

Corrections: End of Lecture 94

Hostage in Rome. Romans had defeated Antiochus III, and imposed tribute on him; required a son as a hostage. For some reason Antiochus' older brother came to Rome to replace him; Antiochus started back home. On the way he heard that his father had died, so he hurried home. Through political machinations, he was able to assume kingship **in place of the rightful heir, his older brother.**

Post-Lecture note: I was confused about the relationships. Here is the correct information.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes . . . (175–164 B.C.). Younger son of Antiochus III, he returned from Rome when his brother Seleucus IV Philopator sent his own son **Demetrius** as hostage in his stead, and usurped the throne after Seleucus was assassinated.¹

So it was his **nephew** Demetrius [**not his brother**], whom Antiochus IV defrauded of the throne.

Corrections: Beginning of Lecture 95

Earliest and Latest Dates, 2 Maccabees.

As the story begins, Onias III is already high-priest. His dates are **196-175 B.C.**

Heliodorus, was minister of King Seleucus IV, reigned from **187-175 B.C.**

The first scene is more legendary than historical, but we can imagine it as taking place between 187-175 B.C.

The final battle at Adasa (2 Macc 15:26-36 = 1 Macc 7:43-50) is usually dated **160 B.C.**²

[In chapter 1 there are two letters prefixed to the history; these earlier of the two is dated from **124 B.C.** This letter is was probably not composed by the author of 2 Maccabees, but by someone later.] .³

Week 32, Lecture 97.⁴ The Decline of the High Priesthood under Jason.

B. Simon's Plot against Onias	2 Macc 4:1-6	This Lecture
B. Hellenizers	1 Macc 1:11-15	This Lecture
C. Jason, the High Priest, Introduces Hellenism	2 Macc 4:7-20	This Lecture
D. Antiochus is Received by Jason in Jerusalem	2 Macc 4:21-22	This Lecture
E. Menelaus as High Priest (172. B.C.) ⁵	2 Macc 4:23-50	Next Lecture

Simon's Plot against Onias, 2 Macc 4:1-6

2 Macc 4:1-2. The previously mentioned Simon, who had informed about the money against his own country, slandered Onias, saying that it was he who had incited Heliodorus and had been the real cause of the evils. ² He dared to designate as a plotter against the government the man who was the benefactor of the city, the protector of his compatriots and a zealot for the laws.

This was the Simon who had some conflict with the High Priest Onias over the market, in chapter 3.

2 Macc 4:3-6. When his hatred progressed to such a degree that even murders were committed by one of Simon's approved agents, ⁴ Onias recognized that the rivalry was serious and that Apollonius son of Menestheus, and governor of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia, was intensifying the malice of Simon. ⁵ So he appealed to the king, not accusing his compatriots but having in view the welfare, both public and private, of all the people. ⁶ For he saw that without the king's attention public affairs could not again reach a peaceful settlement and that Simon would not stop his folly.⁶

¹ John Whitehorne, "Antiochus (Person)" *Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 270.

² Uriel Rappaport, "Nicanor (Person)," *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 4, p. 1105.

³ Robert, Doran, "The Second Book of Maccabees: Introduction, Commentary and Reflections," in the *New Interpreter's Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996) 184.

⁴ Lectures are numbered consecutively. Although this is this week's first lecture, its number reflects its place in the **total** sequence.

⁵ NABRE Note to 2 Macc 4:23. Menelaus begins his reign as High Priest in 172 B.C.

⁶ Unless specified otherwise, all quotations are from the *New English Translation of the Septuagint*. This translation is available for free online at the following site: <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/>.

There is a new governor of the area, who appears to be an ally of Simon. Onias appeals over the governor's head directly to the king [Seleucus IV]. More on this king shortly. First we will look at a related passage in 1 Maccabees.

