost by the war we had, and they are in our possession. [15] Wherefore if you want these things, send some that may fetch them to you.

[16] As we are then about to celebrate the purification, we have written unto you: and you shall do well, if you keep the same days. [17] And we hope that God who hath delivered his people, and hath rendered to all the inheritance, and the kingdom, and the priesthood, and the sanctuary, [18] As he promised in the law, will shortly have mercy upon us, and will gather us together from every land under heaven into the holy place. [19] For he hath delivered us out of great perils, and hath cleansed the place. [20] Now as concerning Judas Machabeus. and his brethren, and the purification of the great temple, and the dedication of the altar:

[16] "The purification": That is, the feast of the purifying or cleansing of the temple.

[21] As also the wars against Antiochus the Illustrious, and his son Eupator: [22] And the manifestations that came from heaven to them, that behaved themselves manfully on the behalf of the Jews, so that, being but a few, they made themselves masters of the whole country, and put to flight; the barbarous multitude: [23] And recovered again the most renowned temple in all the world, and delivered the city, and restored the laws that were abolished, the Lord with all clemency shewing mercy to them. [24] And all such things as have been comprised in five books by Jason of Cyrene, we have attempted to abridge in one book. [25] For considering the multitude of books, and the difficulty that they find that desire to undertake the narrations of histories, because of the multitude of the matter, [26] We have taken care for those indeed that are willing to read, that it might be a pleasure of mind: and for the studious, that they may more easily commit to memory: and that all that read might receive profit. [27] And as to ourselves indeed, in undertaking this work of abridging, we have taken in hand **no easy task**, yea rather a business full of watching and sweat. [28] But as they that prepare a feast, and seek to satisfy the will of others: for the sake of many, we willingly undergo the labour. [29] Leaving to the authors the exact handling of every particular, and as for ourselves, according to the plan proposed, studying to be brief. [30] For as the master builder of a new house must have care of the whole building: but he that taketh care to paint it, must seek out fit things for the adorning of it: so must it be judged for us.

[27] **"No easy task": The spirit of God, that assists the sacred penmen, does not exempt them from labour in seeking out the matter which they are to treat of, and the order and manner in which they are to deliver it. So St. Luke writ the gospel having diligently attained to all things. Luke 1. ver. 3.**

[31] For to collect all that is to be known, to put the discourse in order, and curiously to discuss every particular point, is the duty of the author of a history: [32] But to pursue brevity of speech, and to avoid nice declarations of things, is to be granted to him that maketh an abridgment. [33] Here then we will begin the narration: let this be enough by way of a preface: for it is a foolish thing to make a long prologue, and to be short in the story itself.

Chapter 3: Heliodorus is sent by king Seleucus to take away the treasures deposited in the temple. He is struck by God, and healed by the prayers of the high priest.

[1] Therefore when the holy city was inhabited with all peace, and the laws as yet were very well kept, because of the godliness of Onias the high priest, and the hatred his soul had of evil, [2] It came to pass that even the kings themselves, and the princes esteemed the place worthy of the highest honour, and glorified the temple with very great gifts: [3] So that **Seleucus** king of Asia allowed out of his revenues all the charges belonging to the ministry of the sacrifices. [4] But one Simon of the tribe of Benjamin, who was appointed overseer of the temple, strove in opposition to the high priest, to bring about some unjust thing in the city. [5] And when he could not overcome Onias he went to Apollonius the son of Tharseas, who at that time was governor of Celesyria and Phenicia:

[3] **"Seleucus": Son of Antiochus the Great, and elder brother of Antiochus Epiphanes.**

[6] And told him, that the treasury in Jerusalem was full of immense sums of money, and the common store was infinite, which did not belong to the account of the sacrifices: and that it was possible to bring all into the king's hands. [7] Now when Apollonius had given the king notice concerning the money that he was told of, he called for Heliodorus, who had the charge over his affairs, and sent him with commission to bring him the foresaid money. [8] So Heliodorus forthwith began his journey, under a colour of visiting the cities of Celesyria and Phenicia, but indeed to fulfill the king's purpose. [9] And when he was come to Jerusalem, and had been courteously received in the city by the high priest, he told him what information had been given concerning the money: and declared the cause for which he was come: and asked if these things were so indeed. [10] Then the high priest told him that these were sums deposited, and provisions for the subsistence of the widows and the fatherless.

[11] And that some part of that which wicked Simon had given intelligence of, belonged to Hircanus son of Tobias, a man of great dignity: and that the whole was four hundred talents of silver, and two hundred of gold: [12] But that to deceive them who had trusted to the place and temple which is honoured throughout the whole world, for the reverence and holiness of it, was a thing which could not by any means be done. [13] But he, by reason of the orders he had received from the king, said that by all means the money must be carried to the king. [14] So on the day he had appointed, Heliodorus entered in to order this matter. But there was no small terror throughout the whole city. [15] And the priests prostrated themselves before the altar in their priests' vestments, and called upon him from heaven, who made the law concerning things given to be kept, that he would preserve them safe, for them that had deposited them.

[16] Now whosoever saw the countenance of the high priest, was wounded in heart: for his face, and the changing of his colour declared the inward sorrow of his mind. [17] For the man was so compassed with sadness and horror of the body, that it was manifest to them that beheld him, what sorrow he had in his heart. [18] Others also came flocking together out of their houses, praying and making public supplication, because the place was like to come into contempt. [19] And the women, girded with haircloth about their breasts, came together in the streets. And the virgins also that were shut up, came forth, some to Onias, and some to the walls, and others looked out of the windows. [20] And all holding up their hands towards heaven, made supplication.

[21] For the expectation of the mixed multitude, and of the high priest who was in an agony, would have moved any one to pity. [22] And these indeed called upon almighty God, to preserve the things that had been committed to them, safe and sure for those that had committed them. [23] But Heliodorus executed that which he had resolved on, himself being present in the same place with his guard about the treasury. [24] But the spirit of the almighty God gave a great evidence of his presence, so that all that had presumed to obey him, falling down by the power of God, were struck with fainting and dread. [25] For there appeared to them a horse with a terrible rider upon him, adorned with a very rich covering: and he ran fiercely and struck Heliodorus with his fore feet, and he that sat upon him seemed to have armour of gold.

[26] Moreover there appeared two other young men beautiful and strong, bright and glorious, and in comely apparel: who stood by him, on either side, and scourged him without ceasing with many stripes. [27] And Heliodorus suddenly fell to the ground, and they took him up covered with great darkness, and having put him into a litter they carried him out. [28] So he that came with many servants, and all his guard into the aforesaid treasury, was carried out, no one being able to help him, the manifest power of God being known. [29] And he indeed by the power of God lay speechless, and without all hope of recovery. [30] But they praised the Lord because he had glorified his place: and the temple, that a little before was full of fear and trouble, when the almighty Lord appeared, was filled with joy and gladness.

[31] Then some of the friends of Heliodorus forthwith begged of Onias, that he would call upon the most High to grant him his life, who was ready to give up the ghost. [32] So the high priest considering that the king might perhaps suspect that some mischief had been done to Heliodorus by the Jews, offered a sacrifice of health for the recovery of the man. [33] And when the high priest was praying, the same young men in the same clothing stood by Heliodorus, and said to him: Give thanks to Onias the priest: because for his sake the Lord hath granted thee life. [34] And thou having been scourged by God, declare unto all men the great works and the power of God. And having spoken thus, they appeared no more. [35] So Heliodorus after he had offered a sacrifice to God, and made great vows to him, that had granted him life, and given thanks to Onias, taking his troops with him, returned to the king.

[36] And he testified to all men the works of the great God, which he had seen with his own eyes. [37] And when the king asked Heliodorus, who might be a fit man to be sent yet once more to Jerusalem, he said: [38] If thou hast any enemy or traitor to thy kingdom, send him thither, and thou shalt receive him again scourged, if so be he escape: for there is undoubtedly in that place a certain power of God. [39] For he that hath his dwelling in the heavens, is the visitor, and protector of that place, and he striketh and destroyeth them that come to do evil to it. [40] And the things concerning Heliodorus, and the keeping of the treasury fell out in this manner.

Chapter 4: Onias has recourse to the king. The ambition and wickedness of Jason and Menelaus. Onias is treacherously murdered.

[1] But Simon, of whom we spoke before, and of his country, spoke ill of Onias, as though he had incited Heliodorus to do these things, and had been the promoter of evils: [2] And he presumed to call him a traitor to the kingdom, who provided for the city, and defended his nation, and was zealous for the law of God. [3] But when the enmities proceeded so far, that murders also were committed by some of Simon's friends: [4] Onias considering the danger of this contention, and that Apollonius, who was the governor of Celesyria and Phenicia, was outrageous, which increased the malice of Simon, went to the king, [5] Not to be an accuser of his countrymen, but with a view to the common good of all the people.

[6] For he saw that, except the king took care, it was impossible that matters should be settled in peace, or that Simon would cease from his folly. [7] But after the death of Seleucus, when Antiochus, who was called the Illustrious, had taken possession of the kingdom, Jason the brother of Onias ambitiously sought the high priesthood: [8] And went to the king, promising him three hundred and sixty talents of silver, and out of other revenues fourscore talents. [9] Besides this he promised also a hundred and fifty more, if he might have license to set him up a place for exercise, and a place for youth, and to entitle them, that were at Jerusalem, Antiochians. [10] Which when the king had granted, and he had gotten the rule into his hands, forthwith he began to bring over his countrymen to the fashion of the heathens.

[11] And abolishing those things, which had been decreed of special favour by the kings in behalf of the Jews, by the means of John the father of that Eupolemus, who went ambassador to Rome to make amity and alliance, he disannulled the lawful ordinances of the citizens, and brought in fashions that were perverse. [12] For he had the boldness to set up, under the very castle, a place of exercise, and to put all the choicest youths in brothel houses. [13] Now this was not the beginning, but an increase, and progress of heathenish and foreign manners, through the abominable and unheard of wickedness of Jason, that impious wretch and no priest. [14] Insomuch that the priests were not now occupied about the offices of the altar, but despising the temple and neglecting the sacrifices, hastened to be partakers of the games, and of the unlawful allowance thereof, and of the exercise of the discus. [15] And setting nought by the honours of their fathers, they esteemed the Grecian glories for the best:

[16] For the sake of which they incurred a dangerous contention, and followed earnestly their ordinances, and in all things they coveted to be like them, who were their enemies and murderers. [17] For acting wickedly against the laws of God doth not pass unpunished: but this the time following will declare. [18] Now when the game that was used every fifth year was kept at Tyre, the king being present, [19] The wicked Jason sent from Jerusalem sinful men to carry three hundred didrachmas of silver for the sacrifice of Hercules; but the bearers thereof desired it might not be bestowed on the sacrifices, because it was not necessary, but might be deputed for other charges. [20] So the money was appointed by him that sent it to the sacrifice of Hercules: but because of them that carried it was employed for the making of galleys.

[21] Now when Apollonius the son of Mnestheus was sent into Egypt to treat with the nobles of king Philometor, and Antiochus understood that he was wholly excluded from the affairs of the kingdom, consulting his own interest, he departed thence and came to Joppe, and from thence to Jerusalem: [22] Where he was received in a magnificent manner by Jason, and the city, and came in with torch lights, and with praises, and from thence he returned with his army into Phenicia. [23] Three years afterwards Jason sent Menelaus, brother of the aforesaid Simon, to carry money to the king, and to bring answers from him concerning certain necessary affairs. [24] But he being recommended to the king, when he had magnified the appearance of his power, got the high priesthood for himself, by offering more than Jason by three hundred talents of silver. [25] So having received the king's mandate, he returned bringing nothing worthy of the high priesthood: but having the mind of a cruel tyrant, and the rage of a savage beast.

[26] Then Jason, who had undermined his own brother, being himself undermined, was driven out a fugitive into the country of the Ammonites. [27] So Menelaus got the principality: but as for the money he had promised to the king he took no care, when Sostratus the governor of the castle called for it. [28] For to him appertained the gathering of the taxes: wherefore they were both called before the king. [29] And Menelaus was removed from the priesthood, Lysimachus his brother succeeding: and Sostratus was made governor of the Cyprians. [30] When these things were in doing, it fell out that they of Tharsus and Mallos raised a sedition, because they were given for a gift to Antiochis, the king's concubine.

[31] The king therefore went in all haste to appease them, leaving Andronicus, one of his nobles, for his deputy. [32] Then Menelaus supposing that he had found a convenient time, having stolen certain vessels of gold out of the temple, gave them to Andronicus, and others he had sold at Tyre, and in the neighbouring cities. [33] Which when Onias understood most certainly, he reproved him, keeping himself in a safe place at Antioch beside Daphne. [34] Whereupon Menelaus coming to Andronicus, desired him to kill Onias. And he went to Onias, and gave him his right hand with an oath, and (though he were suspected by him) persuaded him to come forth out of the sanctuary, and immediately slew him, without any regard to justice. [35] For which cause not only the Jews, but also the other nations, conceived indignation, and were much grieved for the unjust murder of so great a man.

[36] And when the king was come back from the places of Cilicia, the Jews that were at Antioch, and also the Greeks went to him: complaining of the unjust murder of Onias. [37] Antiochus therefore was grieved in his mind for Onias, and being moved to pity, shed tears, remembering the sobriety and modesty of the deceased. [38] And being inflamed to anger, he commanded Andronicus to be stripped of his purple, and to be led about through all the city: and that in the same place wherein he had committed the impiety against Onias, the sacrilegious wretch should be put to death, the Lord repaying him his deserved punishment. [39] Now when many sacrileges had been committed by Lysimachus in the temple by the counsel of Menelaus, and the rumour of it was spread abroad, the multitude gathered themselves together against Lysimachus, a great quantity of gold being already carried away. [40] Wherefore the multitude making an insurrection, and their minds being filled with anger, Lysimachus armed about three thousand men, and began to use violence, one Tyrannus being captain, a man far gone both in age, and in madness.

[41] But when they perceived the attempt of Lysimachus, some caught up stones, some strong clubs: and some threw ashes upon Lysimachus, [42] And many of them were wounded, and some struck down to the ground, but all were put to flight: and as for the sacrilegious fellow himself, they slew him beside the treasury. [43] Now concerning these matters, an accusation was laid against Menelaus. [44] And when the king was come to Tyre, three men were sent from the ancients to plead the cause before him. [45] But Menelaus being convicted, promised **Ptolemee** to give him much money to persuade the king to favour him.

[45] "**Ptolemee**": The son of Dorymenus, a favourite of the king.

[46] So Ptolemee went to the king in a certain court where he was, as it were to cool himself, and brought him to be of another mind: [47] So Menelaus who was guilty of all the evil, was acquitted by him of the accusations: and those poor men, who, if they had pleaded their cause even before Scythians, should have been judged innocent, were condemned to death. [48] Thus they that prosecuted the cause for the city, and for the people, and the sacred vessels, did soon suffer unjust punishment. [49] Wherefore even the Tyrians being moved with indignation, were liberal towards their burial. [50] And so through the covetousness of them that were in power, Menelaus continued in authority, increasing in malice to the betraying of the citizens.

Chapter 5: Wonderful signs are seen in the air. Jason's wickedness and end. Antiochus takes Jerusalem, and plunders the temple.

[1] At the same time Antiochus prepared for a second journey into Egypt. [2] And it came to pass that through the whole city of Jerusalem for the space of forty days there were seen horsemen running in the air, in gilded raiment, and armed with spears, like bands of soldiers. [3] And horses set in order by ranks, running one against another, with the shakings of shields, and a multitude of men in helmets, with drawn swords, and casting of darts, and glittering of golden armour, and of harnesses of all sorts. [4] Wherefore all men prayed that these prodigies might turn to good. [5] Now when there was gone forth a false rumour, as though Antiochus had been dead, Jason taking with him no fewer than a thousand men, suddenly assaulted the city: and though the citizens ran together to the wall, the city at length was taken, and Menelaus fled into the castle.

[6] But Jason slew his countrymen without mercy, not considering that prosperity against one's own kindred is a very great evil, thinking they had been enemies, and not citizens, whom he conquered. [7] Yet he did not get the principality, but received confusion at the end, for the reward of his treachery, and fled again into the country of the Ammonites. [8] At the last having been shut up by Aretas the king of the Arabians, in order for his destruction, flying from city to city, hated by all men, as a forsaker of the laws, and execrable, as an enemy of his country and countrymen, he was thrust out into Egypt: [9] And he that had driven many out of their country, perished in a strange land, going to Lacedemon, as if for kindred sake he should have refuge there: [10] But he that had cast out many unburied, was himself cast forth both unlamented and unburied, neither having foreign burial, nor being partaker of the sepulchre of his fathers.

