

Week 39, Lecture 123.¹ Where Do We Go From Here?

We have spent 9 sessions on Maccabees.

What We Have Covered.

Background: From Alexander to Antiochus IV	1 Macc 1:1-10	
The Decline of the High Priesthood, Hellenization	1 Macc 1:11-15	2 Macc 2:19-4:50
Imposition of Hellenism, Persecution, Martyrdom	1 Macc 1:16-54	2 Maccabees 5-7
Resistance Under Mattathias	1 Macc 2:1-70	
Early Successes of Judas Maccabee	1 Maccabees 3-4	2 Maccabees 8
The Death of Antiochus	1 Macc 6:1-17	2 Macc 9:1-29
Purification & Dedication of the Temple	1 Macc 4:36-61	2Macc 10:1-9; 1:10-2:18

Method of Procedure

We have gone back and forth between 1 and 2 Maccabees, in rough chronological order.

Second Maccabees ends with the death of Judas Maccabee

It is harder to coordinate the material in 1 & 2 Maccabees at this point.

Therefore we will cover larger blocks

To Be Covered

From the Dedication of the Temple to the Death of Judas	1 Macc 5:1-9:22	
From the Dedication of the Temple to the Death of Judas		2 Macc 10:10 -15:39
Jonathan Continues the Struggle	1 Macc 9:23-12:54	
Simon as Leader of the Jews	1 Maccabees 13-16	
Later Events (Letter prefixed to 2 Maccabees)		2 Macc 1:1-10

Synopsis of 1 & 2 Maccabees. For more details, see the Synopsis of 1 & 2 Maccabees.

I will give it out as a separate document in class.

It will be **attached as an appendix** to the online version of the notes.

Week 39, Lecture 124. Victories of Judas, Part 1. 1 Macc 5:1-36

Context. First Maccabees reports the victories in this lecture **before** the death of Antiochus in 6:1-17.

We covered his death when we got to that point in 2 Maccabees 9. [Lectures 117, 118, 119].

Second Maccabees reports the victories in this lecture **after** the death of Antiochus.

In this lecture I go back to get the material in 1 Maccabees that we skipped over.

5:1-3, Idumea, formerly “Edom,” named after Esau south of the Dead Sea. This is desert country.

Related to *'adōm*, “red.” 2 stories: “Give me some of the red stuff” (Gen 25:30); he had red hair (Gen 25:25)

In NT times, Herod the Great, an Idumean, would rule in the name of Rome.

The **rebuilding of the sanctuary** has angered the surrounding nations.

It was a sign of Jewish nationalism.

They respond, not by attacking Judea, but by attacking “local Jews” who live in their territories.

This is what prompts Judas to wage war upon them.

It is good not to take war propaganda (even biblical!) at face value.

One of the pretexts of Hitler for annexing parts of Czechoslovakia was the mistreatment of local Germans.

No need to read text in class.

1 Maccabees 5:1 And it came to pass that when the nations round about heard that the altar was built and the sanctuary renewed as before, they were greatly angered. ² they planned to

¹ Lectures are numbered consecutively. This is this week's first lecture, but it is number 123 in the **total** sequence.

wipe out the race of Jacob that was among them. So they began to kill and destroy the people. ³ Then Judas fought against the children of **Esau in Idumea at Akrabattene**, because they were besieging Israel: and he struck them a mighty blow, abased them, and took spoils from them. ²

A Hermeneutical Thought.

How much tension in the modern Near East is because Arabs see their people as being mistreated by Israel? What they regard as a “defensive war,” contemporary Israel regards as “terrorism.” How would the “defensive war” of Judas have been perceived by the surrounding nations?

5:4-8 Judas Attacks Ammon

“Canaanite shift.” Long ā in early Semitic become long ō in Hebrew.

Post-lecture: linguistically, Hebrew is a dialect of the Canaanite language.

Ammon is north of Idumea, on the east side of the Jordan River.

Modern **Amman**, the capital of Jordan is a bit north of the Dead Sea.

Ammon did not reach the Jordan River. Gilead was between Ammon and the River.

Between Edom and Ammon in pre-exilic times had been the Moabites.

I am not sure if they were still there or not.

Most of this campaign takes place east of the Jordan river, in modern day Jordan.

No need to read text in class.

⁴ Also he remembered the wickedness of the children of Baean, who had been a snare and a stumbling block for the people, in that they used to lay in wait for them along the roadways.

⁵ They were shut up by him in the towers, and he encamped against them, and **put them under the ban**: he burned the towers of that place with fire, along with all that were inside them. ⁶ Afterward he crossed over against the children of Ammon, where he found a mighty force -- many people, with Timothy leading them. ⁷ He joined in many battles with them, and they were crushed before him; he struck them down. ⁸ He also took Jazer **and its daughters**; then he returned into Judea.

under the ban. Hebrew: *herem*. (related to the Arabic word “harem,” the “forbidden” quarters of the house.)

This is “holy war,” such as was fought in the book of Joshua.

some excessive cruelty – burning people alive.

Moderns who have used flame-throwers, napalm, and chemical weapons cannot cast stones.

V. 8, “and its daughters.” In Hebrew, all cities and towns are feminine.

Hence they are always personified as women. E. G. “Daughter Zion”

The suburbs and districts of a city are its “daughters.”

This is evidence the book was written in Hebrew and translated (literally) into Greek.

Words Matter.

Many scholars are convinced that most of the slaughters in the book of Joshua are not in fact historical.

Rather they are depictions of what the DH thinks the Israelites **should have done**.

In the time of Maccabees these “ancient slaughters” now provide the rationale for the annihilation of Gentiles.

Fast forward 2,000 years, and these stories will provide the rationale for the slaughter of native Americans.