Hellenistic Jews, 1 Macc 1:11-15

1Macc 1:11-13. In those days out of Israel came sons, **transgressors of the law**, and persuaded many, saying, "Let us go and make a covenant with the nations around us, because from the time we separated ourselves from them many evils have found us." ¹² And the proposition seemed good in their eyes; ¹³ so some of the people took courage and went to the king, and he gave them the authority to follow the statutes of the nations.

1 Maccabees generally portrays the conflict as one of Jews against pagans.

Notice he does not give the details of the inner-Jewish conflicts that we read about in 2 Maccabees.

However, in these few lines we see that there were Jews who were willing to cooperate with the pagans.

To understand how the author of 1 Maccabees feels about these Jews:

Imagine how Southerners felt about "scalawags" immediately after the civil war.

Imagine how ISIS feels about Iraqis who work with the Americans.

1 Macc 1:14-15, The Gymnasium. ¹⁴ And they built a gymnasium in Hierosolyma according to the precepts of the nations, ¹⁵ and they **fashioned foreskins** for themselves and **apostatized** from the holy covenant and joined themselves to the nations and **sold themselves to do evil.** (NETS)

The Greek name for Jerusalem in Hierosolyma. The NETS simply transliterates this.

The Greek word *gymnos* means "naked." The gymnasium got its name because ancient Greeks exercised in the nude.

To this day, Semitic cultures stress "modest dress" more than Western cultures. [My experience as a jogger in Jordan.]

Circumcision was an ancient Semitic custom.

In ancient Israel, even most of the enemies of Israel were also circumcised--e.g., Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites. The Philistines were the exception.

During the Exile, Circumcision came to take on a deeper role as a "boundary marker" of religious identity.

In order to "fit in" to the Greek culture, the Hellenizers were having a medical procedure to "undo" circumcision.

The language of the author expresses his strong feelings about this: "apostasy; selling themselves to do evil."

It would be a mistake to take his harsh language at face value.

Remarks of John Collins

Yet the issues were not so black and white as 1 Maccabees presents them. The Hellenizers, those who favored acceptance of a Greek way of life, undoubtedly saw their actions as a liberalization and updating of Judaism. . . .

Many Jews who lived in the Greek-speaking world, in such centers as Alexandria in Egypt, learned to preserve their Jewish tradition in ways that down-played its differences from the surrounding culture. The reformers in Jerusalem must also have had some vision of Judaism as an integral part of the culture of the day.⁷

Consider our more recent experience as American Catholics.

Consider the contemporary challenge of being a Catholic university. [12:50 on timeline]

Back to the more detailed account of 2 Maccabees.

Jason as High Priest, 2 Macc 4:7-22

Jason's Bribery. 4:7-10. When **Seleucus died** and **Antiochus, who was called Epiphanes**, succeeded to the kingdom,

"Seleucus died" Actually, he was assassinated by Heliodorus, whom we met in chapter 3.

Heliodorus hoped to become king, but Antiochus, the brother of the murdered Seleucus arrived to claim power.

The rightful heir was Demetrius, son of Seleucus -- languishing as a hostage in Rome.

⁷ John Collins, *Daniel, 1-2 Maccabees*, Old Testament Message, volume 15 (Michael Glazier, 1981) 157.

2 Macc 4:7b-10. Jason **the brother of Onias** obtained the high priesthood by corruption,⁸ promising the king at an interview **three hundred sixty** talents of silver and from another source of revenue **eighty** talents.⁹ In addition to this he promised to pay **one hundred fifty** more, if permission were given to establish by his authority a gymnasium and a body of youth for it and **to draw up the list of the 'Antiochenes' amongst those in Hierosolyma.**¹⁰ When the king assented and he came to office, he at once shifted his compatriots over to the Greek way of life.

Remarks on Jason

Jason became high priest in 175 B.C. by bribing the new king, Antiochus IV.⁸

Jason bribed Antiochus to depose Onias, his own brother!

Jason's bribe: **360 + 80 + 150 = 590 talents** [each talent is about 75 pounds of silver]⁹

The Seleucids owed the Romans 1,000 Talents per year (until 173 B.C.) 590 talents would make a big dent in that!