[11] Now when these things were done, the king suspected that the Jews would forsake the alliance: whereupon departing out of Egypt with a furious mind, he took the city by force of arms. [12] And commanded the soldiers to kill, and not to spare any that came in their way, and to go up into the houses to slay. [13] Thus there was a slaughter of young and old, a destruction of women and children, and killing of virgins and infants. [14] And there were slain in the space of three whole days fourscore thousand, forty thousand were made prisoners, and as many sold. [15] But this was not enough; he presumed also to enter into the temple, the most holy in all the world, Menelaus, that traitor to the laws, and to his country, being his guide.

[16] And taking in his wicked hands the holy vessels, which were given by other kings and cities, for the ornament and the glory of the place, he unworthily handled and profaned them. [17] Thus Antiochus going astray in mind, did not consider that God was angry for a while, because of the sins of the inhabitants of the city: and therefore this contempt had happened to the place: [18] Otherwise had they not been involved in many sins, as Heliodorus, who was sent by king Seleucus to rob the treasury, so this man also, as soon as he had come, had been forthwith scourged, and put back from his presumption. [19] But God did not choose the people for the place's sake, but the place for the people's sake. [20] And therefore the place also itself was made partaker of the evils of the people: but afterward shall communicate in the good things thereof, and as it was forsaken in the wrath of almighty God, shall be exalted again with great glory, when the great Lord shall be reconciled.

[21] So when Antiochus had taken away out of the temple a thousand and eight hundred talents, he went back in all haste to Antioch, thinking through pride, that he might now make the land navigable, and the sea passable on foot: such was the haughtiness of his mind. [22] He left also governors to afflict the people: at Jerusalem, Philip, a Phrygian by birth, but in manners more barbarous than he that set him there: [23] And in Gazarim, Andronicus and Menelaus, who bore a more heavy hand upon the citizens than the rest. [24] And whereas he was set against the Jews, he sent that hateful prince Apollonius with an army of two and twenty thousand men, commanding him to kill all that were of perfect age, and to sell the women and the younger sort. [25] Who when he was come to Jerusalem, pretending peace, rested till the holy day of the sabbath: and then the Jews keeping holiday, he commanded his men to take arms.

[26] And he slew all that were come forth to see: and running through the city with armed men, he destroyed a very great multitude. [27] But Judas Machabeus, who **was the tenth**, had withdrawn himself into a desert place, and there lived amongst wild beasts in the mountains with his company: and they continued feeding on herbs, that they might not be partakers of the pollution.

[27] "**Was the tenth**": That is, he had nine others in his company.

Chapter 6: Antiochus commands the law to be abolished, sets up an idol in the temple, and persecutes the faithful. The martyrdom of Eleazar.

[1] But not long after the king sent a certain old man of Antioch, to compel the Jews to depart from the laws of their fathers and of God: [2] And to defile the temple that was in Jerusalem, and to call it the temple of Jupiter Olympius: and **that in Gazarim** of Jupiter Hospitalis, according as they were that inhabited the place. [3] And very bad was this invasion of evils and grievous to all. [4] For the temple was full of the riot and revellings of the Gentiles: and of men lying with lewd women. And women thrust themselves of their accord into the holy places, and brought in things that were not lawful. [5] The altar also was filled with unlawful things, which were forbidden by the laws.

[2] **"That in Gazarim": Viz., the temple of the Samaritans. And as they were originally strangers, the name of Hospitalis (which signifies of or belonging to strangers) was applicable to the idol set up in their temple.**

[6] And neither were the sabbaths kept, nor the solemn days of the fathers observed, neither did any man plainly profess himself to be a Jew. [7] But they were led by bitter constraint on the king's birthday to the sacrifices: and when the feast of Bacchus was kept, they were compelled to go about crowned with ivy in honour of Bacchus. [8] And there went out a decree into the neighbouring cities of the Gentiles, by the suggestion of the Ptolemeans, that they also should act in like manner against the Jews, to oblige them to sacrifice: [9] And whosoever would not conform themselves to the ways of the Gentiles, should be put to death: then was misery to be seen. [10] For two women were accused to have circumcised their children: whom, when they had openly led about through the city with the infants hanging at their breasts, they threw down headlong from the walls.

[11] And others that had met together in caves that were near, and were keeping the sabbath day privately, being discovered by **Philip**, were burnt with fire, because they made a conscience to help themselves with their hands, by reason of the religious observance of the day. [12] Now I beseech those that shall read this book, that they be not shocked at these calamities, but that they consider the things that happened, not as being for the destruction, but for the correction of our nation. [13] For it is a token of great goodness when sinners are not suffered to go on in their ways for a long time, but are presently punished. [14] For, not as with other nations (whom the Lord patiently expecteth, that when the day of judgment shall come, he may punish them in the fulness of their sins:) [15] Doth he also deal with us, so as to suffer our sins to come to their height, and then take vengeance on us.

[11] **"Philip": The governor of Jerusalem.**

[16] And therefore he never withdraweth his mercy from us: but though he chastise his people with adversity, he forsaketh them not. [17] But let this suffice in a few words for a warning to the readers. And now we must come to the narration. [18] Eleazar one of the chief of the scribes, a man advanced in years, and of a comely countenance, was pressed to open his mouth to eat swine's flesh. [19] But he, choosing rather a most glorious death than a hateful life, went forward voluntarily to the torment. [20] And considering in what manner he was come to it, patiently bearing, he determined not to do any unlawful things for the love of life.

[21] But they that stood by, being moved with **wicked pity**, for the old friendship they had with the man, taking him aside, desired that flesh might be brought, which it was lawful for him to eat, that he might make as if he had eaten, as the king had commanded of the flesh of the sacrifice: [22] That by so doing he might be delivered from death: and for the sake of their old friendship with the man they did him this courtesy. [23] But he began to consider the dignity of his age, and his ancient years, and the inbred honour of his grey head, and his good life and conversation from a child: and he answered without delay, according to the ordinances of the holy law made by God, saying, that he would rather be sent into the other world. [24] For it doth not become our age, said he, to dissemble: whereby many young persons might think that Eleazar, at the age of fourscore and ten years, was gone over to the life of the heathens: [25] And so they, through my dissimulation, and for a little time of a corruptible life, should be deceived, and hereby I should bring a stain and a curse upon my old age.

[21] **"Wicked pity": Their pity was wicked, inasmuch as it suggested that wicked proposal of saving his life by dissimulation.**

[26] For though, for the present time, I should be delivered from the punishments of men, yet should I not escape the hand of the Almighty neither alive nor dead. [27] Wherefore by departing manfully out of this life, I shall shew myself worthy of my old age: [28] And I shall leave an example of fortitude to young men, if with a ready mind and constancy I suffer an honourable death, for the most venerable and most holy laws. And having spoken thus, he was forthwith carried to execution. [29] And they that led him, and had been a little before more mild, were changed to wrath for the words he had spoken, which they thought were uttered out of arrogancy. [30] But when he was now ready to die with the stripes, he groaned, and said: O Lord, who hast the holy knowledge, thou knowest manifestly that whereas I might be delivered from death, I suffer grievous pains in body: but in soul am well content to suffer these things because I fear thee.

[31] Thus did this man die, leaving not only to young men, but also to the whole nation, the memory of his death for an example of virtue and fortitude.

Chapter 7: The glorious martyrdom of the seven brethren and their mother.

[1] It came to pass also, that seven brethren, together with their mother, were apprehended, and compelled by the king to eat swine's flesh against the law, for which end they were tormented with whips and scourges. [2] But one of them, who was the eldest, said thus: What wouldst thou ask, or learn of us? we are ready to die rather than to transgress the laws of God, received from our fathers. [3] Then the king being angry commanded fryingpans, and brazen caldrons to be made hot: which forthwith being heated, [4] He commanded to cut out the tongue of him that had spoken first: and the skin of his head being drawn off, to chop off also the extremities of his hands and feet, the rest of his brethren, and his mother, looking on. [5] And when he was now maimed in all parts, he commanded him, being yet alive, to be brought to the fire, and to be fried in the fryingpan: and while he was suffering therein long torments, the rest, together with the mother, exhorted one another to die manfully,

[6] Saying: The Lord God will look upon the truth, and will take pleasure in us, as Moses declared in the profession of the canticle: And In his servants he will take pleasure. [7] So when the first was dead after this manner, they brought the next to make him a, mocking stock: and when they had pulled off the skin of his head with the hair, they asked him if he would eat, before he were punished throughout the whole body in every limb. [8] But he answered in his own language, and said: I will not do it. Wherefore he also in the next place, received the torments of the first: [9] And when he was at the last gasp, he said thus: Thou indeed, O most wicked man, destroyest us out of this present life: but the King of the world will raise us up, who die for his laws, in the resurrection of eternal life. [10] After him the third was made a mocking stock, and when he was required, he quickly put forth his tongue, and courageously stretched out his hands:

[11] And said with confidence: These I have from heaven, but for the laws of God I now despise them: because I hope to receive them again from him. [12] So that the king, and they that were with him, wondered at the young man's courage, because he esteemed the torments as nothing. [13] And after he was thus dead, they tormented the fourth in the like manner. [14] And when he was now ready to die, he spoke thus: It is better, being put to death by men, to look for hope from God, to be raised up again by him: for, as to thee thou shalt have no resurrection unto life. [15] And when they had brought the fifth, they tormented him. But he looking upon the king,

[16] Said: Whereas thou hast power among men, though thou art corruptible, thou dost what thou wilt: but think not that our nation is forsaken by God. [17] But stay patiently a while, and thou shalt see his great power, in what manner he will torment thee and thy seed. [18] After him they brought the sixth, and he being ready to die, spoke thus: Be not deceived without cause: for we suffer these things for ourselves, having sinned against our God, and things worthy of admiration are done to us: [19] But do not think that thou shalt escape unpunished, for that thou attempted to fight against God. [20] Now the mother was to be admired above measure, and worthy to be remembered by good men, who beheld seven sons slain in the space of one day, and bore it with a good courage, for the hope that she had in God:

[21] And she bravely exhorted every one of them in her own language, being filled with wisdom: and joining a man's heart to a woman's thought, [22] She said to them: I know not how you were formed in my womb: for I neither gave you breath, nor soul, nor life, neither did I frame the limbs of every one of you. [23] But the Creator of the world, that formed the nativity of man, and that found out the origin of all, he will restore to you again in his mercy, both breath and life, as now you despise yourselves for the sake of his laws. [24] Now Antiochus, thinking himself despised, and withal despising the voice of the upbraider, when the youngest was yet alive, did not only exhort him by words, but also assured him with an oath, that he would make him a rich and a happy man, and, if he would turn from the laws of his fathers, would take him for a friend, and furnish him with things necessary. [25] But when the young man was not moved with these things, the king called the mother, and counselled her to deal with the young man to save his life.

[26] And when he had exhorted her with many words, she promised that she would counsel her son. [27] So bending herself towards him, mocking the cruel tyrant, she said in her own language: My son, have pity upon me, that bore thee nine months in my womb, and gave thee suck three years, and nourished thee, and brought thee up unto this age. [28] I beseech thee, my son, look upon heaven and earth, and all that is in them: and consider that God made them out of nothing, and mankind also: [29] So thou shalt not fear this tormentor, but being made a worthy partner with thy brethren, receive death, that in that mercy I may receive thee again with thy brethren. [30] While she was yet speaking these words, the young man said: For whom do you stay? I will not obey the commandment of the king, but the commandment of the law, which was given us by Moses.

[31] But thou that hast been the author of all mischief against the Hebrews, shalt not escape the hand of God. [32] For we suffer thus for our sins. [33] And though the Lord our God is angry with us a little while for our chastisement and correction: yet he will be reconciled again to his servants. [34] But thou, O wicked and of all men most flagitious, be not lifted up without cause with vain hopes, whilst thou art raging against his servants. [35] For thou hast not yet escaped the judgment of the almighty God, who beholdeth all things.

[36] For my brethren, having now undergone a short pain, are under the covenant of eternal life: but thou by the judgment of God shalt receive just punishment for thy pride. [37] But I, like my brethren, offer up my life and my body for the laws of our fathers: calling upon God to be speedily merciful to our nation, and that thou by torments and stripes mayst confess that he alone is God. [38] But in me and in my brethren the wrath of the Almighty, which hath justly been brought upon all our nation, shall cease. [39] Then the king being incensed with anger, raged against him more cruelly than all the rest, taking it grievously that he was mocked. [40] So this man also died undefiled, wholly trusting in the Lord.

[41] And last of all after the sons the mother also was consumed. [42] But now there is enough said of the sacrifices, and of the excessive cruelties.

Chapter 8: Judas Machabeus gathering an army gains divers victories.

[1] But Judas Machabeus, and they that were with him, went privately into the towns: and calling together their kinsmen and friends, and taking unto them such as continued in the Jews' religion, they assembled six thousand men. [2] And they called upon the Lord that he would look upon his people that was trodden down by all, and would have pity on the temple, that was defiled by the wicked: [3] That he would have pity also upon the city that was destroyed, that was ready to be made even with the ground, and would hear the voice of the blood that cried to him: [4] That he would remember also the most unjust deaths of innocent children, and the blasphemies offered to his name, and would shew his indignation on this occasion. [5] Now when Machabeus had gathered a multitude, he could not be withstood by the heathens: for the wrath of the Lord was turned into mercy.

[6] So coming unawares upon the towns and cities, he set them on fire, and taking possession of the most commodious places, he made no small slaughter of the enemies, [7] And especially in the nights he went upon these expeditions, and the fame of his valour was spread abroad everywhere. [8] Then **Philip, seeing** that the man gained ground by little and little, and that things for the most part succeeded prosperously with him, wrote to Ptolemee the governor of Celesyria and Phenicia, to send aid to the king's affairs. [9] And he with all speed sent Nicanor the son of Patroclus, one of his special friends, giving him no fewer than **twenty thousand** armed men of different nations, to root out the whole race of the Jews, joining also with him Gorgias, a good soldier, and of great experience in matters of war. [10] And Nicanor purposed to raise for the king the tribute of two thousand talents, that was to be given to the Romans, by making so much money of the captive Jews:

[8] "**Philip seeing**": The governor of Jerusalem found himself unable to contend with Judas, especially after the victories he had obtained over Apollonius and Seron. 1 Mac. 3.

[9] "**Twenty thousand**": The whole number of the forces sent at that time into Judea, was 40, 000 footmen, and 7000 horsemen, 1 Mac. 3. 30. But only 20, 000 are here taken notice of, because there were no more with Nicanor at the time of the battle.

[11] Wherefore he sent immediately to the cities upon the sea coast, to invite men together to buy up the Jewish slaves, promising that they should have ninety slaves for one talent, not reflecting on the vengeance, which was to follow him from the Almighty. [12] Now when Judas found that Nicanor was coming, he imparted to the Jews that were with him, that the enemy was at hand. [13] And some of them being afraid, and distrusting the justice of God, fled away: [14] Others sold all that they had left, and withal besought the Lord, that he would deliver them from the wicked Nicanor, who had sold them before he came near them: [15] And if not for their sakes, yet for the covenant that he had made with their fathers, and for the sake of his holy and glorious name that was invoked upon them.

[16] But Machabeus calling together **seven thousand** that were with him, exhorted them not to be reconciled to the enemies, nor to fear the multitude of the enemies who came wrongfully against them, but to fight manfully: [17] Setting before their eyes the injury they had unjustly done the holy place, and also the injury they had done to the city, which had been shamefully abused, besides their destroying the ordinances of the fathers. [18] For, said he, they trust in their weapons, and in their boldness: but we trust in the Almighty Lord, who at a beck can utterly destroy both them that come against us, and the whole world. [19] Moreover he put them in mind also of the helps their fathers had received from God: and how under Sennacherib a hundred and eighty-five thousand had been destroyed. [20] And of the battle that they had fought against the **Galatians** in Babylonia, how they, being in all but six thousand, when it came to the point, and the Macedonians their companions were a stand, slew a hundred and twenty thousand, because of the help they had from heaven, and for this they received many favours.

[16] "**Seven thousand**": In the Greek it is six thousand. But then three thousand of them had no arms. 1 Mac. 4. 6.

[20] "**Galatians**": That is, the Gauls, who having ravaged Italy and Greece, poured themselves in upon Asia, in immense multitudes, where also they founded the kingdom of Galatia or Gallo Graecia.

[21] With these words they were greatly encouraged, and disposed even to die for the laws and their country. [22] So he appointed his brethren captains over each division of his army, Simon, and Joseph, and Jonathan, giving to each one fifteen hundred men. [23] And after the holy Book had been read to them by Esdras, and he had given them for a watchword, The help of God: himself leading the first band, he joined battle with Nicanor: [24] And the Almighty being their helper, they slew **above nine thousand** men: and having wounded and disabled the greater part of Nicanor's army, they obliged them to fly. [25] And they took the money of them that came to buy them, and they pursued them on every side.

[24] "**Above nine thousand**": Viz., including the three thousand slain in the pursuit.