5:9-54. Battles in Gilead & Galilee, Return to Jerusalem

Gilead is on the East side of the Jordan, between the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee.

It is between Ammon (also East of the Jordan) and the Jordan River.

5:9-20 Jews in other countries appeal to Judas; Judas Responds

Gentiles in Gilead take hostile action against the Jews, who flee to a fortress.

² The English is based on Brenton’s 19th century version, accessed via *BibleWorks*. At times I modify it considerably to make it more literal. I have also Americanized (honour > honor) and updated (followeth > follows) the spelling.

Judas gets a letter that says: “Come help us now, or we are all dead!”

Dramatically, before they are finished reading that letter, a second letter arrives.

Judas gives his brother Simon 3,000 troops to fight in Galilee; he takes 8,000 troops to battle in Gilead.

No need to read text in class.

⁹ Then the Gentiles who were in Gilead assembled themselves against the Israelites who were in their territories to destroy them, but they [the Israelites] fled to the fortress of Dathema.

¹⁰ They sent a letter to Judas and his brothers, saying:

The First Letter. The Gentiles that are round about us are assembled together against us to wipe us out. ¹¹ They are preparing to come and take the fortress into which we have fled, and Timothy is leading their force. ¹² So come now! Deliver us from their hands, for many of us have fallen. ¹³ Indeed, all our brothers that were in the places of the Tobiads³ have been put to death, and they have taken captive their wives and children, and borne away their goods; and they have destroyed about a thousand men there.

¹⁴ While this letter was still being read, behold, other messengers came from Galilee, having rent their garments, who reported similarly. ¹⁵ They said,

The Second Letter. “The men of Ptolemais, of Tyre, of Sidon, and all Galilee of the Gentiles, have assembled against us to annihilate us.”

Response. ¹⁶ Now when Judas and the people heard these words, there assembled a great **congregation** together, to plan what they should do for their brothers who were in trouble, and being attacked. ¹⁷ Then Judas said to Simon his brother, “Choose men for yourself, and go and deliver your brothers that are in Galilee. I myself and Jonathan my brother will go into Gilead.”

¹⁸ Then he left Joseph the son of Zacharias, and Azariah, a leader of the people, with the rest of the force in Judea to keep it. ¹⁹ And he gave them an order, saying: “Take charge of this people, and do not join battle against the Gentiles until we return.”

²⁰ 3,000 men were given to Simon to go into Galilee, and to Judas 8,000 men for Gilead.

A Great “Congregation.” Greek: *ekklesia*. (“Ecclesiology” = “the study of the Church”)

The word is *ekklesia*. In the NT, this word is almost universally translated “church.”

The main point I am making is that **this word is very Jewish!**

There were two synonyms for “assembly, congregation,” *ekklesia* / *synagōgē*

James 2:2 uses the word *synagōgē* to describe a **Christian** gathering!

5:21-23, Simon Fights in Galilee. No need to read text in class.

²¹ Then Simon went into Galilee, where he fought many battles with the Gentiles, so that the Gentiles were crushed before him. ²² He pursued them to the gate of Ptolemais. **3,000 men of the Gentiles fell**, and he despoiled them. ²³ Then Simon took the (Jewish) men in Galilee, and in Arbatta, along with their wives and their children, and all that they had, and **brought them into Judea with great joy.**

Simon is victorious in Galilee. 3,000 Fell. This corresponds exactly to the number of his own soldiers!

The Jews “return” to Judea **with great joy**. This seems to reflect the prophecies of 2nd Isaiah (Isaiah 40-55).

“Then the redeemed of the Lord shall return . . .”

I put “return” in quotes because they probably had been living there for centuries during the Persian period.

Hermeneutical observations. Today Jews from around the world can “return” to Israel.

Part of current Mid-East tensions stem from British Imperial politics at the beginning of the 20th century.

Promises were made to both Arabs and Jews!

5:24-44, Judas Fights in Gilead. Judas receives information from the Nabateans.

If you have ever visited Petra in Jordan, this was a Nabatean city.

³ Brenton had written “Tobie.” The NABRE renders this “the Tobiads,” and gives the following note: Tobiads: a prominent Jewish family that settled east of the Jordan.

In one of the Indiana Jones movies he finds the Holy Grail in Petra.
Judas attacks several cities and **slays all the males**. This is similar to the holy wars of Joshua.
However, he regularly takes spoil / booty, which was not allowed in Joshua's wars.

Siege Lifted.

Next he attacks at Dathema, where Jews have fled. The fortress is surrounded, and they are being attacked. The "battle plan" includes trumpets and loudly shouted prayers. Shades of Jericho!
Judas is successful in lifting the siege.
Just as Simon's force killed 3,000 of the enemy (corresponding to their own number)
here in one battle the force of Judas kills 8,000 (corresponding to **their** number!)
Timothy is the main leader of the enemy force; he and his army are routed.

No need to read this aloud in class.