Translation Difficulties: *ephēbeion*

The Greek word *ephēbos* means "late adolescent," ca. ages 15-19. [cf. ephebophilia vs. pedophilia]

Is an *ephēbeion* a **group of people**: a "body of youth" (RSV, NRSV, NETS)?

Or is it a **building**: (youth center) (NAB, NABRE, NJB)?

The KJV Apocrypha translates the word *ephēbeion* thus:

a place for exercise, and for the training up of youth in the fashions of the heathen,

Translation Difficulties: 'list of Antiochenes'

Some translations think this involves citizenship in the pagan city of Antioch (RSV, NRSV, NABRE).

and to **enroll** Jerusalemites as **citizens of Antioch.** (NABRE)

The NETS (above) has the advantage of preserving the ambiguity of the original Greek.

In this translation, the "Antiochenes" could simply be some kind of club / fraternity

Remark from Collins

There is no record that Jerusalem was renamed Antioch, so that its citizens could be called Antiochenes. It is debated whether the Antiochenes in Jerusalem were citizens of a distinct community within the city or members of a larger Antiochene republic on the model of Rome. It is probable that in any case Jason's action disenfranchised many people . . . and concentrated political power in the hands of his own supporters.¹⁰

Jason's additional actions, 2 Macc 4:11-22.

4:11. He set aside the existing humane royal concessions to the Judeans, secured through Ioannes the father of Eupolemus, who went on the mission to establish friendship and alliance with the **Romans**, and he destroyed the polity's lawful ways of living and introduced new customs contrary to the law.

Earlier we saw that King Antiochus III had been very respectful of Jewish traditions & laws.

Note the mention of the **Romans**. Small countries ally with "great powers" when it appears to be to their advantage.

At this point, the Romans are seen as a **completely positive influence** vs. the Seleucids.

This is an indication that the final editing of the book took place before 63 B.C., when Pompey arrived with an army!

4:12-14 He took delight in establishing a gymnasium right under the acropolis, and subjugating them, he induced the noblest of the young men to wear the Greek hat.¹³ There was such an extreme of hellenization and increase in the adoption of allophylism [= other-tribe-ness] because of the surpassing wickedness of Jason, who was impious and no true high priest,¹⁴ that the priests were no longer intent upon their ministry at the altar.

Although Jason is of the high priestly family, he is "no true high priest" because of his corrupt ways.

⁸ NABRE Note to 2 Macc 3:1 states that the rule the High Priest Onias ended in 175.B.C.

⁹ *Catholic Study Bible*, "Measures and Weights" gives the precise amount as 75.558 lb. (= 75 lbs. 8.928 oz.) or 34.3 kgs.

¹⁰ Collins, *2 Maccabees*, 292.

4:15-17. Rather, despising the shrine and neglecting the sacrifices, they hurried to take part in the unlawful distribution of the oil in the wrestling arena after the signal for the discus throwing, ¹⁵ disdainful of the honors prized by their ancestors and putting the highest value upon Greek forms of prestige. ¹⁶ For this reason heavy disaster overtook them, and those whose ways of living they admired and wished to imitate completely became their enemies and avengers. ¹⁷ It is no light thing to show impiety to the divine laws-- a fact that later events will make clear.

The author's harsh criticism reflects his own position. In his own mind, Jason has probably not abandoned Judaism. He is still High Priest. He worships the God of Israel. He is not a priest of Zeus or some other pagan god. Collins remarks that Jews in other areas were more successful in integrating Judaism with Hellenistic society.¹¹

Participation in pagan athletic contests

4:18-20. When the quinquennial games were being held at Tyre and the king was present, ¹⁹ the vile Jason sent envoys, chosen as being 'Antiochian' citizens [literally, simply "Antiochenes"] from Hierosolyma, to carry three hundred silver drachmas for the sacrifice to Heracles. Those who carried the money, however, thought best not to use it for sacrifice, because that was inappropriate, but to expend it for another purpose. ²⁰ So this money was intended by the sender for the sacrifice to Heracles, but by the decision of its carriers it was applied to the construction of triremes. [Greek warships with 3 banks of oars]

Reflections on Assimilation

Athletic games were under the patronage of a God. Was offering sacrifice to the god of the festival "just being polite?" Consider the analogous situation faced by Paul in Corinth (1 Corinthians 8)

Could Christians eat food sacrificed to idols?