[26] But they came back for want of time: for it was the day before the sabbath: and therefore they did not continue the pursuit. [27] But when they had gathered together their arms and their spoils, they kept the sabbath: blessing the Lord who had delivered them that day, distilling the beginning of mercy upon them. [28] Then after the sabbath they divided the spoils to the feeble and the orphans, and the widows: and the rest they took for themselves and their servants. [29] When this was done, and they had all made a common supplication, they besought the merciful Lord to be reconciled to his servants unto the end. [30] Moreover they slew above twenty thousand of them that were with Timotheus and Bacchides who fought them, and they made themselves masters of the high strong holds: and they divided amongst them many spoils, giving equal portions to the feeble, the fatherless and the widows, yea and the aged also.

[31] And when they had carefully gathered together their arms, they laid them all up in convenient places, and the residue of their spoils they carried to Jerusalem: [32] They slew also Philarches who was with Timotheus, a wicked man, who had many ways afflicted the Jews. [33] And when they kept the feast of the victory at Jerusalem, they burnt Callisthenes, that had set fire to the holy gates, who had taken refuge in a certain house, rendering to him a worthy reward for his impieties: [34] But as for that most wicked man Nicanor, who had brought a thousand merchants to the sale of the Jews, [35] Being through the help of the Lord brought down by them, of whom he had made no account, **laying; aside his garment of glory**, fleeing through the midland country, he came alone to Antioch, being rendered very unhappy by the destruction of his army.

[35] "**Laying aside his garment of glory**": That is, his splendid apparel, which he wore through ostentation; he now throws it off, lest he should be known on his flight.

[36] And he that had promised to levy the tribute for the Romans by the means of the captives of Jerusalem, now professed that the Jews had God for their protector, and therefore they could not be hurt, because they followed the laws appointed by him.

Chapter 9: The wretched end, and fruitless repentance of king Antiochus.

[1] At that time Antiochus returned with dishonour out of Persia. [2] For he had entered into the city called **Persepolis**, and attempted to rob the temple, and to oppress the city: but the multitude running together to arms, put them to flight: and so it fell out that Antiochus being put to flight returned with disgrace. [3] Now when he was come about Ecbatana, he received the news of what had happened to Nicanor and Timotheus. [4] And swelling with anger he thought to revenge upon the Jews the injury done by them that had put him to flight. And therefore he commanded his chariot to be driven, without stopping in his journey, the judgment of heaven urging him forward, because he had spoken so proudly, that he would come to Jerusalem, and make it a common burying place of the Jews. [5] But the Lord the God of Israel, that seeth all things, struck him with an incurable and an invisible plague. For as soon as he had ended these words, a dreadful pain in his bowels came upon him, and bitter torments of the inner parts.

[2] "**Persepolis**": Otherwise called Elymais.

[6] And indeed very justly, seeing he had tormented the bowels of others with many and new torments, albeit he by no means ceased from his malice. [7] Moreover being filled with pride, breathing out fire in his rage against the Jews, and commanding the matter to be hastened, it happened as he was going with violence that he fell from the chariot, so that his limbs were much pained by a grievous bruising of the body. [8] Thus he that seemed to himself to command even the waves of the sea, being proud above the condition of man, and to weigh the heights of the mountains in a balance, now being cast down to the ground, was carried in a litter, bearing witness to the manifest power of God in himself: [9] So that worms swarmed out of the body of this man, and whilst he lived in sorrow and pain, his flesh fell off, and the filthiness of his smell was noisome to the army. [10] And the man that thought a little before he could reach to the stars of heaven, no man could endure to carry, for the intolerable stench.

[11] And by this means, being brought from his great pride, he began to come to the knowledge of himself, being admonished by the scourge of God, his pains increasing every moment. [12] And when he himself could not now abide his own stench, he spoke thus: It is just to be subject to God, and that a mortal man should not equal himself to God. [13] Then this wicked man prayed to the Lord, **of whom he was not like to obtain mercy**. [14] And the city to which he was going in haste to lay it even with the ground, and to make it a, common buryingplace, he now desireth to make free. [15] And the Jews whom he said he would not account worthy to be so much as buried, but would give them up to be devoured by the birds and wild beasts, and would utterly destroy them with their children, he now promiseth to make equal with the Athenians.

[13] **"Of whom he was not like to obtain mercy": Because his repentance was not for the offence committed against God: but barely on account of his present sufferings.**

[16] The holy temple also which before he had spoiled, he promiseth to adorn with goodly gifts, and to multiply the holy vessels, and to allow out of his revenues the charges pertaining to the sacrifices. [17] Yea also, that he would become a Jew himself, and would go through every place of the earth, and declare the power of God. [18] But his pains not ceasing (for the just judgment of God was come upon him) despairing of life he wrote to the Jews in the manner of a supplication, a letter in these words: [19] To his very good subjects the Jews, Antiochus king and ruler wisheth much health and welfare, and happiness. [20] If you and your children are well, and if all matters go with you to your mind, we give very great thanks.

[21] As for me, being infirm, but yet kindly remembering you, returning out of the places of Persia, and being taken with a grievous disease, I thought it necessary to take care for the common good: [22] Not distrusting my life, but having great hope to escape the sickness. [23] But considering that my father also, at what time he led an army into the higher countries, appointed who should reign after him: [24] To the end that if any thing contrary to expectation should fall out, or any bad tidings should be brought, they that were in the countries, knowing to whom the whole government was left, might not be troubled. [25] Moreover, considering that neighbouring princes and borderers wait for opportunities, and expect what shall be the event, I have appointed my son Antiochus king, whom I often recommended to many of you, when I went into the higher provinces: and I have written to him what I have joined here below.

[26] I pray you therefore, and request of you, that remembering favours both public and private, you will every man of you continue to be faithful to me and to my son. [27] For I trust that he will behave with moderation and humanity, and following my intentions, will be gracious unto you. [28] Thus the murderer and blasphemer, being grievously struck, as himself had treated others, died a miserable death in a strange country among the mountains. [29] But Philip that was brought up with him, carried away his body: and out of fear of the son of Antiochus, went into Egypt to Ptolemee Philometor.

Chapter 10: The purification of the temple and city. Other exploits of Judas. His victory over Timotheus.

[1] But Machabeus, and they that were with him, by the protection of the Lord, recovered the temple and the city again. [2] But he threw down the altars, which the heathens had set up in the streets, as also the temples of the idols. [3] And having purified the temple, they made another altar: and taking fire out of the fiery stones, they offered sacrifices after two years, and set forth incense, and lamps, and the loaves of proposition. [4] And when they had done these things, they besought the Lord, lying prostrate on the ground, that they might no more fall into such evils; but if they should at any time sin, that they might be chastised by him more gently, and not be delivered up to barbarians and blasphemous men. [5] Now upon the same day that the temple had been polluted by the strangers, on the very same day it was cleansed again, to wit, on the five and twentieth day of the month of Casleu.

[6] And they kept eight days with joy, after the manner of the feast of the tabernacles, remembering that not long before they had kept the feast of the tabernacles when they were in the mountains, and in dens like wild beasts. [7] Therefore they now, carried boughs, and green branches, and palms for Him that had given them good success in cleansing his place. [8] And they ordained by a common statute, and decree, that all the nation of the Jews should keep those days every year. [9] And this was the end of Antiochus that was called the Illustrious. [10] But now we will relate the acts of Eupator the son of that wicked Antiochus, abridging the account of the evils that happened in the wars.

[11] For when he was come to the crown, he appointed over the affairs of his realm one Lysias, general of the army of Phenicia and Syria. [12] For Ptolemee that was called Macer, was determined to be strictly just to the Jews, and especially by reason of the wrong that had been done them, and to deal peaceably with them. [13] But being accused for this to Eupator by his friends, and being oftentimes called traitor, because he had left Cyprus which Philometor had committed to him, and coming over to Antiochus the Illustrious, had revolted also from him, he put an end to his life by poison. [14] But Gorgias, who was governor of the holds, taking with him the strangers, often fought against the Jews. [15] And **the Jews** that occupied the most commodious hold, received those that were driven out of Jerusalem, and attempted to make war.

[15] **"The Jews": He speaks of them that had fallen from their religion, and were enemies of their country, who joining with the Idumeans or Edomites, kept possession of the strong holds, and from thence annoyed their countrymen.**

[16] Then they that were with Machabeus, beseeching the Lord by prayers to be their helper, made a strong attack upon the strong holds of the Idumeans: [17] And assaulting them with great force, won the holds, killed them that came in the way, and slew altogether no fewer than twenty thousand. [18] And whereas some were fled into very strong towers, having all manner of provision to sustain a siege, [19] Machabeus left Simon and Joseph, and Zacheus, and them that were with them in sufficient number to besiege them, and departed to those expeditions which urged more. [20] Now they that were with Simon, being led with covetousness, were persuaded for the sake of money by some that were in the towers: and taking seventy thousand didrachmas, let some of them escape.

[21] But when it was told Machabeus what was done, he assembled the rulers of the people, and accused those men that they had sold their brethren for money, having let their adversaries escape. [22] So he put these traitors to death, and forthwith took the two towers. [23] And having good success in arms and in all things he took in hand, he slew more than twenty thousand in the two holds. [24] But Timotheus who before had been overcome by the Jews, having called together a multitude of foreign troops, and assembled horsemen out of Asia, came as though he would take Judea by force of arms. [25] But Machabeus and they that were with him, when he drew near, prayed to the Lord, sprinkling earth upon their heads and girding their loins with haircloth,

[26] And lying prostrate at the foot of the altar, besought him to be merciful to them, and to be an enemy to their enemies, and an adversary to their adversaries, as the law saith. [27] And so after prayer taking their arms, they went forth further from the city, and when they were come very near the enemies they rested. [28] But as soon as the sun was risen both sides joined battle: the one part having with their valour the Lord for a surety of victory and success: but the other side making their rage their leader in battle. [29] But when they were in the heat of the engagement there appeared to the enemies from heaven five men upon horses, comely with golden bridles, conducting the Jews: [30] Two of whom took Machabeus between them, and covered him on every side with their arms, and kept him safe: but cast darts and fireballs against the enemy, so that they fell down, being both confounded with blindness, and filled with trouble.

[31] And there were slain twenty thousand five hundred, and six hundred horsemen. [32] But Timotheus fled into Gazara a strong hold, where Chereas was governor. [33] Then Machabeus, and they that were with him, cheerfully laid siege to the fortress four days. [34] But they that were within, trusting to the strength of the place, blasphemed exceedingly, and cast forth abominable words. [35] But when the fifth day appeared, twenty young men of them that were with Machabeus, inflamed in their minds because of the blasphemy, approached manfully to the wall, and pushing forward with fierce courage got up upon it.

[36] Moreover others also getting up after them, went to set fire to the towers and the gates, and to burn the blasphemers alive. [37] And having for two days together pillaged and sacked the fortress, they killed **Timotheus**, who was found hid in a certain place: they slew also his brother Chereas, and Apollophanes. [38] And when this was done, they blessed the Lord with hymns and thanksgiving, who had done great things in Israel, and given them the victory.

[37] "Timotheus": This man, who was killed at the taking of Gazara, is different from that Timotheus who is mentioned in the fifth chapter of the first book of Machabees, and of whom there is mention in the following chapter.

Chapter 11: Lysias is overthrown by Judas. He sues for peace.

[1] A short time after this Lysias the king's lieutenant, and cousin, and who had chief charge over all the affairs, being greatly displeased with what had happened, [2] Gathered together fourscore thousand men, and all the horsemen, and came against the Jews, thinking to take the city, and make it a habitation of the Gentiles: [3] And to make a gain of the temple, as of the other temples of the Gentiles, and to set the high priesthood to sale every year: [4] Never considering the power of God, but puffed up in mind, and trusting in the multitude of his foot soldiers, and the thousands of his horsemen, and his fourscore elephants. [5] So he came into Judea, and approaching to Bethsura, which was in a narrow place, the space of five furlongs from Jerusalem, he laid siege to that fortress.

[6] But when Machabeus and they that were with him, understood that the strong holds were besieged, they and all the people besought the Lord with lamentations and tears, that he would send a good angel to save Israel. [7] Then Machabeus himself, first taking his arms, exhorted the rest to expose themselves together with him, to the danger, and to succour their brethren. [8] And when they were going forth together with a willing mind, there appeared at Jerusalem a horseman going before them in white clothing, with golden armour, shaking a spear. [9] Then they all together blessed the merciful Lord, and took great courage, being ready to break through not only men, but also the fiercest beasts, and walls of iron. [10] So they went on courageously, having a helper from Heaven, and the who shewed mercy to them.

[11] And rushing violently upon the enemy, like lions, they slew of them eleven thousand footmen, and one thousand six hundred horsemen: [12] And put all the rest to flight: many of them being wounded, escaped naked: yea and Lysias himself fled away shamefully, and escaped. [13] And as he was a man of understanding considering with himself, the loss he had suffered, and perceiving that the Hebrews could not be overcome, because they relied upon the help of the Almighty God, he sent to them: [14] And promised that he would agree to all things that are just, and that he would persuade the king to be their friend. [15] Then Machabeus consented to the request of Lysias, providing for the common good in all things, and whatsoever Machabeus wrote to Lysias concerning the Jews, the king allowed of.

[16] For there were letters written to the Jews from Lysias, to this effect: Lysias to the people of the Jews, greeting. [17] John and Abesalom who were sent from you, delivering your writings, requested that I would accomplish those things which were signified by them. [18] Therefore whatsoever things could be reported to the king I have represented to him: and he hath granted as much as the matter permitted. [19] If therefore you will keep yourselves loyal in affairs, hereafter also I will endeavour to be a means of your good. [20] But as concerning other particulars, I have given orders by word both to these, and to them that are sent by me, to commune with you.

[21] Fare ye well. **In the year** one hundred and forty-eight, the four and twentieth day of the month of Dioscorus. [22] But the king's letter contained these words: King Antiochus to Lysias his brother, greeting. [23] Our father being translated amongst the gods, we are desirous that they that are in our realm should live quietly, and apply themselves diligently to their own concerns, [24] And we have heard that the Jews would not consent to my father to turn to the rites of the Greeks, but that they would keep to their own manner of living, and therefore that they request us to allow them to live after their own laws. [25] Wherefore being desirous that this nation also should be at rest, we have ordained and decreed, that the temple should be restored to them, and that they may live according to the custom of their ancestors.

[21] "In the year 148": Viz., according to the computation followed by the Greeks; which was different from that of the Hebrews, followed by the writer of the first book of Machabees. However, by this date, as well as by other circumstances, it appears that the expedition of Lysias, mentioned in this chapter, is different from that which is recorded, 1 Mac. 6.

[26] Thou shalt do well therefore to send to them, and grant them peace, that our pleasure being known, they may be of good comfort, and look to their own affairs. [27] But the king's letter to the Jews was in this manner: King Antiochus to the senate of the Jews, and to the rest of the Jews, greeting. [28] If you are well, you are as we desire, we ourselves also are well. [29] Menelaus came to us, saying that you desired to come down to your countrymen, that are with us. [30] We grant therefore a safe conduct to all that come and go, until the thirtieth day of the month of Xanthicus,

[31] That the Jews may use their own kind of meats, and their own laws as before, and that none of them any manner of ways be molested for things which have been done by ignorance. [32] And we have sent also Menelaus to speak to you. [33] Fare ye well. In the year one hundred and forty-eight, the fifteenth day of the month of Xanthicus. [34] The Romans also sent them a letter, to this effect. Quintus Memmius, and Titus Manilius, ambassadors of the Romans, to the people of the Jews, greeting. [35] Whatsoever Lysias the king's cousin hath granted you, we also have granted.

[36] But touching such things as he thought should be referred to the king, after you have diligently conferred among yourselves, send some one forthwith, that we may decree as it is convenient for you: for we are going to Antioch. [37] And therefore make haste to write back, that we may know of what mind you are. [38] Fare ye well. In the year one hundred and forty-eight, the fifteenth day of the month of Xanthicus.

Chapter 12: The Jews are still molested by their neighbours. Judas gains divers victories over them. He orders sacrifice and prayers for the dead.

[1] When these covenants were made, Lysias went to the king, and the Jews gave themselves to husbandry. [2] But they that were behind, namely, Timotheus and Apollonius the son of Genneus, also Hieronymus, and Demophon, and besides them Nicanor the governor of Cyprus, would not suffer them to live in peace, and to be quiet. [3] The men of Joppe also were guilty of this kind of wickedness: they desired the Jews who dwelt among them to go with their wives and children into the boats, which they had prepared, as though they had no enmity to them. [4] Which when they had consented to, according to the common decree of the city, suspecting nothing, because of the peace: when they were gone forth into the deep, they drowned no fewer than two hundred of them. [5] But as soon as Judas heard of this cruelty done to his countrymen, he commanded the men that were with him: and after having called upon God the just judge,

[6] He came against those murderers of his brethren, and set the haven on fire in the night, burnt the boats, and slew with the sword them that escaped from the fire. [7] And when he had done these things in this manner, he departed as if he would return again, and root out all the Joppites. [8] But when he understood that the men of Jamnia also designed to do in like manner to the Jews that dwelt among them, [9] He came upon the Jamnites also by night, and set the haven on fire with the ships, so that the light of the fire was seen at Jerusalem two hundred and forty furlongs off. [10] And when they were now gone from thence nine furlongs, and were marching towards Timotheus, five thousand footmen and five hundred horsemen of the Arabians set upon them.