Information from the Nabateans. ²⁴ Judas Maccabeus and also his brother Jonathan went over the Jordan, and travelled three days' journey in the wilderness, ²⁵ They encountered the **Nabateans**, who came to them peacefully, and told them everything that had happened to their brothers in Gilead: ²⁶ They also said that many of them were shut up in Bozrah and Bosor, in Alema, Chaspho, Maked, and Carnaim. All these cities are strong and large, ²⁷ and that [others] were shut up in the rest of the cities of Gilead, and that on the next day [the enemy] was planning to besiege the forts, to take them, and to destroy them all in one day. **Bozrah.** ²⁸ Then Judas and his force turned suddenly into the wilderness of Bozrah. He took the city, he **slew all the males** with the edge of the sword, despoiled them all, and burned the city with fire. **Fortress of Dathema.** ²⁹ then he departed from there by night, and traveled until he came to the fortress. ³⁰ And it happened that in the morning they looked up, and, behold, there was an innumerable people bearing ladders and machines to take the fortress [of Dathema]. They (the Gentiles) were assaulting them (the Jews inside). ³¹ Judas saw that the battle had begun, and that the cry of the city went up to Heaven with trumpets and loud shouting, ³² and he said to the men of his force, "Fight this day for your brothers." ³³ He went forth behind the enemy in three companies, and they sounded their **trumpets, and cried out in prayer.** ³⁴ Then the army of Timothy realized that it was Maccabeus, and they fled from him. He stuck a great blow against them, and that day **about 8,000 men** of the enemy fell. **Other Cities.** ³⁵ Then Judas turned toward Alema. ⁴ He assaulted it, and took it. He **slew all its males**, despoiled them and burnt it with fire. ³⁶ From thence went he, and took Chaspho, Maked, Bosor, and the other cities of the country of Gilead.

Week 39, Lecture 125. Victories of Judas, Part 2. 1 Maccabees 5:37-68

Second Battle with Timothy, 5:37-44. Timothy gathers another army.
Judas (like Joshua) sends spies. They report that Arabs / Arabians have joined his forces.
Greek *arabos* can mean either "Arab" or "Arabian."
Timothy hopes that Judas will be overly cautious, and encamp on the far side of stream before attacking.
Judas, however -- like a previous incarnation of General Patton -- goes straight into battle. He is victorious.
The Gentiles are defeated. They throw down their weapons and run to the temple.
Judas shows no respect for the local god. He burns the temple, along with all the people hiding inside.

No need to read text in class.

Report of Judas' Spies. ³⁷ After these things Timothy gathered another army and encamped against Raphon beyond the brook. ³⁸ Judas sent men to spy on the encampment, and they brought him word, saying, "All the Gentiles around us have assembled with him, a very large

⁴ NABRE note: Alema: see v. 26; other manuscripts read Maapha, which may be Mizpah of Gilead.

force. ³⁹ He has also hired **Arabians** to help them and they have pitched their tents beyond the brook, ready to come and into battle against you." So Judas went to meet them.

Timothy's preparations. ⁴⁰ Then Timothy said to the leaders of his force, "When Judas and his army come near the brook, if he crosses over to us first, we shall not be able to resist him; for he will certainly prevail over us: ⁴¹ But if he shows fear, and encamps on the other side of the river, we will cross over to him, and prevail over him."

Judas Attacks and Is Victorious. ⁴² Now when Judas approached the brook, he stationed **the scribes of the people** beside the brook, and he commanded them, saying, "Do not allow any man to remain in the camp, but let all come to the battle." ⁴³ So he crossed over first to them, and all the people after him. Then all the Gentiles were crushed before him, and they threw down their weapons, and fled to the temple at Carnaim. ⁴⁴ But they took the city, and burned the temple with fire **along with all inside it**. So Carnaim was subdued, and they could notneither could they stand against Judas any longer.

V. 42, Scribes. (Greek *grammateis* pl. of *grammateus*) Both NABRE and NRSV render this as "officers!" KJA, RSV, Brenton, NETS all render it as "scribes."

5:45-54, The Return to Jerusalem

Then Judas gathered together all Israel that was in Gilead, from the least to the greatest, even their wives and their children, and their belongings -- a very large company -- to go to the land of Judea. ⁴⁶ Now when they came to Ephron, (this was a great city on the road, very well fortified) they could not turn from it, either on the right hand or the left, but had to pass through the middle of it. ⁴⁷ Then the people from the city shut them out, and blockaded the gates with stones. [Remember, Judas and his warriors have just burned down a temple with a lot of people inside it -- maybe the inhabitants of Ephron are "nervous"?] ⁴⁸ Then Judas sent to them with peaceful words, saying, "**We will pass** [All translations render this "Let us pass," but it is not a subjunctive; it is a future] through your land to go away to our own country. No one shall do you any harm; we will just pass through on foot." But they refused to open [the gates] for him.

⁴⁹ Then Judas commanded a proclamation to be made throughout the camp, that every man should pitch his tent in the place where he was. ⁵⁰ So the soldiers encamped, and assaulted the city all that day and all that night, and the city was delivered into his hands.

⁵¹ Then he **slew all the males** with the edge of the sword. He razed [literally "uprooted"] the city, despoiled it, and passed through it on top of the slain.

⁵² Then they crossed the Jordan into the great plain before Beth-shan. ⁵³ And Judas was continually gathering those lagging behind, and exhorting the people during the entire journey, until he came into the land of Judea. ⁵⁴ So they went up to mount Sion with joy and gladness, where they offered holocausts, because not one of them were slain **until** they had returned in peace.

Slew all the males.

We are not told what happened to the women and children. Presumably they were taken captive.

V. 54, A Hebrew "Until." Does not mean that **after** they got back some of them **were** slain! Matthew's Gospel. Joseph did not have relations with Mary "until" she bore her first-born son (Matt 1:25). Book of Job. A man will not rise from the grave "until" the sun and moon are no more (Job 14:7-12).

5:55-62, Joseph and Azariah Are Defeated. No need to read text in class.