Paul draws the line at eating such food **in a pagan Temple**. But what if it is a meal in a private home?

You don't have to ask about the meat; but if somebody mentions it; don't eat for the sake of **his** conscience.

What about a modern American pledging allegiance to the flag? Some religious groups have a problem with this. On the other hand, some Churches display the flag in their sanctuary. Where does one draw the line?

Antiochus Visits Jerusalem

2 Macc 4:21-22. When Apollonius the son of Menestheus was sent to Egypt for the **coronation** of Philometor as king, Antiochus learned that the other had become hostile to his government, and he took measures for his own security. Therefore upon arriving at Joppe he proceeded to Hierosolyma. ²² He was welcomed magnificently by Jason and the city and ushered in with a blaze of torches and with shouts. Then he marched off to Phoenicia in the same manner. (NETS)

A translation difficulty: Does *prōtoklisia* mean "Coronation"?

There is ambiguity about the precise meaning of *prōtoklisia* usually translated "coronation."

Problem: historically, it appears this event is taking place a couple of years before Philometor actually was crowned.

This is the only time the word occurs in the entire Greek Bible, or anywhere else in Greek literature.

LSJ sees it as a synonym of *anaklētēria* which means "festival on a king's proclamation."

So the precise nature of this "festival" is unknown. According to Goldstein:

Prōtoklisia here could easily mean the celebration of the first occasion on which the young king presided over a formal state banquet.¹²

Some historical background

Ptolemy VI Philometor, after the death of his father . . . in 181/180, had been under the control of his mother, Cleopatra I, who died in 176, and then of guardians; he proclaimed himself to be of age in **170**. The event recorded here seems to take place around **172 BCE**, and tension had been building for a long time. . . .Antiochus IV, to

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Jonathan A. Goldstein, *II Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 41A, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 235.

forestall any invasion, made a tour of his southern areas. Joppa (v. 21) lay on the coast to the northwest of Jerusalem.¹³

Friendly Relations

At this point in the story, there appears to be no hostility whatsoever between Antiochus and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. However, this does not mean that “all is well” throughout the country. Consider how in recent elections the more urbanized East & West Coasts voted very differently from the land in-between! Our own recent experience shows that a country can be deeply divided on issues of “values.”

Week 32, Lecture 98. Menelaus as High Priest, Part 1. 2 Macc 4:23-29

I did not realize our projector was still “on” from a previous video we had watched. It is casting a shadow, and giving a blue tint to everything in the next 3 lectures. I hope this is not too distracting.

Menelaus Becomes High Priest, 4:23-29

Verses 23-29. After a period of three years Jason sent Menelaus, the brother of the previously mentioned Simon, to carry the money to the king and to complete the records of essential business. ²⁴ But he, when presented to the king, extolled him with an air of authority and **secured the high priesthood for himself, outbidding Jason by three hundred talents of silver.** ²⁵ After receiving the king's commands he returned, **possessing no qualification for the high priesthood** but having the hot temper of a cruel tyrant and the rage of a savage wild beast. ²⁶ So Jason, who after supplanting his own brother was supplanted by another man, was **driven as a fugitive into the land of Ammon.** ²⁷ Although Menelaus continued to hold the office, he did not pay regularly any of the money promised to the king. ²⁸ So when **Sostratus** the captain of the acropolis kept requesting payment-- for the collection of the revenue was his responsibility-- the two of them were summoned by the king on account of this issue. ²⁹ Menelaus left his own brother **Lysimachus** as deputy in the high priesthood, while Sostratus left **Crates**, the commander of the **Cyprian** troops.¹⁴

Review: Background

Jason, the high priest, has gotten his job by bribing the king to depose his own brother, Onias. Jason, at least, is a member of the high-priestly family. He sends Menelaus to pay tribute to the king.