[11] And after a hard fight, in which by the help of God they got the victory, the rest of the Arabians being overcome, besought Judas for peace, promising to give him pastures, and to assist him in other things. [12] And Judas thinking that they might be profitable indeed in many things, promised them peace, and after having joined hands, they departed to their tents. [13] He also laid siege to a certain strong city, encompassed with bridges and walls, and inhabited by multitudes of different nations, the name of which is Casphin. [14] But they that were within it, trusting in the strength of the walls, and the provision of victuals, behaved in a more negligent manner, and provoked Judas with railing and blaspheming, and uttering such words as were not to be spoken. [15] But Machabeus calling upon the great Lord of the world, who without any batteringrams or engines of war threw down the walls of Jericho in the time of Joshua, fiercely assaulted the walls.

[16] And having taken the city by the will of the Lord, he made an unspeakable slaughter, so that a pool adjoining of two furlongs broad seemed to run with the blood of the slain. [17] From thence they departed seven hundred and fifty furlongs, and came to Characa to the Jews that are called Tubianites. [18] But as for Timotheus, they found him not in those places, for before he had dispatched any thing he went back, having left a very strong garrison in a certain hold: [19] But Dositheus, and Sosipater, who were captains with Machabeus, slew them that were left by Timotheus in the hold, to the number of ten thousand men. [20] And Machabeus having set in order about him six thousand men, and divided them by bands, went forth against Timotheus, who had with him a hundred and twenty thousand footmen, and two thousand five hundred horsemen.

[21] Now when Timotheus had knowledge of the coming of Judas, he sent the women and children, and the other baggage before him into a fortress, called Carnion: for it was impregnable and hard to come at, by reason of the straitness of the places. [22] But when the first band of Judas came in sight, the enemies were struck with fear, by the presence of God, who seeth all things, and they were put to flight one from another, so that they were often thrown down by their own companions, and wounded with the strokes of their own swords. [23] But Judas was vehemently earnest in punishing the profane, of whom he slew thirty thousand men. [24] And Timotheus himself fell into the hands of the band of Dositheus and Sosipater, and with many prayers he besought them to let him go with his life, because he had the parents and brethren of many of the Jews, who, by his death, might happen to be deceived. [25] And when he had given his faith that he would restore them according to the agreement, they let him go without hurt, for the saving of their brethren.

[26] Then Judas went away to Carnion, where he slew five and twenty thousand persons. [27] And after he had put to flight and destroyed these, he removed his army to Ephron, a strong city, wherein there dwelt a multitude of divers nations: and stout young men standing upon the walls made a vigorous resistance: and in this place there were many engines of war, and a provision of darts. [28] But when they had invocated the Almighty, who with his power breaketh the strength of the enemies, they took the city; and slew five and twenty thousand of them that were within. [29] From thence they departed to **Scythopolis**, which lieth six hundred furlongs from Jerusalem. [30] But the Jews that were among the Scythopolitans testifying that they were used kindly by them, and that even in the times of their adversity they had treated them with humanity:

[29] "**Scythopolis**": Formerly called **Bethsan**.

[31] They gave them thanks exhorting them to be still friendly to their nation, and so they came to Jerusalem, the feast of the weeks being at hand. [32] And after Pentecost they marched against Gorgias the governor of Idumea. [33] And he came out with three thousand footmen, and four hundred horsemen. [34] And when they had joined battle, it happened that a few of the Jews were slain. [35] But Dositheus, a horseman, one of Bacenor's band, a valiant man, took hold of Gorgias: and when he would have taken him alive, a certain horseman of the Thracians came upon him, and cut off his shoulder: and so Gorgias escaped to Maresa.

[36] But when they that were with Esdrin had fought long, and were weary, Judas called upon the Lord to be their helper, and leader of the battle: [37] Then beginning in his own language, and singing hymns with a loud voice, he put Gorgias' soldiers to flight. [38] So Judas having gathered together his army, came into the city Odollam: and when the seventh day came, they purified themselves according to the custom, and kept the sabbath in the place. [39] And the day following Judas came with his company, to take away the bodies of them that were slain, and to bury them with their kinsmen, in the sepulchres of their fathers. [40] And they found under the coats of the slain some **of the donaries** of the idols of Jamnia, which the law forbiddeth to the Jews: so that all plainly saw, that for this cause they were slain.

[40] "**Of the donaries**": That is, of the votive offerings, which had been hung up in the temples of the idols, which they had taken away when they burnt the port of Jamnia, ver. 9., contrary to the prohibition of the law, Deut. 7:25.

[41] Then they all blessed the just judgment of the Lord, who had discovered the things that were hidden. [42] And so betaking themselves to prayers, they besought him, that the sin which had been committed might be forgotten. But the most valiant Judas exhorted the people to keep themselves from sin, forasmuch as they saw before their eyes what had happened, because of the sins of those that were slain. [43] And making a gathering, he sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection, [44] (For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead,) [45] And because he considered that they who had fallen asleep **with godliness**, had great grace laid up for them. [46] It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to **pray for the dead**, that they may be loosed from sins.

[45] "With godliness": Judas hoped that these men who died fighting for the cause of God and religion, might find mercy: either because they might be excused from mortal sin by ignorance; or might have repented of their sin, at least at their death.

[46] "Pray for the dead": Here is an evident and undeniable proof of the practice of praying for the dead under the old law, which was then strictly observed by the Jews, and consequently could not be introduced at that time by Judah, their chief and high priest, if it had not been always their custom.

Chapter 13: Antiochus and Lysias again invade Judea. Menelaus is put to death. The king's great army is worsted twice. The peace is renewed.

[1] In the year one hundred and forty-nine, Judas understood that Antiochus Eupator was coming with a multitude against Judea, [2] And with him Lysias the regent, who had charge over the affairs of the realm, having with him **a hundred and ten thousand** footmen, five thousand horsemen, twenty-two elephants, and three hundred chariots armed with hooks. [3] Menelaus also joined himself with them: and with great deceitfulness besought Antiochus, not for the welfare of his country, but in hopes that he should be appointed chief ruler. [4] But the King of kings stirred up the mind of Antiochus against the sinner, and upon Lysias suggesting that he was the cause of all the evils, he commanded (as the custom is with them) that he should be apprehended and put to death in the same place. [5] Now there was in that place a tower fifty cubits high, having a heap of ashes on every side: this had a prospect steep down.

[2] "A hundred and ten thousand": The difference between the numbers here set down, and those recorded, 1 Mac. 4, is easily accounted for; if we consider that such armies as these are liable to be at one time more numerous than at another; either by sending away large detachments, or being diminished by sickness; or increased by receiving fresh supplies of troops, according to different exigencies or occurrences.

[6] From thence he commanded the sacrilegious wretch to be thrown down into the ashes, all men thrusting him forward unto death. [7] And by such a law it happened that Menelaus the transgressor of the law was put to death: not having so much as burial in the earth. [8] And indeed very justly, for insomuch as he had committed many sins against the altar of God, the fire and ashes of which were holy: he was condemned to die in ashes. [9] But the king, with his mind full of rage, came on to shew himself worse to the Jews than his father was. [10] Which, when Judas understood, he commanded the people to call upon the Lord day and night, that as he had always done, so now also he would help them:

[11] Because they were afraid to be deprived of the law, and of their country, and of the holy temple: and that he would not suffer the people, that had of late taken breath for a little while, to be again in subjection to blasphemous nations. [12] So when they had all done this together, and had craved mercy of the Lord with weeping and fasting, lying prostrate on the ground for three days continually, Judas exhorted them to make themselves ready. [13] But he with the ancients determined, before the king should bring his army into Judea, and make himself master of the city, to go out, and to commit the event of the thing to the judgment of the Lord. [14] So committing all to God, the creator of the world, and having exhorted his people to fight manfully, and to stand up even to death for the laws, the temple, the city, their country, and citizens: he placed his army about Modin. [15] And having given his company for a watchword, The victory of God, with most valiant chosen young men, he set upon the king's quarter by night, and slew four thousand men in the camp, and the greatest of the elephants, with them that had been upon him,

[16] And having filled the camp of the enemies with exceeding great fear and tumult, they went off with good success. [17] Now this was done at the break of day, by the protection and help of the Lord. [18] But the king having taken a taste of the hardness of the Jews, attempted to take the strong places by policy: [19] And he marched with his army to Bethsura, which was a strong hold of the Jews: but he was repulsed, he failed, he lost his men. [20] Now Judas sent necessaries to them that were within.

[21] But Rhodocus, one of the Jews' army, disclosed the secrets to the enemies, so he was sought out, and taken up, and put in prison. [22] Again the king treated with them that were in Bethsura: gave his right hand: took theirs: and went away. [23] He

fought with Judas: and was overcome. And when he understood that Philip, who had been left over the affairs, had rebelled at Antioch, he was in a consternation of mind, and entreating the Jews, and yielding to them, he swore to all things that seemed reasonable, and, being reconciled, offered sacrifices, honoured the temple, and left gifts. [24] He embraced Machabeus, and made him governor and prince from Ptolemais unto the Gerrenians. [25] But when he was come to Ptolemais, the men of that city were much displeased with the conditions of the peace, being angry for fear they should break the covenant.

[26] Then Lysias went up to the judgment seat, and set forth the reason, and appeased the people, and returned to Antioch: and thus matters went with regard to the king's coming and his return.

Chapter 14: Demetrius challenges the kingdom. Alcimus applies to him to be made high priest: Nicanor is sent into Judea: his dealings with Judas: his threats. The history of Razias.

[1] But after the space of three years Judas, and they that were with him, understood that Demetrius the son of Seleucus was come up with a great power, and a navy by the haven of Tripolis to places proper for his purpose. [2] And had made himself master of the countries against Antiochus, and his general Lysias. [3] Now one **Alcimus**, who had been chief priest, but had wilfully defiled himself in the time of **mingling** with the heathens, seeing that there was no safety for him, nor access to the altar, [4] Came to king Demetrius in the year one hundred and fifty, presenting unto him a crown of gold, and a palm, and besides these, some boughs which seemed to belong to the temple. And that day indeed he held his peace. [5] But having gotten a convenient time to further his madness, being called to counsel by Demetrius, and asked what the Jews relied upon, and what were their counsels,

[3] "**Alcimus, who had been chief priest**": This Alcimus was of the stock of Aaron, but for his apostasy here mentioned was incapable of the high priesthood, but king Antiochus Eupator appointed him in place of the high priest, (see above, 1 Mac. chap. 7., ver. 9,) as Menelaus had been before him, set up by Antiochus (above chap. 4.), yet neither of them were truly high priests; for the true high priesthood was amongst the Machabees, who were also of the stock of Aaron, and had strictly held their religion, and were ordained according to the rites commanded in the law of Moses.-- Ibid.

[3] "**Mingling**": with the heathens; that is, in their idolatrous worship.

[6] He answered thereunto: They among the Jews that are called Assideans, of whom Judas Machabeus is captain, nourish wars, and raise seditions, and will not suffer the realm to be in peace. [7] For I also being deprived of my ancestors' glory (I mean of the high priesthood) am now come hither: [8] Principally indeed out of fidelity to the king's interests, but in the next place also to provide for the good of my countrymen: for all our nation suffereth much from the evil proceedings of those men. [9] Wherefore, O king, seeing thou knowest all these things, take care, I beseech thee, both of the country, and of our nation, according to thy humanity which is known to all men, [10] For as long as Judas liveth, it is not possible that the state should be quiet.

[11] Now when this man had spoken to this effect, the rest also of the king's friends, who were enemies of Judas, incensed Demetrius against him. [12] And forthwith he sent Nicanor, the commander over the elephants, governor into Judea: [13] Giving him in charge, to take Judas himself: and disperse all them that were with him, and to make Alcimus the high priest of the great temple. [14] Then the Gentiles who had fled out of Judea from Judas, came to Nicanor by flocks, thinking the miseries and calamities of the Jews to be the welfare of their affairs. [15] Now when the Jews heard of Nicanor's coming, and that the nations were assembled against them, they cast earth upon their heads, and made supplication to him, who chose his people to keep them for ever, and who protected his portion by evident signs.

[16] Then at the commandment of their captain, they forthwith removed from the place where they were, and went to the town of Dessau, to meet them. [17] Now Simon the brother of Judas had joined battle with Nicanor, but was frightened with the sudden coming of the adversaries. [18] Nevertheless Nicanor hearing of the valour of Judas' companions, and the greatness of courage with which they fought for their country, was afraid to try the matter by the sword. [19] Wherefore he sent Posidonius, and Theodotius, and Matthias before to present and receive the right hands. [20] And when there had been a consultation thereupon, and the captain had acquainted the multitude with it, they were all of one mind to consent to covenants.

[21] So they appointed a day upon which they might commune together by themselves: and seats were brought out, and set for each one. [22] But Judas ordered men to be ready in convenient places, lest some mischief might be suddenly practiced by the enemies: so they made an agreeable conference. [23] And Nicanor abode in Jerusalem, and did no wrong, but sent away the flocks of the multitudes that had been gathered together. [24] And Judas was always dear to him from the heart, and he was well affected to the man. [25] And he desired him to marry a wife, and to have children. So he married: he lived quietly, and they lived in common.

[26] But Alcimus seeing the love they had one to another, and the covenants, came to Demetrius, and told him that Nicanor assented to the foreign interest, for that he meant to make Judas, who was a traitor to the kingdom, his successor. [27] Then the king being in a rage and provoked with this man's wicked accusations, wrote to Nicanor, signifying, that he was greatly displeased with the covenant of friendship: and that he commanded him nevertheless to send Machabeus prisoner in all haste to Antioch. [28] When this was known, Nicanor was in a consternation, and took it grievously that he should make void the articles that were agreed upon, having received no injury from the man. [29] But because he could not oppose the king, he watched an opportunity to comply with the orders. [30] But when Machabeus perceived that Nicanor was more stern to him, and that when they met together as usual he behaved himself in a rough manner: and was sensible that this rough behaviour came not of good, he gathered together a few of his men, and hid himself from Nicanor.

[31] But he finding himself notably prevented by the man, came to the great and holy temple: and commanded the priests that were offering the accustomed sacrifices, to deliver him the man. [32] And when they swore unto him, that they knew not where the man was whom he sought, he stretched out his hand to the temple, [33] And swore, saying: Unless you deliver Judas prisoner to me, I will lay this temple of God even with the ground, and will beat down the altar, and I will dedicate this temple to Bacchus. [34] And when he had spoken thus he departed. But the priests stretching forth their hands to heaven, called upon him that was ever the defender of their nation, saying in this manner: [35] Thou, O Lord of all things, who wantest nothing, wast pleased that the temple of thy habitation should be amongst us.

[36] Therefore now, O Lord the holy of all holies, keep this house for ever undefiled which was lately cleansed. [37] Now Razias, one of the ancients of Jerusalem, was accused to Nicanor, a man that was a lover of the city, and of good report, who for his affection was called the father of the Jews. [38] This man, for a long time, had held fast his purpose of keeping himself pure in the Jews' religion, and was ready to expose his body and life, that he might persevere therein. [39] So Nicanor being willing to declare the hatred that he bore the Jews, sent five hundred soldiers to take him. [40] For he thought by insnaring him to hurt the Jews very much.

[41] Now as the multitude sought to rush into his house, and to break open the door, and to set fire to it, when he was ready to be taken, **he struck himself** with his sword: [42] Choosing to die nobly rather than to fall into the hands of the wicked, and to suffer abuses unbecoming his noble birth. [43] But whereas through haste he missed of giving himself a sure wound, and the crowd was breaking into the doors, he ran boldly to the wall, and manfully threw himself down to the crowd: [44] But they quickly making room for his fall, **he came upon the midst of the neck**. [45] And as he had yet breath in him, being inflamed in mind he arose: and while his blood ran down with a great stream, and he was grievously wounded, he ran through the crowd:

[41] "He struck himself": St. Augustine, (Epist. 61, ad Dulcitium, et lib. 2, cap. 23, ad Epist. 2, Gaud.) discussing this fact of Razias, says, that the holy scripture relates it, but doth not praise it, as to be admired or imitated.

[44] "He came upon the midst of the neck": Venit per mediam cervicem. In the Greek it is *keneona*, which signifies a void place, where there is no building.