⁵⁵ Now in those days in which Judas and Jonathan were in Gilead, and Simon his brother in the Galilee before Ptolemais, ⁵⁶ Joseph the son of Zacharias, and Azariah, captains of the garrisons, heard of the valiant acts and brave deeds which they had done. ⁵⁷ So they said, "Let's also get make a name for ourselves; let's go fight against the Gentiles around us. ⁵⁸ So they gave orders to the garrison that was with them, and they went toward Jamnia. ⁵⁹ Then Gorgias and his men came out of the city to do battle. ⁶⁰ And Joseph and Azariah were put to flight, and pursued to the borders of Judea: and there were slain that day about two thousand men of the people of Israel. ⁶¹ Thus was there a great rout among the people because they were not obedient to Judas and his brothers as they were thinking about brave deeds. ⁶²

Moreover **these men were not of the offspring** [literally “seed”] **of those by whose hand deliverance was given to Israel.**

The **main point** of this short story is that God does not support just any Jew. Rather, God has chosen the Maccabees. Those who ignore their authority can expect defeat.

Hermeneutical observation. The victories of Judas are seen as a sign of divine approval. This can be a dangerous theological assumption!

5:63-68, Victories against Edom and the Philistines

Summary Statement. ⁶³ The man Judas and his brothers were greatly honored before all Israel and all the Gentiles, wherever their name was heard. ⁶⁴ They used to gather around them with joyful acclamations.

Edom & Hebron. ⁶⁵ Then Judas went out with his brothers and made war against the children of Esau in the land toward the south. He struck Hebron **and her daughters** [see comment on verse 8, previous lecture], and pulled down its fortress, and burned the towers all around it.

Philistine Territory. ⁶⁶ Then he set out to go into the land of the Philistines, and passed through **Marisa**. ⁶⁷ At that time **certain priests**, desirous to show their valor, fell in battle because they went out to battle recklessly. ⁶⁸ Judas turned to Azotus in the land of the Philistines. He pulled down their altars, burned the carved images of their gods with fire, and despoiled their cities. Then he returned into the land of Judea

V. 66, Marisa. Some translations read “Samaria.” [Have not had time to check Greek manuscripts] This is supported by the Vulgate and the Syriac.

Samaria would be out of the way (a northern detour) going from Jerusalem to Philistia.

Post lecture notes: Some Greek manuscripts do indeed read “Samaria.”

Since “Marisa” makes better sense, it is the **less likely** reading, according to “general” text-critical principles.

Of course, there are exceptions to every “rule.”

Robert Doran remarks:

Judas had previously fought against the sons of Esau (5:3) and then traveled counter clockwise northward on the eastern side of the Jordan. Now he fights against them in the south and travels clockwise to the coastal plain. **Marisa lies to the west of Hebron.**⁵ [Hebron is south of Jerusalem, PJM.]

V. 67, Certain Priests.

This seems to be a “stray remark” out of context. It would have fit better with the previous story.

The Philistine War. Unlike the previously narrated battles, was not to defend “local Jews.”

Did Judas regard this as a precautionary “defensive” war?

Often what is “defense” and what is “offense” depends on one’s perspective.

Week 39, Lecture 126. Attacks under Antiochus V, 1 Macc 6:18-63

Context. King Antiochus IV, the persecutor of the Jews, has died.

The chronology of 2 Maccabees places the event before the Dedication of the Temple, Hanukkah.

Lecture 117, 1 Macc 6:1-17; **Lecture 118**, 2 Macc 9:1-29; **Lecture 119**, 2 Macc 1:10-17

His son is Antiochus V, Eupator. He is still a boy, only about 11 years old.

The real power is held by the General Lysias, who is serving as guardian of the young king.

6:18-31, Pre-Invasion Events.

6:18-22a. Now those in the citadel were hemming Israel in around the sanctuary, and were continually seeking evil against them, and the strengthening of the Gentiles. ¹⁹ Therefore

⁵ Robert Doran, “The First Book of Maccabees,” in *New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 4 (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996) 81.

Judas planned to destroy them, and called **all the people** together to besiege them. ²⁰ So they came together, and besieged them in the **hundred and fiftieth year**, and he made towers to shoot from, and other war machines. ²¹ However some of them who were besieged got out, and some **ungodly men of Israel** joined them. ²² They went to the king, and said, ⁶

Remarks on 6:18-22a.

Judas has control of the Temple. However, the Seleucid garrison still controls the fortress inside Jerusalem. “**All the people**” = all of those who supported the Maccabees.

As far as our author is concerned, the “**ungodly men of Israel**” are not really part of “the people” (of God). 150th year (of the Greeks) = October 163 to September 162 B.C.⁷

Complaint to the King. No need to read the text in class.

The author ignores the fact that the king is a mere boy, and that the real decision is made by Lysias.

The “ungodly” Israelites remind the king of their loyalty, and warn him that the situation is dire.

They complain that Judas and his men “**are estranged**” from them, i.e., behaving like renegades.

From the perspective of 1 Maccabees, these Jews who are the king’s loyal subjects are the renegades! If he does not act immediately, he will lose control of the area.

6:22b-27. How long will it be until you execute judgment, and avenge our brothers? ²³ We were willing to serve your father, and to walk according to his commands, and to obey his decrees; ²⁴ On account of this, the sons of our nation are besieging the citadel, and **are estranged from us**. Moreover they have been slaying as many of us as they can find, and have seized our inheritances. ²⁵ And they stretched out their hand not only against us, but also against the surrounding districts. ²⁶ And, behold, this day are they besieging the citadel at Jerusalem to take it. They have also fortified the sanctuary and Beth-zur. ²⁷ And if you do not prevent them quickly, they will do the greater things than these, and you shall not be able to rule them.

The King’s Response. No need to read the text in class.

The king raises a huge army consisting of infantry, cavalry, and war elephants.

They are joined by mercenaries, and attack Beth-zur, on the way to Jerusalem.

Most commentators think the numbers are exaggerated. This inflates the importance of Judas.