The Machinations of Menelaus

V. 24 Menelaus **out-bribes Jason** to become high priest! V. 25. He has “**no qualification**” to be high priest. In addition to having a nasty disposition, he is not of the high-priestly family.

V. 26, Jason Flees to the land of Ammon

That would be on the east bank of the Jordan.

Long ō in Hebrew is long ā in most other Semitic languages. The capital of modern Jordan is Ammān.

Vv. 27-29, Menelaus, Sostratus, Lysimachus, & Crates

Apparently there is a division of power in Jerusalem.

Sostratus is the king's representative, in charge of the garrison at the citadel.

Menelaus is not paying the bribes he promised. Sostratus has not gotten blood out of this turnip.

The king summons them both. Menelaus leaves his brother Lysimachus in charge while he is away.

¹³ Robert Doran, “The Second Book of Maccabees,” in *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Abingdon, 1996) volume 4, p. 219.

¹⁴ All scripture quotes in this lecture are from NETS, the New English Translation of the Septuagint, unless otherwise specified.

V. 29, Cyprian Troops. Sostratus leaves Crates in charge of the Cyprian troops in the garrison. Cyrus was under the control of Ptolemaic Egypt, so these soldiers would have been mercenaries.

Because the next section is long, I decided to break the lecture at this point.

Week 32, Lecture 99. Menelaus as High Priest, Part 2. 2 Macc 4:30-38

The Murder of Onias, 4:30-38

Verse 30. While such was the state of affairs, it happened that the people of Tarsus and of Mallus revolted because their cities had been given as a present to Antiochis, the king's **concubine**.

“Concubine.” Other translations say **“Mistress.”**

In polygamous societies, “concubines” were legal wives of a lower status -- they were **not** “sluts.”

Diplomacy. Different styles of leadership in various parts of the Seleucid Empire.

However, giving the city to a woman without consultation would have been an affront to the dignity of a Greek City. The Seleucids behaved as “Persian overlords” in the Eastern part of their empire, where despotism was expected. However, generally in the West, they dealt “diplomatically” with Greek cities.

Verse 31. So the king went hurriedly to settle the trouble, leaving Andronicus, a man of high rank, to act as his deputy.

This means that King Antiochus would not have been present when Menelaus & Sostratus arrived.

Verse 32. But Menelaus, thinking he had obtained a suitable opportunity, stole some of the gold vessels of the temple and gave them to **Andronicus**; other vessels, as it happened, he had sold to Tyre and the neighboring cities.

Since the king is away, they are dealing with is representative **Andronicus**. (More about him shortly)

Doran points out that pious King Hezekiah had paid off King Sennacherib with temple silver & gold (2 Kgs 18:13-16)¹⁵

This could have been seen as a precedent for using Temple funds to pay tribute to overlords.

Is that what the transfer of the vessels to Andronicus meant? Or was it some kind of bribe?

Nobody would have seen the actions of King Hezekiah as a precedent for bribery.

Verse 33. When Onias became fully aware of these acts, he publicly exposed them, having first withdrawn to a place of sanctuary at Daphne near Antioch.

We have no evidence of a synagogue at Daphne. The only sanctuary there was a famous temple to Apollo & Artemis. It is curious that a Jewish high priest, renowned for his piety, would take refuge in a pagan shrine.

Doran notes the editorial view of 2 Maccabees: Gentiles & Jews can live together in peace.

This is different from the editorial view of 1 Maccabees.

Verses 34-35. Therefore Menelaus, taking **Andronicus** aside, urged him to kill Onias. Andronicus came to Onias, and resorting to treachery, offered him sworn pledges and gave him his right hand; he persuaded him, though still suspicious, to come out from the place of sanctuary; then, with no regard for justice, he immediately put him out of the way. ³⁵ For this reason not only Judeans, but many also of other nations, were grieved and displeased at the unjust slaughter of the man.