[46] And standing upon a steep rock, when he was now almost without blood, grasping his bowels with both hands, he cast them upon the throng, calling upon the Lord of life and spirit, to restore these to him again: and so he departed this life.

Chapter 15: Judas encouraged by a vision gains a glorious victory over Nicanor. The conclusion.

[1] But when Nicanor understood that Judas was in the places of Samaria, he purposed to set upon him with all violence on the sabbath day. [2] And when the Jews that were constrained to follow him, said: Do not act so fiercely and barbarously, but give honour to the day that is sanctified: and reverence him that beholdeth all things: [3] That unhappy man asked, if there were a mighty One in heaven, that had commanded the sabbath day to be kept. [4] And when they answered: There is the living Lord himself in heaven, the mighty One, that commanded the seventh day to be kept, [5] Then he said: And I am mighty upon the earth, and I command to take arms, and to do the king's business. Nevertheless he prevailed not to accomplish his design.

[6] So Nicanor being puffed up with exceeding great pride, thought to set up a public monument of his victory over Judas. [7] But Machabeus ever trusted with all hope that God would help them. [8] And he exhorted his people not to fear the coming of the nations, but to remember the help they had before received from heaven, and now to hope for victory from the Almighty. [9] And speaking to them out of the law, and the prophets, and withal putting them in mind of the battles they had fought before, he made them more cheerful: [10] Then after he had encouraged them, he shewed withal the falsehood of the Gentiles, and their breach of oaths.

[11] So he armed every one of them, not with defence of shield and spear, but with very good speeches and exhortations, and told them a dream worthy to be believed, whereby he rejoiced them all. [12] Now the vision was in this manner: Onias who had been high priest, a good and virtuous man, modest in his looks, gentle in his manners, and graceful in his speech, and who from a child was exercised in virtues, holding up his hands, prayed for all the people of the Jews: [13] After this there appeared also another man, admirable for age, and glory, and environed with great beauty and majesty: [14] Then Onias answering, said: This is a lover of his brethren, and of the people of Israel: this is he that prayeth much for the people, and for all the holy city, Jeremias the prophet of God. [15] Whereupon Jeremias stretched forth his right hand, and gave to Judas a sword of gold, saying:

[16] Take this holy sword a gift from God, wherewith thou shalt overthrow the adversaries of my people Israel. [17] Thus being exhorted with the words of Judas, which were very good, and proper to stir up the courage, and strengthen the hearts of the young men, they resolved to fight, and to set upon them manfully: that valour might decide the matter, because the holy city and the temple were in danger. [18] For their concern was less for their wives, and children, and for their brethren, and kinsfolks: but their greatest and principal fear was for the holiness of the temple. [19] And they also that were in the city, had no little concern for them that were to be engaged in battle. [20] And now when all expected what judgment would be given, and the enemies were at hand, and the army was set in array, the beasts and the horsemen ranged in convenient places,

[21] Machabeus considering the coming of the multitude, and the divers preparations of armour, and the fierceness of the beasts, stretching out his hands to heaven, called upon the Lord, that worketh wonders, who giveth victory to them that are worthy, not according to the power of their arms, but according as it seemeth good to him. [22] And in his prayer he said after this manner: Thou, O Lord, who didst send thy angel in the time of Ezechias king of Juda, and didst kill a hundred and eighty-five thousand of the army of Sennacherib: [23] Send now also, O Lord of heaven, thy good angel before us, for the fear and dread of the greatness of thy arm, [24] That they may be afraid, who come with blasphemy against thy holy people. And thus he concluded his prayer. [25] But Nicanor, and they that were with him came forward, with trumpets and songs.

[26] But Judas, and they that were with him, encountered them, calling upon God by prayers: [27] So fighting with their hands, but praying to the Lord with their hearts, they slew no less than five and thirty thousand, being greatly cheered with the presence of God. [28] And when the battle was over, and they were returning with joy, they understood that Nicanor was slain in his armour. [29] Then making a shout, and a great noise, they blessed the Almighty Lord in their own language. [30] And Judas, who was altogether ready, in body and mind, to die for his countrymen, commanded that Nicanor's head, and his hand with the shoulder should be cut off, and carried to Jerusalem.

[31] And when he was come thither, having called together his countrymen, and the priests to the altar, he sent also for them that were in the castle, [32] And shewing them the head of Nicanor, and the wicked hand, which he had stretched out, with proud boasts, against the holy house of the Almighty God, [33] He commanded also, that the tongue of the wicked Nicanor, should be cut out and given by pieces to birds, and the hand of the furious man to be hanged up over against the temple. [34] Then all blessed the Lord of heaven, saying: Blessed be he that hath kept his own place undefiled. [35] And he hung up Nicanor's head in the top of the castle, that it might be an evident and manifest sign of the help of God.

[36] And they all ordained by a common decree, by no means to let this day pass without solemnity: [37] But to celebrate the thirteenth day of the month of Adar, called, in the Syrian language, the day before Mardocheas' day. [38] So these things being done with relation to Nicanor, and from that time the city being possessed by the Hebrews, I also will here make an end of my narration. [39] Which if I have done well, and as it becometh the history, it is what I desired: but **if not so perfectly**, it must be pardoned me. [40] For as it is hurtful to drink always wine, or always water, but pleasant to use sometimes the one, and sometimes the other: so if the speech be always nicely framed, it will not be grateful to the readers. But here it shall be ended.

[39] "If not so perfectly": This is not said with regard to the truth of the narration; but with regard to the style and manner of writing: which in the sacred penmen is not always the most accurate. See St. Paul, 2 Cor. 11:6.

The Book of Judith

‘Judith’ or ‘Yahudith’ is here used as a title meaning ‘Queen of Judea’, likely for Hasmonean Queen Salome Alexandra.

Chapter 1: Nabuchodonosor king of the Assyrians overcometh Arphaxad king of the Medes.

[1] Now **Arphaxad** king of the Medes had brought many nations under his dominions, and he built a very strong city, which he called Ecbatana, [2] Of stones squared and hewed: he made the walls thereof seventy cubits broad, and thirty cubits high, and the towers thereof he made a hundred cubits high. But on the square of them, each side was extended the space of twenty feet. [3] And he made the gates thereof according to the height of the towers: [4] And he gloried as a mighty one in the force of his army and in the glory of his chariots. [5] Now in the twelfth year of his reign, **Nabuchodonosor** king of the Assyrians, who reigned in Ninive the great city, fought against Arphaxad and overcame him,

[1] "Arphaxad": He was probably the same as is called Dejoces by Herodotus; to whom he attributes the building of Ecbatana, the capital city of Media.

[5] "Nabuchodonosor": Not the king of Babylon, who took and destroyed Jerusalem, but another of the same name, who reigned in Ninive: and is called by historians Saosduchin. He succeeded Asarhaddon in the kingdom of the Assyrians, and was contemporary with Manasses king of Juda.

[6] In the great plain which is called Ragua, about the Euphrates, and the Tigris, and the Jadason, in the plain of Erioch the king of the Elicians. [7] Then was the kingdom of Nabuchodonosor exalted, and his heart was elevated: and he sent to all that dwelt in Cilicia and Damascus, and Libanus, [8] And to the nations that are in Carmelus, and Cedar, and to the inhabitants of Galilee in the great plain of Asdreton, [9] And to all that were in Samaria, and beyond the river Jordan even to Jerusalem, and all the land of Jesse till you come to the borders of Ethiopia. [10] To all these Nabuchodonosor king of the Assyrians, sent messengers:

[11] But they all with one mind refused, and sent them back empty, and rejected them without honour. [12] Then king Nabuchodonosor being angry against all that land, swore by his throne and kingdom that he would revenge himself of all those countries.

Chapter 2: Nabuchodonosor sendeth Holofernes to waste the countries of the west.

[1] In the thirteenth year of the reign of Nabuchodonosor, the two and twentieth day of the first month, the word was given out in the house of Nabuchodonosor king of the Assyrians, that he would revenge himself. [2] And he called all the ancients, and all the governors, and his officers of war, and communicated to them the secret of his counsel: [3] And he said that his thoughts were to bring all the earth under his empire. [4] And when this saying pleased them all, Nabuchodonosor, the king, called Holofernes the general of his armies, [5] And said to him: Go out against all the kingdoms of the west, and against them especially that despised my commandment.

[6] Thy eye shall not spare any kingdom, and all the strong cities thou shalt bring under my yoke. [7] Then Holofernes called the captains and officers of the power of the Assyrians: and he mustered men for the expedition, as the king commanded him, a hundred and twenty thousand fighting men on foot, and twelve thousand archers, horsemen. [8] And he made all his warlike preparations to go before with a multitude of innumerable camels, with all provisions sufficient for the armies in abundance, and herds of oxen, and flocks of sheep, without number. [9] He appointed corn to be prepared out of all Syria in his passage. [10] But gold and silver he took out of the king's house in great abundance.

[11] And he went forth he and all the army, with the chariots, and horsemen, and archers, who covered the face of the earth, like locusts. [12] And when he had passed through the borders of the Assyrians, he came to the great mountains of Ange, which are on the left of Cilicia: and he went up to all their castles, and took all the strong places. [13] And he took by assault the renowned city of Melothus, and pillaged all the children of Tharsis, and the children of Ismahel, who were over against the face of the desert, and on the south of the land of Cellon. [14] And he passed over the Euphrates and came into Mesopotamia: and he forced all the stately cities that were there, from the torrent of Mambre, till one comes to the sea: [15] And he took the borders thereof from Cilicia to the coasts of Japheth, which are towards the south.

[16] And he carried away all the children of Madian, and stripped them of all their riches, and all that resisted him he slew with the edge of the sword. [17] And after these things he went down into the plains of Damascus in the days of the harvest, and he set all the corn on fire, and he caused all the trees and vineyards to be cut down. [18] And the fear of them fell upon all the inhabitants of the land.

Chapter 3: Many submit themselves to Holofernes. He destroyeth their cities, and their gods, that Nabuchodonosor only might be called God.

[1] Then the kings and the princes of all the cities and provinces, of Syria, Mesopotamia, and Syria Sobal, and Libya, and Cilicia sent their ambassadors, who coming to Holofernes, said: [2] Let thy indignation towards us cease: for it is better for us to live and serve Nabuchodonosor the great king, and be subject to thee, than to die and to perish, or suffer the miseries of slavery. [3] All our cities and our possessions, all mountains and hills, and fields, and herds of oxen, and flocks of sheep, and goats, and horses, and camels, and all our goods, and families are in thy sight: [4] Let all we have be subject to thy law. [5] Both we and our children are thy servants.

[6] Come to us a peaceable lord, and use our service as it shall please thee. [7] Then he came down from the mountains with horsemen, in great power, and made himself master of every city, and all the inhabitants of the land. [8] And from all the cities he took auxiliaries valiant men, and chosen for war. [9] And so great a fear lay upon all those provinces, that the inhabitants of all the cities, both princes and nobles, as well as the people, went out to meet him at his coming. [10] And received him with garlands, and lights, and dances, and timbrels, and flutes.

[11] And though they did these things, they could not for all that mitigate the fierceness of his heart: [12] For he both destroyed their cities and cut down their groves. [13] For Nabuchodonosor the king had commanded him to destroy all the gods of the earth, that he only might be called God by those nations which could be brought under him by the power of Holofernes. [14] And when he had passed through all Syria Sobal, and all Apamea, and all Mesopotamia, he came to the Idumeans into the land of Gabaa, [15] And he took possession of their cities, and stayed there for thirty days, in which days he commanded all the troops of his army to be united.

Chapter 4: The children of Israel prepare themselves to resist Holofernes. They cry to the Lord for help.

[1] Then the children of Israel, who dwelt in the land of Juda, hearing these things, were exceedingly afraid of him. [2] Dread and horror seized upon their minds, lest he should do the same to Jerusalem and to the temple of the Lord, that he had done to other cities and their temples. [3] And they sent into all Samaria round about, as far as Jericho, and seized upon all the tops of the mountains: [4] And they compassed their towns with walls, and gathered together corn for provision for war. [5] And Eliachim the priest wrote to all that were over against Esdrelon, which faceth the great plain near Dothain, and to all by whom there might be a passage of way, that they should take possession of the ascents of the mountains, by which there might be any way to Jerusalem, and should keep watch where the way was narrow between the mountains.

[6] And the children of Israel did as the priest of the Lord Eliachim had appointed them, [7] And all the people cried to the Lord with great earnestness, and they humbled their souls in fastings, and prayers, both they and their wives. [8] And the priests put on haircloths, and they caused the little children to lie prostrate before the temple of the Lord, and the altar of the Lord they covered with haircloth. [9] And they cried to the Lord the God of Israel with one accord, that their children might not be made a prey, and their wives carried off, and their cities destroyed, and their holy things profaned, and that they might not be made a reproach to the Gentiles. [10] Then Eliachim the high priest of the Lord went about all Israel and spoke to them,

[11] Saying: Know ye that the Lord will hear your prayers, if you continue with perseverance in fastings and prayers in the sight of the Lord. [12] Remember Moses the servant of the Lord, who overcame Amalec that trusted in his own strength, and in his power, and in his army, and in his shields, and in his chariots, and in his horsemen, not by fighting with the sword, but by holy prayers: [13] So shall all the enemies of Israel be, if you persevere in this work which you have begun. [14] So they being moved by this exhortation of his, prayed to the Lord, and continued in the sight of the Lord. [15] So that even they who offered the holocausts to the Lord, offered the sacrifices to the Lord girded with haircloths, and with ashes upon their head.

[16] And they all begged of God with all their heart, that he would visit his people Israel.

Chapter 5: Achior gives Holofernes an account of the people of Israel.

[1] And it was told Holofernes the general of the army of the Assyrians, that the children of Israel prepared themselves to resist, and had shut up the ways of the mountains. [2] And he was transported with exceeding great fury and indignation, and he called all the princes of Moab and the leaders of Amman. [3] And he said to them: Tell me what is this people that besetteth the mountains: or what are their cities, and of what sort, and how great: also what is their power, or what is their multitude: or who is the king over their warfare: [4] And why they above all that dwell in the east, have despised us, and have not come out to meet us, that they might receive us with peace? [5] Then Achior captain of all the children of Ammon answering, said: If thou vouch safe, my lord, to hear, I will tell the truth in thy sight concerning this people, that dwelleth in the mountains, and there shall not a false word come out of my mouth.

[6] This people is of the offspring of the Chaldeans. [7] They dwelt first in Mesopotamia, because they would not follow the gods of their fathers, who were in the land of the Chaldeans. [8] Wherefore forsaking the ceremonies of their fathers, which consisted in the worship of many gods, [9] They worshipped one God of heaven, who also commanded them to depart from thence, and to dwell in Charan. And when there was a famine over all the land, they went down into Egypt, and there for four hundred years were so multiplied, that the army of them could not be numbered. [10] And when the king of Egypt oppressed them, and made slaves of them to labour in clay and brick, in the building of his cities, they cried to their Lord, and he struck the whole land of Egypt with divers plagues.

[11] And when the Egyptians had cast them out from them, and the plague had ceased from them, and they had a mind to take them again, and bring them back to their service, [12] The God of heaven opened the sea to them in their flight, so that the waters were made to stand firm as a wall on either side, and they walked through the bottom of the sea and passed it dry foot. [13] And when an innumerable army of the Egyptians pursued after them in that place, they were so overwhelmed with the waters, that there was not one left, to tell what had happened to posterity. [14] And after they came out of the Red Sea, they abode in the deserts of mount Sina, in which never man could dwell, or son of man rested. [15] There bitter fountains were made sweet for them to drink, and for forty years they received food from heaven.

[16] Wheresoever they went in without bow and arrow, and without shield and sword, their God fought for them and overcame. [17] And there was no one that triumphed over this people, but when they departed from the worship of the Lord their God. [18] But as often as beside their own God, they worshipped any other, they were given to spoil, and to the sword, and to reproach. [19] And as often as they were penitent for having revolted from the worship of their God, the God of heaven gave them power to resist. [20] So they overthrew the king of the Chanaanites, and of the Jebusites, and of the Pherezites, and of the Hethites, and of the Hevites, and of the Amorrhites, and all the mighty ones in Hesebon, and they possessed their lands, and their cities:

[21] And as long as they sinned not in the sight of their God, it was well with them: for their God hateth iniquity. [22] And even some years ago when they had revolted from the way which God had given them to walk therein, they were destroyed in battles by many nations, and very many of them were led away captive into a strange land. [23] But of late returning to the Lord their God, from the different places wherein they were scattered, they are come together and are gone up into all these mountains, and possess Jerusalem again, where their holies are. [24] Now therefore, my lord, search if there be any iniquity of theirs in the sight of their God: let us go up to them, because their God will surely deliver them to thee, and they shall be brought under the yoke of thy power: [25] But if there be no offense of this people in the sight of their God, we can not resist them, because their God will defend them: and we shall be a reproach to the whole earth.

