

Second Book of Machabees

Chapter 1

To the brethren, the Jews that are through- out 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 Scenopegia 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.

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,

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 Scenopegia, 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.

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.

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.

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

Chapter 2

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.

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:

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 of us.

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

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:

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 fulfil 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 Hir-

canus, 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 multi-

tude, 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 king dom, 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 visiter 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

But Simon, of whom we spoke before, who was the betrayer of the money, 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 Celesyia, 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 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 Mnesotheus 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 alas 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 Antiochus, 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 reprov'd 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.

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 persecuted 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 very 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

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 Artabanes, 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 Lacedaemon, 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, 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 afterwards 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 flee: 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.

Chapter 6

But not long after the king sent a certain oldman 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 Garazim 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.

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.

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 to 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 heavens:

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.

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

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.

6 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 hast 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 her 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

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 every where.

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.

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 at a stand, slew a hundred and twenty thousand, because of the help they had from heaven, and for this they received many favours.

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.

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 against 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.

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

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.

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 burying place, 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.

16 The holy temple also, which before he had spoiled, he promised 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

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 repeat 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 holds, received those that were driven out of Jerusalem, and attempted to make war.

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 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.

26 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 them 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.

Chapter 11

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 Lord, 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; and 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.

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 to 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

When these covenants were made, Lysias went to the king, and the Jews gave themselves to husbandry.

2 But they that were behind, viz. Timotheus, and Apollonius, the son of Genneus, also

Hieronimus, 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 rams or engines of war threw down the walls of Jericho, in the time of Josue, 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 chil-

dren, 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 pursued them close, 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:

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's 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 same 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.

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.

Chapter 13

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.

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.

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 be-

fore 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 intreating the Jews, and yielding to them, he swore to all things that seemed reasonable, and,

being reconciled, offered sacrifice, 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

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 that 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,

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 ancestor's 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 these 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's 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 come together by themselves: and seats were brought out, and set for each one.

22 But Judas ordered armed men to be ready in convenient places, lest some mischief might be suddenly practised 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 had 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 accusation, 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 kindness 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 ensnaring 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 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:

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

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 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.