6:28-31. Now when the king heard this, he was angry, and gathered together all his Friends, and the captains of his army, and those in charge of the cavalry. ²⁹ Also bands of mercenaries came to him from other kingdoms, and from islands of the sea. ³⁰ The number of his army was **100,000 infantry**, and **20,000 cavalry**, and **thirty-two elephants** accustomed to war. ³¹ These went through Idumea, and encamped against Beth-zur, which they assaulted many days. They made war engines, but they [the defenders] came out, and burned them with fire, and fought valiantly.

The Battle at Beth-zechariah, and the death of Eleazar Maccabee, 6:32-47. [Summary]

We get a detailed description of the preparations for battle.

The elephants were the “tanks” of the 2nd century B.C. Each elephant is assigned infantry and cavalry.

They are like aircraft carriers of a naval task force, surrounded by supporting ships.

The huge force shakes the confidence of all who hear its rumbling approach. No need to read the text in class.

6:32-41. Then Judas withdrew from the citadel, and encamped in Beth-zechariah, opposite the king’s camp. ³³ Then the king rose very early and made a forced march with his army toward Beth-zechariah, where his forces prepared for battle, and sounded the trumpets. ³⁴ Then to the elephants they showed the juice of grapes and mulberries to arouse them for battle. ³⁵ Then they divided the beasts among the phalanxes, and for every elephant they appointed a thousand men, armed with coats of mail, and with helmets of brass on their heads and there were 500 chosen horsemen for every beast. ³⁶ Wherever the beast was going,

⁶ The English is based on Brenton’s 19th century version, accessed via *BibleWorks*. At times I modify it considerably to make it more literal. I have also Americanized (honour > honor) and updated (followeth > follows) the spelling.

⁷ Note to 1 Macc 6:20, NABRE.

these (units) went ahead, and they would not separate from it. ³⁷ And upon the beasts were there strong covered towers of wood fastened to them with harnesses, and there were upon each (elephant) thirty-two strong men, who fought upon them, and its Indian (driver). ³⁸ They stationed the rest of the horsemen on one side and the other of the two parts of the army, ready to harass (the enemy while being protected among the phalanxes. ³⁹ Now when the sun shone upon the shields of gold and brass, the mountains glistened with them, and shone like lamps of fire. ⁴⁰ So part of the king's army was arrayed upon the high mountains, and part on the valleys below, and they marched on safely and in order. ⁴¹ All who heard the noise of their multitude, and the marching of the company, and the rattling of the harness, were shaken: for the army was very great and mighty.

6:42-47, the Death of Eleazar. Then Judas and his army drew near, and entered into battle, and **six hundred men** of the king's army **fell**. ⁴³ And Eleazar the Avaran saw that one of the beasts, armed with royal harness, was higher than all the rest, and supposed that the king was upon him. ⁴⁴ He gave his life to save his people, and to win for himself **an everlasting name**: ⁴⁵ He ran at him courageously through the middle of the phalanx; he was dealing death right and left, so that they were parting before him on both sides. ⁴⁶ Then he got under the elephant, stabbed him from underneath, and killed it. Then the elephant fell to the ground on top of him, and he died there. ⁴⁷ Then the rest of the Jews saw the strength of the king, and the attack of his forces, and **they retreated** from them.

600 fell. This appears to be a skirmish, rather than a major battle.

Win an everlasting name. 1 Maccabees has no hope of an “afterlife” or “resurrection.” This is in stark contrast to the view of 2 Maccabees.

A Glorious Defeat. The Jews Retreat.

Discretion was the better part of valor. Theology of Defeat. The author has none (Collins). Like our American “Remember the Alamo,” he records a “glorious defeat.”

The Empire Strikes Back

Luke Skywalker destroys an “imperial walker” with his light-saber. [Enjoy the link!](#)

The Siege of Jerusalem.

Antiochus (Lysias) makes peace with those in the outpost at Beth-zur (protecting his flank)

A diplomatic move. Harsh treatment would have only stiffened resistance in Jerusalem.

Those in Jerusalem are desperate. They are running out of supplies.

It was a sabbatical year.

All the people they had **saved from the Gentiles** had were also eating the supplies.

No need to read the text in class.

6:48-54. Now those in the king's army went up to Jerusalem to engage them, and the king encamped against Judea, and against Mount Sion. ⁴⁹ Then **he made peace** with those from Beth-zur, and they came out of the city, because they had no food there to endure the siege, because it was a **sabbatical year** for the land. ⁵⁰ So the king took Beth-zur, and stationed a garrison there to hold it. ⁵¹ Then he besieged the sanctuary for many days. He set up towers to shoot from and war engines and catapults to throw fire and stones, and machines to shoot darts and projectiles. ⁵² They (the Jews) also made engines of war against their (the enemy's) war engines, and they fought many days. ⁵³ But finally, their storerooms being without provisions, (for that it was **the seventh year**, and **those who had come up to Judea after being delivered from the Gentiles**, had eaten up the rest of the supplies;) ⁵⁴ And there were only a few left in the sanctuary, because the famine was so overpowering for them, so they scattered, every man to his own place.

6:55-63, End of Assault by Antiochus V. **No need to read the text in class.**

⁵⁵ At that time Lysias heard, that Philip --, whom King Antiochus (IV), while he was alive had appointed to bring up his son Antiochus (V), that he might be king -- ⁵⁶ had returned from Persia and Media, along with the king's army also that had gone (East) with him, and that he

was seeking to take charge of affairs. ⁵⁷ Therefore he went quickly, and said to the king and the captains of the army and the company: "We grow weaker daily, and are short on supplies; the place we lay siege to is strong, and the affairs of the kingdom are now weighing urgently upon us: ⁵⁸ Now therefore let's give the right hand (of friendship) to these men, and make peace with them, and with all their nation; ⁵⁹ **And let us agree with them that they shall live according to their own laws, as they did before:** for they became angry and have done all these things because we abolished their laws.