[26] And it came to pass, when Achior had ceased to speak these words, all the great men of Holofernes were angry, and they had a mind to kill him, saying to each other: [27] Who is this, that saith the children of Israel can resist king Nabuchodonosor, and his armies, men unarmed, and without force, and without skill in the art of war? [28] That Achior therefore may know that he deceiveth us, let us go up into the mountains: and when the bravest of them shall be taken, then shall he with them be stabbed with the sword: [29] That every nation may know that Nabuchodonosor is god of the earth, and besides him there is no other.

Chapter 6: Holofernes in great rage sendeth Achior to Bethulia, there to be slain with the Israelites.

[1] And it came to pass when they had left off speaking, that Holofernes being in a violent passion, said to Achior: [2] Because thou hast prophesied unto us, saying: That the nation of Israel is defended by their God, to shew thee that there is no God, but Nabuchodonosor: [3] When we shall slay them all as one man, then thou also shalt die with them by the sword of the Assyrians, and all Israel shall perish with thee: [4] And thou shalt find that Nabuchodonosor is lord of the whole earth: and then the sword of my soldiers shall pass through thy sides, and thou shalt be stabbed and fall among the wounded of Israel, and thou shalt breathe no more till thou be destroyed with them. [5] But if thou think thy prophecy true, let not thy countenance sink, and let the paleness that is in thy face, depart from thee, if thou imaginest these my words cannot be accomplished.

[6] And that thou mayst know that thou shalt experience these things together with them, behold from this hour thou shalt be associated to their people, that when they shall receive the punishment they deserve from my sword, thou mayst fall under the same vengeance. [7] Then Holofernes commanded his servants to take Achior, and to lead him to Bethulia, and to deliver him into the hands of the children of Israel. [8] And the servants of Holofernes taking him, went through the plains: but when they came near the mountains, the slingers came out against them. [9] Then turning out of the way by the side of the mountain, they tied Achior to a tree hand and foot, and so left him bound with ropes, and returned to their master. [10] And the children of Israel coming down from Bethulia, came to him, and loosing him they brought him to Bethulia, and setting him in the midst of the people, asked him what was the matter, that the Assyrians had left him bound.

[11] In those days the rulers there, were Ozias the son of Micha of the tribe of Simeon, and Charmi, called also Gothoniell. [12] And Achior related in the midst of the ancients, and in the presence of all the people, all that he had said being asked by Holofernes: and how the people of Holofernes would have killed him for this word, [13] And how Holofernes himself being angry had commanded him to be delivered for this cause to the Israelites: that when he should overcome the children of Israel, then he might command Achior also himself to be put to death by diverse torments, for having said: The God of heaven is their defender. [14] And when Achior had declared all these things, all the people fell upon their faces, adoring the Lord, and all of them together mourning and weeping poured out their prayers with one accord to the Lord, [15] Saying: O Lord God of heaven and earth, behold their pride, and look on our low condition, and have regard to the face of thy saints, and shew that thou forsakes not them that trust on thee, and that thou humblest them that presume of themselves, and glory in their own strength.

[16] So when their weeping was ended, and the peoples prayer, in which they continued all the day, was concluded, they comforted Achior, [17] Saying: the God of our fathers, whose power thou hast set forth, will make this return to thee, that thou rather shalt see their destruction. [18] And when the Lord our God shall give this liberty to his servants, let God be with thee also in the midst of us: that as it shall please thee, so thou with all thine mayst converse with us. [19] Then Ozias, after the assembly was broken up, received him into his house, and made him a great supper. [20] And all the ancients were invited, and they refreshed themselves together after their fast was over.

[21] And afterwards all the people were called together, and they prayed all the night long within **the church**, desiring help of the God of Israel.

[21] "The church": That is, the synagogue or place where they met for prayer.

Chapter 7: Holofernes besiegeth Bethulia. The distress of the besieged.

[1] But Holofernes on the next day gave orders to his army, to go up against Bethulia. [2] Now there were in his troops a hundred and twenty thousand footmen, and two and twenty thousand horsemen, besides the preparations of those men who had been taken, and who had been brought away out of the provinces and cities of all the youth. [3] All these prepared themselves together to fight against the children of Israel, and they came by the hillside to the top, which looketh toward Dothain, from the place which is called Behlma, unto Chelmon, which is over against Esdrelon. [4] But the children of Israel, when they saw the multitude of them, prostrated themselves upon the ground, putting ashes upon their heads, praying with one accord, that the God of Israel would shew his mercy upon his people. [5] And taking their arms of war, they posted themselves at the places, which by a narrow pathway lead directly between the mountains, and they guarded them all day and night.

[6] Now Holofernes, in going round about, found that the fountains which supplied them with water, ran through an aqueduct without the city on the south side: and he commanded their aqueduct to be cut off. [7] Nevertheless there were springs not far from the walls, out of which they were seen secretly to draw water, to refresh themselves a little rather than to drink their fill. [8] But the children of Ammon and Moab came to Holofernes, saying: The children of Israel trust not in their spears, nor in their arrows, but the mountains are their defense, and the steep hires and precipices guard them. [9] Wherefore that thou mayst overcome them without joining battle, set guards at the springs that they may not draw water out of them, and thou shalt destroy them without sword, or at least being wearied out they will yield up their city, which they suppose, because it is situate in the mountains, to be impregnable. [10] And these words pleased Holofernes, and his officers, and he placed all round about a hundred men at every spring.

[11] And when they had kept this watch for full twenty days, the cisterns, and the reserve of waters failed among all the inhabitants of Bethulia, so that there was not within the city, enough to satisfy them, no not for one day, for water was daily given out to the people by measure. [12] Then all the men and women, young men, and children, gathering themselves together to Ozias, all together with one voice, [13] Said: God be judge between us and thee, for thou hast done evil against us, in that thou wouldst not speak peaceably with the Assyrians, and for this cause God hath sold us into their hands. [14] And therefore there is no one to help us, while we are cast down before their eyes in thirst, and sad destruction. [15] And now assemble ye all that are in the city, that we may of our own accord yield ourselves all up to the people of Holofernes.

[16] For it is better, that being captives we should live and bless the Lord, than that we should die, and be a reproach to all flesh, after we have seen our wives and our infants die before our eyes. [17] We call to witness this day heaven and earth, and the God of our fathers, who taketh vengeance upon us according to our sins, conjuring you to deliver now the city into the hand of the army of Holofernes, that our end may be short by the edge of the sword, which is made longer by the drought of thirst. [18] And when they had said these things, there was great weeping and lamentation of all in the assembly, and for many hours with one voice they cried to God, saying: [19] We have sinned with our fathers we have done unjustly, we have committed iniquity: [20] Have thou mercy on us, because thou art good, or punish our iniquities by chastising us thyself, and deliver not them that trust in thee to a people that knoweth not thee,

[21] That they may not say among the gentiles: Where is their God? [22] And when being wearied with these cries, and tired with these weepings, they held their peace, [23] Ozias rising up all in tears, said: Be of good courage, my brethren, and let us wait these five days for mercy from the Lord. [24] For perhaps he will put a stop to his indignation, and will give glory to his own name. [25] But if after five days be past there come no aid, we will do the things which you leave spoken.

Chapter 8: The character of Judith: her discourse to the ancients.

[1] Now it came to pass, when Judith a widow had heard these words, who was the daughter of Merari, the son of Idox, the son of Joseph, the son of Ozias, the son of Elai, the son of Jamnor, the son of Gedeon, the son of Raphaim, the son of Achitob, the son of Melehias, the son of Enan, the son of Nathanias, the son of Salathiel, the son of Simeon, the son of Israel: [2] And her husband was Manasses, who died in the time of the barley harvest: [3] For he was standing over them that bound sheaves in the field; and the heat came upon his head, and he died in Bethulia his own city, and was buried there with his fathers. [4] And Judith his relict was a widow now three years and six months. [5] And she made herself a private chamber in the upper part of her house, in which she abode shut up with her maids.

[6] And she wore haircloth upon her loins, and fasted all the days of her life, except the sabbaths, and new moons, and the feasts of the house of Israel. [7] And she was exceedingly beautiful, and her husband left her great riches, and very many servants, and large possessions of herds of oxen, and flocks of sheep. [8] And she was greatly renowned among all, because she feared the Lord very much, neither was there any one that spoke an ill word of her. [9] When therefore she had heard that Ozias had promised that he would deliver up the city after the fifth day, she sent to the ancients Chabri and Charmi. [10] And they came to her, and she said to them: What is this word, by which Ozias hath consented to give up the city to the Assyrians, if within five days there come no aid to us?

[11] And who are you that tempt the Lord? [12] This is not a word that may draw down mercy, but rather that may stir up wrath, and enkindle indignation. [13] You have set a time for the mercy of the Lord, and you have appointed him a day, according to your pleasure. [14] But forasmuch as the Lord is patient, let us be penitent for this same thing, and with many tears let us beg his pardon: [15] For God will not threaten like man, nor be inflamed to anger like the son of man.

[16] And therefore let us humble our souls before him, and continuing in an humble spirit, in his service: [17] Let us ask the Lord with tears, that according to his will so he would shew his mercy to us: that as our heart is troubled by their pride, so also we may glorify in our humility. [18] For we have not followed the sins of our fathers, who forsook their God, and worshipped strange gods. [19] For which crime they were given up to their enemies, to the sword, and to pillage, and to confusion: but we know no other God but him. [20] Let us humbly wait for his consolation, and the Lord our God will require our blood of the afflictions of our enemies, and he will humble all the nations that shall rise up against us, and bring them to disgrace.

[21] And now, brethren, as you are the ancients among the people of God, and their very soul resteth upon you: comfort their hearts by your speech, that they may be mindful how our fathers were tempted that they might be proved, whether they worshipped their God truly. [22] They must remember how our father Abraham was tempted, and being proved by many tribulations, was made the friend of God. [23] So Isaac, so Jacob, so Moses, and all that have pleased God, passed through many tribulations, remaining faithful. [24] But they that did not receive the trials with the fear of the Lord, but uttered their impatience and the reproach of their murmuring against the Lord, [25] Were destroyed by the destroyer, and perished by serpents.

[26] As for us therefore let us not revenge ourselves for these things which we suffer. [27] But esteeming these very punishments to be less than our sins deserve, let us believe that these scourges of the Lord, with which like servants we are chastised, have happened for our amendment, and not for our destruction. [28] And Ozias and the ancients said to her: All things which thou hast spoken are true, and there is nothing to be reprehended in thy words. [29] Now therefore pray for us, for thou art a holy woman, and one fearing God. [30] And Judith said to them: As you know that what I have been able to say is of God:

[31] So that which I intend to do prove ye if it be of God, and pray that God may strengthen my design. [32] You shall stand at the gate this night, and I will go out with my maidservant: and pray ye, that as you have said, in five days the Lord may look down upon his people Israel. [33] But I desire that you search not into what I am doing, and till I bring you word let nothing else be done but to pray for me to the Lord our God. [34] And Ozias the prince of Juda said to her: Go in peace, and the Lord be with thee to take revenge of our enemies. So returning they departed.

Chapter 9: Judith's prayer, to beg of God to fortify her in her undertaking.

[1] And when they were gone, Judith went into her oratory: and putting on haircloth, laid ashes on her head: and falling down prostrate before the Lord, she cried to the Lord, saying: [2] O Lord God of my father Simeon, who gavest him a sword to execute vengeance against strangers, who had defiled by their uncleanness, and uncovered the virgin unto confusion: [3] And who gavest their wives to be made a prey, and their daughters into captivity: and all their spoils to be divided to thy servants, who were zealous with thy zeal: assist, I beseech thee, O Lord God, me a widow. [4] For thou hast done the things of old, and hast devised one thing after another: and what thou hast designed hath been done. [5] For all thy ways are prepared, and in thy providence thou hast placed thy judgments.

[2] "Gavest him a sword": The justice of God is here praised, in punishing by the sword of Simeon the crime of the Shechemites: and not the act of Simeon, which was justly condemned by his father, Gen. 49:5. Though even with regard to this act, we may distinguish between his zeal against the crime committed by the ravishers of his sister, which zeal may be considered just: and the manner of his punishing that crime, which was irregular and excessive.

[6] Look upon the camp of the Assyrians now, as thou wast pleased to look upon the camp of the Egyptians, when they pursued armed after thy servants, trusting in their chariots, and in their horsemen, and in a multitude of warriors. [7] But thou lookedst over their camp, and darkness wearied them. [8] The deep held their feet, and the waters overwhelmed them. [9] So may it be with these also, O Lord, who trust in their multitude, and in their chariots, and in their pikes, and in their shields, and in their arrows, and glory in their spears, [10] And know not that thou art our God, who destroyest wars from the beginning, and the Lord is thy name.

[11] Lift up thy arm as from the beginning, and crush their power with thy power: let their power fall in their wrath, who promise themselves to violate thy sanctuary, and defile the dwelling place of thy name, and to beat down with their sword the horn of thy altar. [12] Bring to pass, O Lord, that his pride may be cut off with his own sword. [13] Let him be caught in the net of his own eyes in my regard, and do thou strike him by the graces of the words of my lips. [14] Give me constancy in my mind, that I may despise him: and fortitude that I may overthrow him. [15] For this will be a glorious monument for thy name, when he shall fall by the hand of a woman.

[16] For thy power, O Lord, is not in a multitude, nor is thy pleasure in the strength of horses, nor from the beginning have the proud been acceptable to thee: but the prayer of the humble and the meek hath always pleased thee. [17] O God of the heavens, creator of the waters, and Lord of the whole creation, hear me a poor wretch, making supplication to thee, and presuming of thy mercy. [18] Remember, O Lord, thy covenant, and put thou words in my mouth, and strengthen the resolution in my heart, that thy house may continue in thy holiness: [19] And all nations may acknowledge that thou art God, and there is no other besides thee.

Chapter 10: Judith goeth out towards the camp, and is taken, and brought to Holofernes.

[1] And it came to pass, when she had ceased to cry to the Lord, that she rose from the place wherein she lay prostrate before the Lord. [2] And she called her maid, and going down into her house she took off her haircloth, and put away the garments of her widowhood, [3] And she washed her body, and anointed herself with the best ointment, and plaited the hair of her head, and put a bonnet upon her head, and clothed herself with the garments of her gladness, and put sandals on her feet, and took her bracelets, and lilies, and earlets, and rings, and adorned herself with all her ornaments. [4] And the Lord also gave her more beauty: because all this dressing up did not proceed from sensuality, but from virtue: and therefore the Lord increased this her beauty, so that she appeared to all men's eyes incomparably lovely. [5] And she gave to her maid a bottle of wine to carry, and a vessel of oil, and parched corn, and dry figs, and bread and cheese, and went out.

[6] And when they came to the gate of the city, they found Ozias, and the ancients of the city waiting. [7] And when they saw her they were astonished, and admired her beauty exceedingly. [8] But they asked her no question, only they let her pass, saying: The God of our fathers give thee grace, and may he strengthen all the counsel of thy heart with his power, that Jerusalem may glory in thee, and thy name may be in the number of the holy and just. [9] And they that were there said, all with one voice: So be it, so be it. [10] But Judith praying to the Lord, passed through the gates, she and her maid.

[11] And it came to pass, when she went down the hill, about break of day, that the watchmen of the Assyrians met her and stopped her, saying: Whence comest thou? or whither goest thou? [12] And she answered: I am a daughter of the Hebrews, and I am fled from them, **because I knew** they would be made a prey to you, because they despised you, and would not of their own accord yield themselves, that they might find mercy in your sight. [13] For this reason I thought with myself, saying: I will go to the presence of the prince Holofernes, that I may tell him their secrets, and shew him by what way he may take them, without the loss of one man of his army. [14] And when the men had heard her words, they beheld her face, and their eyes were amazed, for they wondered exceedingly at her beauty. [15] And they said to her: Thou hast saved thy life by taking this resolution, to come down to our lord.

[12] "Because I knew": In this and the following chapter, Judith says some things which are clearly untrue, in order to conceal her true motives from Holofernes.

[16] And be assured of this, that when thou shalt stand before him, he will treat thee well, and thou wilt be most acceptable to his heart. And they brought her to the tent of Holofernes, telling him of her. [17] And when she was come into his presence, forthwith Holofernes was caught by his eyes. [18] And his officers said to him: Who can despise the people of the Hebrews who have such beautiful women, that we should not think it worth our while for their sakes to fight against them? [19] And Judith seeing Holofernes sitting under a canopy, which was woven of purple and gold, with emeralds and precious stones: [20] After she had looked on his face bowed down to him, prostrating herself to the ground. And the servants of Holofernes lifted her up, by the command of their master.

Chapter 11: Judith's speech to Holofernes.