Andronicus is the Assassin. Were the Temple vessels given to him earlier meant as “payment” for these services? Diodorus Siculus tells us that Antiochus had somebody named Andronicus kill his young nephew -- a potential rival to the throne. The commentators think it is likely this is the same Andronicus. Recall that the predecessor of Antiochus IV, Seleucus IV, died suddenly.

¹⁵ Doran, “2 Maccabees,” *New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 4, p. 222.

His oldest son was a hostage in Rome. His youngest son was at Antioch.
When Antiochus arrived, he apparently began his rule by acting as “regent” for the boy.
But eventually he had Andronicus get rid of him.

Daniel 9:26 notes the Assassination of Onias¹⁶

And after sixty-two weeks **Christ shall be slain** (Douay)

And after threescore and two weeks **shall Messiah be cut off**, (KJV)

And after the sixty-two weeks, **an anointed one shall be cut off** (RSV)

Note that older translations (Douay & KJV) regard this as a prophecy about Jesus.

Contemporary translations (e.g., RSV) regard it as a commentary on “current events” by an apocalyptic writer.

Back to 2 Maccabees

Verses 36-38. When the king returned from the region of Cilicia, the Judeans in the city appealed to him with regard to the unreasonable murder of Onias, and the Greeks shared their hatred of the crime.

³⁷ Therefore Antiochus was grieved at heart and filled with pity and wept because of the moderation and good conduct of the deceased. ³⁸ Inflamed with anger, he immediately stripped off the purple robe from Andronicus, tore off his clothes and led him around the whole city to that very place where he had committed the outrage against Onias, and there he removed the bloodthirsty fellow from the world. The Lord thus repaid him with the punishment he deserved.

Motive? Was Antiochus really outraged? Or was this just a convenient way to get rid of a dangerous co-conspirator?

Recall King David & Saul (2 Samuel 1). Mortally wounded, Saul asks an Amalekite to kill him.

After he does so, he brings word to David, expecting a reward. But David kills the Amalekite!

Recall King David & Abner (2 Samuel 3). David mourns profusely after Joab kills the enemy general.

Post-Lecture Note: (2 Samuel 4) The only one keeping David from ruling over all Israel was Saul’s son Ishbosheth. David ruled only over Judah. Ishbosheth was king of all the Northern Tribes.

When Rechab and Baanah do David the favor of assassinating Ishbosheth, David has them executed.

Thus he profits from their deed, but is able to convince the Northern Tribes to let him be their king.

Summary. The motives of politicians, ancient and modern, are not always obvious!

Week 32, Lecture 100. Menelaus as High Priest, Part 3. 2 Macc 4:39-50

Further Charges against Menelaus, 4:39-50

Verses 39-40. When many acts of sacrilege had been committed in the city by Lysimachus with the connivance of Menelaus and when report of them had spread abroad, the populace gathered against Lysimachus, because many of the gold vessels had already been stolen. ⁴⁰ Since the crowds were becoming aroused and filled with anger, Lysimachus armed about **three thousand men** and launched an unjust attack under the leadership of a certain Auranus, a man advanced in years and no less **advanced in folly**.

Doran comments on the 3,000 Armed Men

The reader may wonder what the Seleucid garrison (4:29) was doing during this confrontation and how Lysimachus could so easily procure arms for three thousand men, a small militia in itself.¹⁷

¹⁶ Collins, *Daniel, 1-2 Maccabees*, 293.

¹⁷ Doran, “2 Maccabees,” 223.

Contrast between two old men.

There will be a contrast between this old man “advanced in folly” and the old man Eliezar, who will be a martyr.