⁶⁰ This proposal pleased the king and the princes, so he sent to them (the Jews) to make peace; and they agreed. ⁶¹ The king and the princes also wore an oath to them, so they came out of the strong hold. ⁶² Then the king entered into mount Sion; but when he saw the strength of the place, he broke his oath that he had made, and gave commandment to pull down the wall round about. ⁶³ Afterward he quickly departed, and returned to Antioch, where he found Philip to be master of the city: so he fought against him, and took the city by force.

Summary of 6:55-63. Internal politics of the Seleucid empire "save the day."

Philip has returned from the East, with the army that Antiochus IV took to subdue the provinces.

Philip is "taking charge" of things. Lysias realizes he has to get home fast.

He promises the Jews they can live by their own laws, and they agree to come out.

Lysias does not harm them, but he does violate his oath by tearing down their fortifications.

The Akra, the citadel remains under his control. He returns to defeat Philip.

Maccabees not mentioned in these negotiations! His army has retreated; he is not part of the deal. This also shows how Jews who were not as "radical" as the Maccabees might deal with pagans.

Week 39, Lecture 127. Demetrius Becomes King, 1 Macc 7:1-25

Introduction. Normally I go use Brenton's translation as a "model." I go through it, and make it more contemporary. At the same time, I also try to make it more literal. I had some extra "pastoral responsibilities" this week, so I did not have time to update the translation. Also, I did not have time to make lecture notes. So, what I am did was to read through Brenton's translation, and make comments "from memory" from what I have read in the commentaries on this chapter. If this turns out okay, I'll publish it; if it is a total disaster, I will trash it, and start from scratch next week, using lecture notes.

The New King, Demetrius, 7:1-7

1Macc 7:1 In the hundred and one and fiftieth year Demetrius the son of Seleucus departed from Rome, and came up with a few men unto a city of the sea coast, and reigned there. ⁸

Remarks about Demetrius, 7:1

He had replaced Antiochus as a hostage in Rome. When Antiochus was on his way home, the king died. Rather than go back to Rome, and allow Demetrius, the rightful heir, to return, Antiochus had hurried to Antioch, and under the guise of serving as regent for the younger brother of Demetrius, Antiochus was able to seize control of the kingdom. Eventually Demetrius managed to slip out of Rome. He returned to his own country. Rome did not recognize him as king; neither did several of the Satraps of the Seleucid Empire. Briefly: it was political chaos!

7:2-Reading & Remarks on 7:2-7

² And as he entered into the palace of his ancestors, so it was, that his forces had taken Antiochus and Lysias, to bring them unto him. ³ Wherefore, when he knew it, he said, **Let me not see their faces.** ⁴ **So his host slew them.**

Main point. Everything that happens now will be influenced by the chaotic politics of the Seleucid Empire. **Now when Demetrius was set upon the throne of his kingdom,** ⁵ There came unto him all the wicked and ungodly men of Israel, having Alcimus, who was desirous to be high priest, for

⁸ The translation in this lecture and the next is straight from Brenton's 19th-century version. I had no time to improve it.

their captain: ⁶ And they accused the people to the king, saying, **Judas and his brethren have slain all thy friends**, and driven us out of our own land. ⁷ Now therefore send some man whom you trust, and let him go and see what havoc he hath made among us, and in the king's land, and let him punish them with all them that aid them.

Bacchides Invades, 7:8-20

7:8-9, Remarks about Alcimus. Then the king chose Bacchides, a friend of the king, who ruled beyond the flood, and was a great man in the kingdom, and faithful to the king, ⁹ And him he sent with that wicked **Alcimus**, whom he made high priest, and commanded that he should take vengeance of the **children of Israel**.

Alcimus was already high priest, but he needed reappointment because there was a new king. The high priest was not just “religious.” He was the highest Jewish **political** official on the scene. This was the situation since Persian times.

After the Persians defeated the Babylonians they would not allow the Jews to have a king. The Persians thought it was “safer” to deal with priests than with kings.

Vengeance on the “children of Israel.” The people supporting Alcimus consider themselves good Jews. Alcimus was not going to take vengeance on the Jews who supported him!

From the perspective of the author of 1 Maccabees **only** those who support Judas are “children of Israel!”

7:10-12. So they departed, and came with a great power into the land of Judea, where they sent messengers to Judas and his brethren with peaceable words deceitfully. ¹¹ But they gave no heed to their words; for they saw that they were come with a great power. ¹² Then did they assemble unto Alcimus [Jewish High Priest] and Bacchides [pagan general] a company of **scribes**, to require justice.

“**Scribes**.” Some translations render this as “officers.”

The normal meaning of *grammateus* is “scribe.” Why it could mean “officer” here I do not understand.

7:13. Now **the Hasideans** were the first among the children of Israel that sought peace of them:

Hasideans. Many scholars think these were the ancestors of the **Pharisees** of the NT.

Because Alcimus is a high priest of the **line of Aaron** (see below), these pious men trust him.

Some of the high priests, e.g., Menelaus, had not been descendants of Aaron.

The pious Hasideans did not demand complete political freedom, as did the Maccabees.

They would be loyal subjects of the pagans, as long as their religion was respected.

7:14-16. For said they, One that is a priest of the **seed of Aaron** is come with this army, and he will do us no wrong. ¹⁵ So he spoke unto them, peaceably, and swore unto them, saying, we will procure the harm neither of you nor your friends. ¹⁶ Whereupon they believed him: howbeit he took of them threescore men, and slew them in one day, according to the words ~~which he wrote~~, **[which were written.]**

“The Words which he wrote.” Post-lecture research:

The NABRE tries to make sense of this in their note to 7:16.

The words that he wrote: based on Psa 79:2-3. But who is “he”- David, Alcimus, Judas, or someone else?