[1] Then Holofernes said to her: Be of good comfort, and fear not in thy heart: for I have never hurt a man that was willing to serve Nabuchodonosor the king. [2] And if thy people had not despised me, I would never have lifted up my spear against them. [3] But now tell me, for what cause hast thou left them, and why it hath pleased thee to come to us? [4] And Judith said to him: Receive the words of thy handmaid, for if thou wilt follow the words of thy handmaid, the Lord will do with thee a perfect thing. [5] For as Nabuchodonosor the king of the earth liveth, and his power liveth which is in thee for chastising of all straying souls: not only men serve him through thee, but also the beasts of the field obey him.

[6] For the industry of thy mind is spoken of among all nations, and it is told through the whole world, that thou only art excellent, and mighty in all his kingdom, and thy discipline is cried up in all provinces. [7] It is known also what Achior said, nor are we ignorant of what thou hast commanded to be done to him. [8] For it is certain that our God is so offended with sins, that he hath sent word by his prophets to the people, that he will deliver them up for their sins. [9] And because the children of Israel know they have offended their God, thy dread is upon them. [10] Moreover also a famine hath come upon them, and for drought of water they are already to be counted among the dead.

[11] And they have a design even to kill their cattle, and to drink the blood of them. [12] And the consecrated things of the Lord their God which God forbade them to touch, in corn, wine, and oil, these have they purposed to make use of, and they design to consume the things which they ought not to touch with their hands: therefore because they do these things, it is certain they will be given up to destruction. [13] And I thy handmaid knowing this, am fled from them, and the Lord hath sent me to tell thee these very things. [14] For I thy handmaid worship God even now that I am with thee, and thy handmaid will go out, and I will pray to God, [15] And he will tell me when he will repay them for their sins, and I will come and tell thee, so that I may bring thee through the midst of Jerusalem, and thou shalt have all the people of Israel, as sheep that have no shepherd, and there shall not so much as one dog bark against thee: [16] Because these things are told me by the providence of God. [17] And because God is angry with them, I am sent to tell these very things to thee. [18] And all these words pleased Holofernes, and his servants, and they admired her wisdom, and they said one to another: [19] There is not such another woman upon earth in look, in beauty, and in sense of words. [20] And Holofernes said to her: God hath done well who sent thee before the people, that thou mightest give them into our hands: [21] And because thy promise is good, if thy God shall do this for me, he shall also be my God, and thou shalt be great in the house of Nabuchodonosor, and thy name shall be renowned through all the earth.

Chapter 12: Judith goeth out in the night to pray: she is invited to a banquet with Holofernes.

[1] Then he ordered that she should go in where his treasures were laid up, and bade her tarry there, and he appointed what should be given her from his own table. [2] And Judith answered him and said: Now I cannot eat of these things which thou commandest to be given me, lest sin come upon me: but I will eat of the things which I have brought. [3] And Holofernes said to her: If these things which thou hast brought with thee fail thee, what shall we do for thee? [4] And Judith said: As thy soul liveth, my lord, thy handmaid shall not spend all these things till God do by my hand that which I have purposed. And his servants brought her into the tent which he had commanded. [5] And when she was going in, she desired that she might have liberty to go out at night and before day to prayer, and to beseech the Lord.

[6] And he commanded his chamberlains, that she might go out and in, to adore her God as she pleased, for three days. [7] And she went out in the nights into the valley of Bethulia, and washed herself in a fountain of water. [8] And as she came up, she prayed to the Lord the God of Israel, that he would direct her way to the deliverance of his people. [9] And going in, she remained pure in the tent, until she took her own meat in the evening. [10] And it came to pass on the fourth day, that Holofernes made a supper for his servants, and said to Vagao his eunuch: Go, and persuade that Hebrew woman, to consent of her own accord to dwell with me.

[11] For it is looked upon as shameful among the Assyrians, if a woman mock a man, by doing so as to pass free from him. [12] Then Vagao went in to Judith, and said: Let not my good maid be afraid to go in to my lord, that she may be honoured before his face, that she may eat with him and drink wine and be merry. [13] And Judith answered him: Who am I, that I should gainsay my lord? [14] All that shall be good and best before his eyes, I will do. And whatsoever shall please him, that shall be best to me all the days of my life. [15] And she arose and dressed herself out with her garments, and going in she stood before his face.

[16] And the heart of Holofernes was smitten, for he was burning with the desire of her. [17] And Holofernes said to her: Drink now, and sit down and be merry for thou hast found favour before me. [18] And Judith said: I will drink my lord, because my life is magnified this day above all my days. [19] And she took and ate and drank before him what her maid had prepared for her. [20] And Holofernes was made merry on her occasion, and drank exceeding much wine, so much as he had never drunk in his life.

Chapter 13: Judith cutteth off the head of Holofernes, and returneth to Bethulia.

[1] And when it was grown late, his servants made haste to their lodgings, and Vagao shut the chamber doors, and went his way. [2] And they were all overcharged with wine. [3] And Judith was alone in the chamber. [4] But Holofernes lay on his bed, fast asleep, being exceedingly drunk. [5] And Judith spoke to her maid to stand without before the chamber, and to watch:

[6] And Judith stood before the bed praying with tears, and the motion of her lips in silence, [7] Saying: Strengthen me, O Lord God of Israel, and in this hour look on the works of my hands, that as thou hast promised, thou mayst raise up Jerusalem thy city: and that I may bring to pass that which I have purposed, having a belief that it might be done by thee. [8] And when she had said this, she went to the pillar that was at his bed's head, and loosed his sword that hung tied upon it. [9] And when she had drawn it out, she took him by the hair of his head, and said: Strengthen me, O Lord God, at this hour. [10] And she struck twice upon his neck, and cut off his head, and took off his canopy from the pillars, and rolled away his headless body.

[11] And after a while she went out, and delivered the head of Holofernes to her maid, and bade her put it into her wallet. [12] And they two went out according to their custom, as it were to prayer, and they passed the camp, and having compassed the valley, they came to the gate of the city. [13] And Judith from afar off cried to the watchmen upon the walls: Open the gates for God is with us, who hath shewn his power in Israel. [14] And it came to pass, when the men had heard her voice, that they called the ancients of the city. [15] And all ran to meet her from the least to the greatest: for they now had no hopes that she would come.

[16] And lighting up lights they all gathered round about her: and she went up to a higher place, and commanded silence to be made. And when all had held their peace, [17] Judith said: Praise ye the Lord our God, who hath not forsaken them that hope in him. [18] And by me his handmaid he hath fulfilled his mercy, which he promised to the house of Israel: and he hath killed the enemy of his people by my hand this night. [19] Then she brought forth the head of Holofernes out of the wallet, and shewed it them, saying: Behold the head of Holofernes the general of the army of the Assyrians, and behold his canopy, wherein he lay in his drunkenness, where the Lord our God slew him by the hand of a woman. [20] But as the same Lord liveth, his angel hath been my keeper both going hence, and abiding there, and returning from thence hither: and the Lord hath not suffered me his handmaid to be defiled, but hath brought me back to you without pollution of sin, rejoicing for his victory, for my escape, and for your deliverance.

[21] Give all of you glory to him, because he is good, because his mercy endureth for ever. [22] And they all adored the Lord, and said to her: The Lord hath blessed thee by his power, because by thee he hath brought our enemies to nought. [23] And Ozias the prince of the people of Israel, said to her: Blessed art thou, O daughter, by the Lord the most high God, above all women upon the earth. [24] Blessed be the Lord who made heaven and earth, who hath directed thee to the cutting off the head of the prince of our enemies. [25] Because he hath so magnified thy name this day, that thy praise shall not depart out of the mouth of men who shall be mindful of the power of the Lord for ever, for that thou hast not spared thy life, by reason of the distress and tribulation of thy people, but hast prevented our ruin in the presence of our God.

[26] And all the people said: So be it, so be it. [27] And Achior being called for came, and Judith said to him: The God of Israel, to whom thou gavest testimony, that he revengeth himself of his enemies, he hath cut off the head of all the unbelievers this night by my hand. [28] And that thou mayst find that it is so, behold the head of Holofernes, who in the contempt of his pride despised the God of Israel: and threatened thee with death, saying: When the people of Israel shall be taken, I will command thy sides to be pierced with a sword. [29] Then Achior seeing the head of Holofernes, being seized with a great fear he fell on his face upon the earth, and his soul swooned away. [30] But after he had recovered his spirits he fell down at her feet, and revered her and said:

[31] Blessed art thou by thy God in every tabernacle of Jacob, for in every nation which shall hear thy name, the God of Israel shall be magnified on occasion of thee.

Chapter 14: The Israelites assault the Assyrians, who finding their general slain, are seized with a panic fear.

[1] And Judith said to all the people: Hear me, my brethren, hang ye up this head upon our walls. [2] And as soon as the sun shall rise, let every man take his arms, and rush ye out, not as going down beneath, but as making an assault. [3] Then the watchmen must needs run to awake their prince for the battle. [4] And when the captains of them shall run to the tent of Holofernes, and shall find him without his head wallowing in his blood, fear shall fall upon them. [5] And when you shall know that they are fleeing, go after them securely, for the Lord will destroy them under your feet.

[6] Then Achior seeing the power that the God of Israel had wrought, leaving the religion of the gentiles, he believed God, and circumcised the flesh of his foreskin, and was joined to the people of Israel, with all the succession of his kindred until this present day. [7] And immediately at break of day, they hung up the head of Holofernes upon the walls, and every man took his arms, and they sent out with a great noise and shouting. [8] And the watchmen seeing this, ran to the tent of Holofernes. [9] And they that were in the tent came, and made a noise before the door of the chamber to awake him, endeavouring by art to break his rest, that Holofernes might awake, not by their calling him, but by their noise. [10] For no man durst knock, or open and go into the chamber of the general of the Assyrians.

[11] But when his captains and tribunes were come, and all the chiefs of the army of the king of the Assyrians, they said to the chamberlains: [12] Go in, and awake him, for the mice coming out of their holes, have presumed to challenge us to fight. [13] Then Vagao going into his chamber, stood before the curtain, and made a clapping with his hands: for he thought that he was sleeping with Judith. [14] But when with hearkening, he perceived no motion of one lying, he came near to the curtain, and lifting it up, and seeing the body of Holofernes, lying upon the ground, without the head, sweltering in his blood, he cried out with a loud voice, with weeping, and rent his garments. [15] And he went into the tent of Judith, and not finding her, he ran out to the people,

[16] And said: One Hebrew woman hath made confusion in the house of king Nabuchodonosor: for behold Holofernes lieth upon the ground, and his head is not upon him. [17] Now when the chiefs of the army of the Assyrians had heard this, they all rent their garments, and an intolerable fear and dread fell upon them, and their minds were troubled exceedingly. [18] And there was a very great cry in the midst of their camp.

Chapter 15: The Assyrians flee: the Hebrews pursue after them, and are enriched by their spoils.

[1] And when all the army heard that Holofernes was beheaded, courage and counsel fled from them, and being seized with trembling and fear they thought only to save themselves by flight: [2] So that no one spoke to his neighbour, but hanging down the head, leaving all things behind, they made haste to escape from the Hebrews, who, as they heard, were coming armed upon them, and fled by the ways of the fields, and the paths of the hills. [3] So the children of Israel seeing them fleeing, followed after them. And they went down sounding with trumpets and shouting after them. [4] And because the Assyrians were not united together, they went without order in their flight; but the children of Israel pursuing in one body, defeated all that they could find. [5] And Ozias sent messengers through all the cities and countries of Israel.

[6] And every country, and every city, sent their chosen young men armed after them, and they pursued them with the edge of the sword until they came to the extremities of their confines. [7] And the rest that were in Bethulia went into the camp of the Assyrians, and took away the spoils, which the Assyrians in their flight had left behind them, and they were laden exceedingly. [8] But they that returned conquerors to Bethulia, brought with them all things that were theirs, so that there was no numbering of their cattle, and beasts, and all their moveables, insomuch that from the least to the greatest all were made rich by their spoils. [9] And Joachim the high priest came from Jerusalem to Bethulia with all his ancients to see Judith. [10] And when she was come out to him, they all blessed her with one voice, saying: Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, thou art the joy of Israel, thou art the honour of our people:

[11] For thou hast done manfully, and thy heart has been strengthened, because thou hast loved chastity, and after thy husband hast not known any other: therefore also the hand of the Lord hath strengthened thee, and therefore thou shalt be blessed for ever. [12] And all the people said: So be it, so be it. [13] And thirty days were scarce sufficient for the people of Israel to gather up the spoils of the Assyrians. [14] But all those things that were proved to be the peculiar goods of Holofernes, they gave to Judith in gold, and silver, and garments and precious stones, and all household stuff, and they all were delivered to her by the people. [15] And all the people rejoiced, with the women, and virgins, and young men, playing on instruments and harps.

Chapter 16: The canticle of Judith: her virtuous life and death.

[1] Then Judith sung this canticle to the Lord, saying: [2] Begin ye to the Lord with timbrels, sing ye to the Lord with cymbals, tune unto him a new psalm, extol and call upon his name. [3] The Lord putteth an end to wars, the Lord is his name. [4] He hath set his camp in the midst of his people, to deliver us from the hand of all our enemies. [5] The Assyrians came out of the mountains from the north in the multitude of his strength: his multitude stopped up the torrents, and their horses covered the valleys.

[6] He bragged that he would set my borders on fire, and kill my young men with the sword, to make my infants a prey, and my virgins captives. [7] But the almighty Lord hath struck him, and hath delivered him into the hands of a woman, and hath slain him. [8] For their mighty one did not fall by young men, neither did the sons of Titan strike him, nor tall giants oppose themselves to him, but Judith the daughter of Merari weakened him with the beauty of her face. [9] For she put off her the garments of widowhood, and put on her the garments of joy, to give joy to the children of Israel. [10] She anointed her face with ointment, and bound up her locks with a crown, she took a new robe to deceive him.

[11] Her sandals ravished his eyes, her beauty made his soul her captive, with a sword she cut off his head. [12] The Persians quaked at her constancy, and the Medes at her boldness. [13] Then the camp of the Assyrians howled, when my lowly ones appeared, parched with thirst. [14] The sons of the damsels have pierced them through, and they have killed them like children fleeing away: they perished in battle before the face of the Lord my God. [15] Let us sing a hymn to the Lord, let us sing a new hymn to our God.

[16] O Adonai, Lord, great art thou, and glorious in thy power, and no one can overcome thee. [17] Let all thy creatures serve thee: because thou hast spoken, and they were made: thou didst send forth thy spirit, and they were created, and there is no one that can resist thy voice. [18] The mountains shall be moved from the foundations with the waters: the rocks shall melt as wax before thy face. [19] But they that fear thee, shall be great with thee in all things. [20] Woe be to the nation that riseth up against my people: for the Lord almighty will take revenge on them, in the day of judgment he will visit them.

[21] For he will give fire, and worms into their flesh, that they may burn, and may feel for ever. [22] And it came to pass after these things, that all the people, after the victory, came to Jerusalem to adore the Lord: and as soon as they were purified, they all offered holocausts, and vows, and their promises. [23] And Judith offered for **an anathema of oblivion** all the arms of Holofernes, which the people gave her, and the canopy that she had taken away out of his chamber. [24] And the people were joyful in the sight of the sanctuary, and for three months the joy of this victory was celebrated with Judith. [25] And after those days every man returned to his house, and Judith was made great in Bethulia, and she was most renowned in all the land of Israel.

[23] "An anathema of oblivion": That is, a gift or offering made to God, by way of an everlasting monument, to prevent the oblivion or forgetting so great a benefit.

[26] And chastity was joined to her virtue, so that she knew no man all the days of her life, after the death of Manasses her husband. [27] And on festival days she came forth with great glory. [28] And she abode in her husband's house a hundred and five years, and made her handmaid free, and she died, and was buried with her husband in Bethulia. [29] And all the people mourned for seven days. [30] And all the time of her life there was none that troubled Israel, nor many years after her death.

[31] But the day of the festivity of this victory is received by the Hebrews in the number of holy days, and **is religiously observed by the Jews** from that time until this day.

[31] "is religiously observed by the Jews": Rabbinical sources refer in glowing terms to the prosperity which Judea enjoyed under Judith Salome Alexandra. The Haggadah (Ta'anit, 23a; Sifra, ḤuḲḲat, i. 110) relates that during her rule, as a reward for her piety, rain fell only on Sabbath (Friday) nights; so that the working class suffered no loss of pay through the rain falling during their work-time. The fertility of the soil was so great that the grains of wheat grew as large as kidney beans; oats as large as olives; and lentils as large as gold denarii. The sages collected specimens of these grains and preserved them to show future generations the rewards of obedience to the Law, and what piety could achieve. Some Jews to this day read the Scroll of Judith 'Megillat Yahudith' on the seventh night of Hanukkah, which is called 'Judith's night of triumph' or 'Hag haBanot' Which means 'the Festival of the Daughters.' On which it is tradition to eat cheese to remember Judith's having fed the enemy general salty cheese to encourage his drinking of wine so that she could kill him once he had passed out.