Verses 41-44. But when they became aware that Lysimachus was attacking them, some picked up stones, some blocks of wood, and others took handfuls of the ashes that were lying around and threw them in wild confusion at Lysimachus' men. ⁴² As a result, they wounded many of them and killed some and put all the rest to flight; **the temple robber himself they killed close by the treasury.** ⁴³ Charges were brought against Menelaus about this incident. ⁴⁴ When the king came to Tyre, **three men sent by the senate** presented the case before him.

[Post-Lecture Note] V. 42 Death of the Temple Robber. This would be Lysimachus.

Inflamed by Lysimachus' sacrilege, the crowd attacked the would-be thieves, and Lysimachus was killed near the treasury. ¹⁸

The exact duties of “the senate” are not known, but the group is **mentioned by Josephus.**

Quoting a letter of the previous king Anitochus III, Josephus writes:

and let all of that nation live according to the laws of their own country; and let the **[council of] elders**, and the priests, and the scribes of the temple, and the sacred singers, be discharged from poll money and the crown tax and other taxes also; (Ant. 12:142, accessed via *BibleWorks* -- translation of *gerousia* “updated,” PJM)

Verses 45-50. But Menelaus, already as good as beaten, promised a substantial bribe to Ptolemy son of Dorymenes to win over the king. ⁴⁶ Therefore, Ptolemy, taking the king aside into a colonnade as if for refreshment, induced the king to change his mind. ⁴⁷ Menelaus, the cause of all the trouble, he acquitted of the charges against him, while he sentenced to death those unfortunate men, who would have been freed uncondemned, if they had pleaded even before Scythians. ⁴⁸ And so those who had spoken for the city and the villages and the holy vessels quickly suffered the unjust penalty. ⁴⁹ Therefore even the Tyrians, showing their hatred of the crime, provided magnificently for their funeral. ⁵⁰ But Menelaus, because of the greed of those in power, remained in office, growing in wickedness, having become the chief plotter against his compatriots.

Bribery is once again Menelaus' **method of choice**, and it works.

The guilty man goes free, and the innocent who accused him are executed.

The Author's View: Decline of the High Priesthood

. As the author of 2 Maccabees sees history, it is proceeding according to the following arc:

Onias (holy) → Jason (bad) → Menelaus (totally awful)

APPENDIX: 2 Maccabees 4:9, a difficult verse for translators!

In addition to this he promised to pay one hundred and fifty more if permission were given to establish by his authority a **gymnasium** and a **body of youth** for it, and to **enroll the men of Jerusalem as citizens of Antioch.** (RSV, NRSV)

a **gymnasium** and a **youth center** for it and to **enroll** Jerusalemites as **citizens of Antioch.** (NABRE)

a **gymnasium** and a **youth club** for it and to **enroll** men in Jerusalem as **Antiochians.** (NAB)

a **gymnasium** and **youth centre**, and to **register** the **Antiochists** of Jerusalem. (NJB)

a **place for exercise**, and a **place for youth**, and to **entitle** them, that were at Jerusalem, **Antiochians.** (Douay)

¹⁸ Michael E. Hardwick, “Lysimachus (Person),” ed. D. N. Freedman, *Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (NY: Doubleday, 1992), 426.

a **place for exercise**, and **for the training up of youth in the fashions of the heathen**, and to **write** them of Jerusalem **by the name** of Antiochians. (KJV Apocrypha)

a **gymnasium** and a **body of youth** for it and to **draw up the list of the 'Antiochenes'** amongst those in Hierosolyma. (NETS)

a **place for exercise**, and **for the training up of youth in the fashions of the heathen**, and to write them of Jerusalem by the name of Antiochians. (Brenton)

a **gymnasium** and a **place for training the young people**, and to **enroll** those living in Jerusalem as citizens of Antioch. (Common English bible)

Questions

The Greek word *ephēbos* means “late adolescent,” ca. ages 15-19. [cf. ephebophilia vs. pedophilia]

Is an *ephēbeion* a group of people: a “body of youth” (RSV, NRSV, NETS)?

Or is it a building: (youth center) (NAB, NABRE, NJB)?