Jerome’s Vulgate reads: *verbum quod scriptum est*, “the word which was written.”

The Syriac Peshitta also has this reading.

There is a textual variant in the Syriac which reads, “according to the word which the prophet said.”⁹

If 1 Maccabees was originally written in Hebrew without vowels *ktb* could be rendered either way.

katab = “he wrote;” *katûb* = “was written.”

7:17. The flesh of thy **saints** [**hasidim**] have they cast out, and their blood have they shed round about Jerusalem, and there was none to bury them.

“**Saints**.” The Hebrew word in Ps 79:2 is **hasidim** -- plural of *hasid*, literally, “saint, pious one, holy one.”

⁹ Text of the Leiden Peshitta and the Vulgate accessed through *BibleWorks* 10.

The author is referring this to the pious **Hasideans**.

Like the Essenes at Qumran, and the writers of the NT, this author sees scripture “fulfilled” in his own day. However, unlike the Essenes and the early Christians, he does not think he is living in “the end time.”

After the Slaughter

7:18-19. Wherefore the fear and dread of them fell upon all the people, who said, There is neither truth nor righteousness in them; for they have broken the covenant and oath that they made. ¹⁹ After this, removed Bacchides from Jerusalem, and pitched his tents in Beth-zaiton, where he sent and took many of the **men that had forsaken him**, and certain of the people also, and when he had slain them, he cast them into the great pit.

“**The Men who had forsaken him.**” These would be those who had supported Judas when he took Jerusalem. Because they supported Judas, now the king’s general executes them.

7:20. Then committed he the country to Alcimus, and left with him a power to aid him: so Bacchides went to the king.

Remember, the chief priest is the most powerful Jewish **political official**.

This would continue even to Roman times -- the times of the NT.

This goes back to Persian times.

The Rule of Alcimus, 7:21-25

7:21-22. But Alcimus contended for the high priesthood. ²² And unto him resorted all such as **troubled the people**, who, after they had gotten the land of Juda into their power, did much hurt in Israel.

The hymn to Judas Maccabeus (1 Macc 3:5) states that he **burned** “those who **troubled his people**.” These would be **Jews** who were siding with the pagans.

7:23. Now when Judas saw all the mischief that Alcimus and his company had done among the Israelites, even **above the heathen**,

Note: These people are not “heathen.” They are **Jews** who do not agree with the policies of Judas! Consider contemporary arguments about who is or is not a “real Catholic.”

7:24. He went out into all the coasts of Judea round about, and took vengeance of them that had **revolted from him**, so that they durst no more go forth into the country.

The ones who had “revolted” against Judas. **These poor people were “caught in the middle.”** They went over to the king’s side when he was in control. When Judas got back in power, he killed them! If the king’s men got back into power, they would kill any who has supported Judas!

7:25. On the other side, when Alcimus saw that Judas and his company had gotten the upper hand, and knew that he was not able to abide their force, he went again to the king, and said all the worst of them that he could.

Week 39, Lecture 128. War with Nicanor, 1 Macc, 7:26-50

The Treachery of Nicanor, 7:26-32

7:26. Then the king sent Nicanor, one of his honorable princes, a man that bare deadly hate unto Israel, with commandment to destroy the people.

Presumably he is not going to destroy the supporters of Alcimus, the Jews loyal to him.

For the author of 1 Maccabees, only those who are supporters of Judas are true members of “the people.”

7:27-32. So Nicanor came to Jerusalem with a great force; and sent unto Judas and his brethren deceitfully with friendly words, saying, ²⁸ Let there be no battle between me and you; I will come with a few men, that I may see you in peace. ²⁹ He came therefore to Judas, and they saluted one another peaceably. Howbeit the enemies were prepared to take away Judas by violence. ³⁰ Which thing after it was known to Judas, to wit, that he came unto him with deceit, he was sore afraid of him, and would see his face no more. ³¹ Nicanor also, when he

saw that his counsel was discovered, went out to fight against Judas beside **Capharsalama**:
³² Where there were slain of Nicanor's side about five thousand men, and the rest fled into the city of David.

Post-lecture note. NABRE note on **Capharsalama**.

Capharsalama: a village north of Jerusalem whose precise location is disputed.

The City of David, 49x in the OT. It *always* means Jerusalem! It is *never once* Bethlehem! The **only** place in the entire Bible where Bethlehem is called “city of David” is Luke 2:4 & 11. This is part of the familiar Christmas story. Most Christians don't have a clue how “strange” it sounds to Jewish ears. I call this “Lucan slight of hand.”

Nicanor Threatens the Temple, 7:33-38. His senseless violence alienates possible supporters.

³³ After this went Nicanor up to mount Sion, and there came out of the sanctuary certain of the priests and certain of the elders of the people, to salute him peaceably, and to shew him the burnt sacrifice that was offered for the king. [Jews had been praying for the king since Persian times.] ³⁴ But he mocked them, and laughed at them, and abused them shamefully, and spoke proudly, ³⁵ And swore in his wrath, saying, Unless Judas and his host be now delivered into my hands, if ever I come again in safety, I will burn up this house: and with that he went out in a great rage. ³⁶ Then the priests entered in, and stood before the altar and the temple, weeping, and saying, ³⁷ Thou, O Lord, didst choose this house to be called by thy name, and to be a house of prayer and petition for thy people: ³⁸ Be avenged of this man and his host, and let them fall by the sword: remember their blasphemies, and suffer them not to continue any longer.

Reminiscent of the story in 2 Kings 18 || Isaiah 36-37 where the Assyrian are besieging Jerusalem. “None of the other gods could save their cities. Why do you think the LORD can protect you?”