Megillat Yahudith (the Scroll of Judith)

It came to pass, at the beginning of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, that a certain duke burned with desire for Jerusalem and its people, and he went up to Jerusalem, and all his court with him. Then he besieged it, and built a siege-ramp, and he did not allow any man to go out or come in. Thus they were besieged for many days. And the famine grew more severe for them and the city was broken up. Then the duke entered Jerusalem and he prevailed over it and captured it, together with all the fortified cities in Judah. Thus they put their hand under his hand and surrendered. Then he placed his throne above the throne of the kings who had been in Jerusalem and he was triumphant and smote Israel and possessed their land. He took the treasures of the House of YHVH and the treasures of the king, and imposed a punishment on the land: the people of Judah and Benjamin could no longer raise up their heads and they were subdued.

Then he consulted his officers and his nobles and they behaved wickedly, saying: “This is the counsel we counsel: the land has been made over to us as our property, now let us take their daughters for ourselves and they shall take home their lives and nothing more. On this condition they will consent and we shall become one people.” Their words pleased him, and he deferred not, for he desired the daughter of Jacob.

So he sent and called all the people of Judah and Jerusalem, and they all came to the king. And the king said to them: “Listen to me, you stubborn of heart, who are far from salvation. I am a god and I sit throned like a god. There is none like me, and there is none able to save you except for me. I reveal the end from the beginning, what is to be. I say that my purpose shall take effect, I will accomplish all that I please. I will give counsel in Zion and my glory to Israel. All the king desires as bride-price is spoil of dyed cloths, spoil of embroidered cloths, a damsel or two for each man. Listen to this, O daughter of Israel, who loves luxury, and sits in her house perfect in beauty, and fair to look upon: if you are destined to marry a man, his friends must bring you first to me and I will know you. These two will not please me: a widow, or a divorced woman: these he shall not take, but a virgin of his people. Hear this, O House of Jacob, behold I have refined you but not with silver, I have tested you, and if your ear is not opened, know what I shall do to you: I shall slay your young men with the sword, and I will cause your officers and judges to be trodden down. I will turn my hand upon you, and I shall burn all your fortresses. Behold, I teach you for your own advantage, in the way you should go. Take counsel together and speak.”

He gave them three days’ time, but they did not speak to him either good or evil, and went away from him heavy and displeased. Then the children of Israel saw they were in trouble: they had no power to flee this way or that way, and they found no answer. Thus they took longer than the time he set them.

So he sent and called them, and he bound them and put them in the prison-house. When he brought them out of prison, he said to them: “I declared the former things from the beginning and they went forth from my mouth, because I knew that you are obstinate and your brow brass. But for the sake of my name I will control my wrath, I will not destroy you. Turn back to me, and I will make you high in praise and in name and in honour.”

They all answered at once with stammering lip and in a different tongue, saying: “As you say, O lord king, we are in your hands, to do as you please.” They stooped, they bowed down together, they could not deliver the burden. The beautiful virgins fainted and said tearfully: “God has found out our sins and given us as spoil,” and they wept sore.

But the king’s command remained firm, and he took them out to his house, and he defiled them by lying with the women. Then the women who had been at ease said: “How long will this one be a snare for us? Would it not be better for us to cease to marry so we should not have to lie with him?” And they did so. Then there ceased in the city the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride.

This was so for many days: they did not come as in the earlier days, and he was very surprised and his wrath was kindled. So he sent and called to the men of the city: “Was this not what I said at first, that you were stubborn and you turned and did not face me? By my head! You are destined for death, for you did not observe my commandments. It would be better for you if someone else were to rule you, rather than my men should rule you! You should know therefore, that [the women] will be their prey.”

They replied: “Far be it from your servants to cease to do your pleasure. We ceased to give our daughters in marriage for we no longer have money to give away our daughters, and because of that they are debarred from marrying.”

Then the worthless man, son of Belial, answered: “I will try you this time and see if you are honest. So go back to your tents and I will command you saying: ‘A proclamation shall go forth in Judah and the land of Jerusalem: Every man and woman who do not marry, each of them brings blood on his house, there is one law for him – he shall be put to death.’”

Then there was a second time a veil of tears. Trembling, they turned to one another, and the counsel of the women came to nought. Thus when the women were married, they would take them to the house of the king and he lay with crowds of women. And it came to pass in those days there was in the city a great upheaval, and the daughters of Israel were shut up unto the day of their death, living in widowhood.

And it came to pass out of their affliction they were humbled and returned to YHVH, with all their heart and with all their soul. Then YHVH heard their voice from his abode, and he gave them a saviour, Judah. This man was greater than all men of old, a mighty hero and man of war. He had a beautiful sister, of good understanding. Now her brother decided to give her to a man [in marriage], and he betrothed her, and all the city was amazed. When she heard, she wept and pleaded with him, not to be given to a man: "lest you should take me and I should fall into the hands of this uncircumcised one, and I, how shall I suffer my shame? And you will be like one of the scoundrels of Israel. Of you the tale-tellers will say: 'Judah has broken faith, and a shameful deed has been done, they took his sister and violated her.'"

When he heard the words of his sister, they weighed on him, and his wrath was kindled. He put on his sword-belt and went to the king's house. He was sitting on his throne and his officers were on his right and on his left. When he saw him belted with his sword close to him, he derided him, saying: "Is it well with you, Judah? Bring your sister so we can know her." But he replied: "What concern of yours is it whether it is well? Turn behind me. Should my sister be treated like a whore?" Then he drew his sword and he cut off his head with all the officers, and he put all the servants of the king to the sword.

Then he went out from there, and blew the shofar [ram's horn], and the children of Israel assembled as one man. And he said: "Follow me, for God has given all our enemies into our hands." So they went out, and they smote man against man, and they shouted. Then they [the enemy] fled and the camp was secure, and not a man of them remained. And there was joy in Israel, for YHVH had made them to rejoice over their enemies, and they dwelt in their tents as befortimes.

When the great king Aliphorni Holophernes heard that his brother was dead because the children of Israel had smitten him, and taken some of them prisoners, his wrath was kindled and he burst into wild and bitter sobbing. He assembled his camp, a multitude of people, as numerous as the sands of the sea.

Then the children of Israel realized they had incurred the wrath of the king Aliforni, and they feared greatly for their lives. So they built fortresses in all Judah and Jerusalem, and they prepared missiles and many shields and they strengthened the lookouts of their walls and they made towers to put large stones in them. They put a garrison and men of war in each and every town and in Jerusalem, proclaimed a fast and prayed to YHVH.

Then Aliforni went up to Jerusalem, he and all his army with him and Israel saw that his camp was very numerous and they feared greatly. Every day he went around the wall with his officers and his horsemen, his generals and his chariot. They sounded great trumpet blasts to frighten them into panic. Thus they did for many days.

Then a man of Israel who was on the wall spoke out, and cried: "Help, my lord, O king! Make a treaty with us and we will make you our king. Silver and gold will not be accounted, but you should be our support and come to the city and reign over us. And we together will bow down to your footstool."

Then Aliforni called loudly to them in the language of Judah: "O house of Israel, have you not killed my people? I seek the blood of my brother from you. If a man were to give all the substance of his house it would not save him from me. I shall destroy the cities of your land and demolish all your fortresses and I shall do it with anger and rage and by no means clearing the guilty. I shall make you a desolation and the inhabitants an object of hissing and you shall bear the reproach of my people. I will not return to the house of my kingdom until I have executed my vile designs. I shall carry out what I have sworn. I will not stay my sword from blood and I will wreak vengeance on my foe."

The man replied saying: "Let not him who girds on his sword boast like him who puts it off it. For I will look to YHVH, I will wait for the God of my salvation."

On that day Aliforni returned to his tent which he had pitched to sit in. For many days he sat in his tent with his officers and the nobles of the country. Then there came before him, wondrous in purpose and mighty in deed, an honourable man and a counsellor, a cunning artificer and an eloquent orator. He spoke to the king: "Let my supplication be accepted before you: I would, my lord, that we should arise and go to our home and our land, so we shall not perish sitting in tents and fighting with the inhabitants of this coastland. Do you not know? Have you not heard what he did to Sihon and Og and the inhabitants of their countries, all the thirty-one kings? They defeated them and took possession of their territories: the Negeb, the Shephelah, the Arabah and all the seacoast. Every people who will make them tremble will fall by the sword. For behold! YHVH will take up

their cause and rob him who robs them of their livelihood. My father, see, O see, the shame of your brother, his shameful acts. YHVH has made them recoil on his own head. For YHVH their God is the God of gods and Lord of lords, and the earth is YHVH's and all that is in it. Who can contend with what is mightier than he? YHVH will fight for them. The prophets prophesied to them, saying: 'Hill of Zion's daughter, the promises to you shall be fulfilled; your former sovereignty shall come again to the daughter of Jerusalem. If you be mine and will hearken to my voice each man will go back to his own land.'

When Aliforni heard the words of this man he was very wrathful, and he said: "You man of blood you are telling me a lie. You have gone over to the Jews." The officers were angry with him also, saying: "You have come to discourage the soldiers. Among all the god of the nations is there one who saved his land from me? And how will he save Jerusalem?" So they seized him, and swore: "By the life of our lord the king, he deserves to die!" The king added: "Because he spoke well of the Jews, according to this judgement I shall do to him, I have decided it. Go and hang him up beyond the gates of Jerusalem his hands bound and his feet thrust in fetters. You shall not put him to death, but leave him to hunger and thirst, to heat by day and to frost by night. And on that day the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem will see my revenge: my servants shall eat and he will starve, my servants shall drink and he will cry out from sorrow, and I will strike him once: I shall not have to strike twice. Let him come and deliver him! Who will save him from my hands?" Then he commanded his servants saying: "Bind him with new ropes," and they strung him up and left him. He lifted up his eyes to heaven and said: "Now I am ready to die after I have seen the revenge of Aliforni and his people." He stood between heaven and earth for three days and three nights and had no bread to eat, nor water to drink.

On the third day a woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets, whose name was Judith, cried out to YHVH, and prayed, and fasted, and beseeched him: "Please, YHVH, who performs kindness to thousands! Remember David's loyal service in faithfulness!" After she had prayed, the spirit of YHVH suddenly seized her and she took it to her heart.

Then she said to the gatekeeper of the city: "Open the gates of the city. Perhaps YHVH will be with me and will deliver us from the hand of our enemies." But the gatekeeper said: "Why are you going so quickly? Have you gone over to the camp of Aliforni? Will you play the whore with him? Will you betray [us] with your lover?" Judith replied saying: "I have mortified myself with fasting and poured out my complaint before YHVH. Let me go, for it is time to act for YHVH." The gatekeeper saw her good sense and said: "Go, and the god of your fathers be with you." And he opened the gate secretly and she went out, herself and her two maids and he closed the door behind them.

When the lady went out, herself and her two maids in attendance, she put on royal apparel and set a royal diadem on her head and dressed her hair. Her glory increased and her beauty grew, and Judith won the admiration of all who saw her.

She left and came to the camp of Aliforni, where they saw her and praised her to the king. Then she asked, saying: "Where is the king's house?" So they went with her, a very large army. And it came to pass, when she came to the king, she bowed down before him to the ground. When he saw her, she found favour in his eyes and he was amazed and asked: "Whose girl is this?"

She answered, saying: "I am one of the daughters of Israel. I am come to you today to go over to you and implore you, if your handmaid has found favour in your eyes, spread your robe over your handmaid."

The king said: "Ask me, sister, what is your wish and what is your request? Even to half my kingdom it shall be fulfilled."

She replied "My lord the king, your handmaid has an old father, he is a man of God, of the sons of the prophets. He arose from within the people and stood on the top of the Mount of Olives and said: 'Hear now my words, which my god sends to you: "Now on whom do you trust, that you rebel against the great king Aliforni, my servant? If you surrender to him you shall escape with your life and live." And if you do not listen to my words, at this time tomorrow, my servant Aliforni will come and sit on the throne of David and rule with great dominion. You will not be saved from his hand and he will rip up your women with child and dash your children,' says YHVH." When they heard him they were afraid because of what he said, and they pursued him. So he went and sat on one of the hills to see what would become of the city, and he commanded me: 'Go, flee for your life, and go to the great king. Take him all this message and speak for me well before the king, so I too will escape because of you.' Now I have come. Hear my supplication! When you come to the city, save alive my father and my mother and my brethren, and I will be as one of your handmaids."

When Aliforni heard the words of the girl, he rejoiced greatly, and said: "Do not fear for I will do what you desire and I will deliver your lives from death. You will be in charge of my household and reign over all your soul desires and your father – I shall make him my body guard for ever. Come now, lie with me my sister, for it is a great love I have for you, a love with all its rapture."

Judith answered, saying: "By your leave, by your great splendour, lest you pour out your fury in blood, but tonight I shall cleanse myself from my issue and I shall wash my hands in innocence. Until evening withhold your hand."

Then he said: "As you say, my sister. But do not hinder me tonight, wash and make yourself clean."

Judith requested: "Two things I ask of you, my lord, I pray you, do not refuse me, or let me go away empty-handed. Remove your men's tents, so that they distance themselves from us a bowshot's length away, lest the soldiers should see us embracing, and say what they have seen and we should be demeaned in their eyes. Even if the soldiers see us in the springs and streams, let them not touch us or talk."

And he said: "Good," for he desired the daughter of the Jews. So he made a proclamation aloud in all the camp and they kept a long distance from them, for they feared for their lives.

Then Judith said: "I am thirsty and have been humbling my soul with fasting." So she said to her maid: "Cook me two pancakes so I can eat at your hands." She made her the pancakes and salted them heavily and poured them into the pot with pieces of cheese. She took them and brought them to the room where Holofernes was. And Holofernes made a great banquet, the feast of Judith, and he ate the pancakes and the pieces of cheese. He drank too, and his heart was merry. He got drunk and he uncovered himself in his tent, and he lay down and slept.

When Judith saw that he had been drinking himself drunk and that he had fallen to the ground and there was no-one with him in the house, she rose to her feet. She spread forth her hands toward heaven and said: "YHVH, I beseech, you prosper your handmaid this day. Let my own hand save me!" Then she took the sword and went softly to him, for he was fast asleep. Then she held up her right hand and her left hand and she smote his head, she smote him and killed him and she cut off his head and she put it wrapped up in her clothes.

Then she went with her maids beating timbrels and rejoicing to the crossroads. The people of the camp saw her and they were afraid to come nigh to her. And they came to the gates of Jerusalem.

They cried to the gatekeeper: Open for the woman beloved of her friend and he opened for her and she showed him the head. So he gathered together all the people of the city, and they did not believe it. They said: "Perhaps she found a head thrown onto the road and brought it to us."

Then she said: "If you will not listen to me and my voice, I will take faithful witnesses. Here, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem, is a mighty valiant man, a counsellor of the king who ordered him to be hung up by his hands because he spoke well of the Jews to the king. So they ran and fetched him and gave him food and drink, and his spirit came to him again. Then they showed him the head, and he said: 'Blessed be the name of YHVH, for he has taken my vengeance on Aliforni. Know now that Aliforni is not alive but dead.'" When they heard the words of the herald they bowed down to YHVH. Then all the men of war gathered together and went forth as the sun girded with swords, and they fell upon them suddenly and fought them.

Then the mighty men of Aliforni saw how it was and went to the tent of Aliforni, but they found the opening closed. Then they waited until they were ashamed to delay any longer, and they cried aloud and there was no answer. So they opened up and saw their lord fallen down dead on the earth.

Then YHVH discomfited them with a great noise and they fell back and many were overthrown: there remained not so much as one of them. So let all our enemies perish, YHVH! They returned that day joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that God did for us.

Then Judith became queen over the land and judged Israel. Because of this the children of Israel shall make a very great feast in their pots and cauldrons, with pieces of cheese, gladness and feasting, a good day, of sending portions to one another, baked pieces, food from the frying pan and dough kneaded until it is leavened so its glory will grow with honey, all manner of baked goods, a wafer, for a memorial to the man who meddled in a quarrel which was not his and the drinking was according to the law: none did compel, for thus the Queen Judith had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure. The Jews ordained and took it upon themselves to confirm this letter to make a day of feasting and joy and a good day.

And now God, as you were with our fathers, so be you with us, and bring our souls out of prison. Therefore we will look to YHVH, and wait for the God who saves us. Behold YHVH will announce to Zion: Behold your Saviour is coming! Behold his reward is with him! And they shall be called: The holy people, The redeemed of YHVH. Amen, Amen, Selah.

Blessed be YHVH who teaches my hand to bring near from on high all blessing and praise. Amen, Amen, Selah.