The Death of Nicanor, 7:39-50

7:39-46. So Nicanor went out of Jerusalem, and pitched his tents in Bethhoron, where an host out of Syria met him. ⁴⁰ But Judas pitched in Adasa with three thousand men, and there he prayed, saying, [explicit reference to the **Assyrians**, 500 years earlier] ⁴¹ O Lord, when they that were sent from the king of the **Assyrians** blasphemed, thine angel went out, and smote an hundred fourscore and five thousand of them. ⁴² Even so destroy this host before us this day, that the rest may know that he hath spoken blasphemously against thy sanctuary, and judge him according to his wickedness. ⁴³ So the thirteenth day of the month Adar [March or April] the hosts joined battle: but Nicanor's host was discomfited [= “crushed”], and he himself was first slain in the battle. ⁴⁴ Now when Nicanor's host saw that he was slain, **they cast away their weapons**, and fled. ⁴⁵ Then they [i.e., the Jews] pursued after them a day's journey, from Adasa unto Gazara, sounding an alarm after them with their trumpets. ⁴⁶ Whereupon they came forth out of all the towns of Judea round about, and closed them in; so that they, turning back upon them that pursued them, were all slain with the sword, and not one of them was left.

Are we surprised they were all slain? They had **thrown down their weapons!**

True **story about Bernard Häring**, great Catholic moral theologian.

He was chaplain to a military unit as the Nazi army invaded Russia. All the officers were killed.

The soldiers said, “Father, lead us back to Germany.”

He said, “I will, on one condition. You throw down your weapons, and I will lead you out unarmed.”

They did, and he did.

This story of the unarmed walking out of Russia came to me as I read about these unarmed men, slaughtered.

7:47-50, Aftermath of Victory. Afterwards they took the spoils, and the prey, and smote off Nicanor's head, and his right hand, which he stretched out so proudly, and brought them away, and hanged them up toward Jerusalem. [not **inside** Jerusalem -- the corpse would defile the city] ⁴⁸ For this cause the people rejoiced greatly, and they kept that day a day of great gladness. ⁴⁹ Moreover they ordained to keep yearly this day, being the **thirteenth of Adar**.

Feast of Purim is the 14th of Adar. We read about this in the book of **Esther**. [I said “Judith” by mistake.]

Perhaps the author of Maccabees is trying to make some connection between this victory and that festival? It celebrates the deliverance of Jews from those who were going to slaughter them.

⁵⁰ Thus the land of Juda was in rest a little while.

Line from the Book of Judges.

The judge defeats the enemies of Israel. As long as he lives, the “land has rest.”

However, after he dies, the people fall back into their sinful ways.

The cycle begins again. God raises up a judge. They return to the LORD under his leadership. Here in Maccabees, however, the “rest” is only for a short period. The enemies are alive and powerful!

Week 39, Lecture 129. 1 Macc 8:1-16, An Idealized View of the Romans

Introduction. 2 Parts to chapter 8.

- 1) 8:1-16 An Idealized View of the Romans [[this lecture](#)]
- 2) 8:17-32 Dealings between Rome & Judea, including correspondence [[next lecture](#)]

8:1-7. Judas had heard of the fame of the Romans, that they were mighty and valiant men, and that they would willingly accept all who allied themselves to them, and make a treaty of friendship with all who came to them; and that they were men of great valor. ² It was also told him of their wars and noble acts which they had done among the Galatians, and how they had conquered them, and brought them under tribute; ³ and what they had done in the country of Spain to seize control of the mines of the silver and gold there; ⁴ and that by their policy and patience they had conquered the whole region, even though it was very far from them. He was also told about the kings that came against them from the ends of the earth, until they (the Romans) had crushed them, and inflicted a great disaster on them, and that the rest (of the kings) gave them tribute every year: ⁵ and that they had crushed in battle Philip and Perseus, king of the Macedonians (*Kiteis*), and others who rose up against them, and had overcome them: ⁶ and that **Antiochus the Great, king of Asia**, who came against them in battle, having a hundred and twenty elephants, with horsemen, and chariots, and a very great army, was crushed by them; ⁷ and how they took him alive, and decreed that he and such as reigned after him should pay a great tribute, and give hostages, [and a list (?*diastolē*?)], ¹⁰

Antiochus, the Great King of Asia. This would be Antiochus III.

I have gotten the relationship between Antiochus III and Antiochus IV balled up.

I decided to check the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* to get it straight. **No need to read the quote in class.**

Antiochus IV Epiphanes (“manifest” [*as a god*]) (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. His unpredictable character—at one time generous to a fault, at another fiercely tyrannical—is described by Polybius, who gave him the nickname Epimanes (“utterly mad”) . . . It was his instability, verging upon insanity, which was to lead to the excessively harsh treatment meted out to the Jews by this otherwise energetic and capable ruler.¹¹

Antiochus III was succeeded by Seleucus IV, the **older brother** of Antiochus.

Seleucus IV sent his own son Demetrius, as hostage to replace Antiochus, his brother.

Demetrius, the nephew of Antiochus IV was the rightful heir.

One his way home, Antiochus heard that his brother, Seleucus IV, had died.

The “right thing to do” would be to return to Rome so that Demetrius, his nephew, could rule. Instead, Antiochus hastened home, managed to seize the throne, and thus become Antiochus IV.

¹⁰ The English is based on Brenton’s 19th century version, accessed via *BibleWorks*. At times I modify it considerably to make it more literal. I have also Americanized (honour > honor) and updated (followeth > follows) the spelling.

¹¹ John Whitehorne, “Antiochus (Person),” *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (Doubleday, 1992), Vol. 1, p. 270.

Antiochus III	
Seleucus IV (older son of Antiochus III)	Antiochus IV (younger son of Antiochus III) usurped kingdom from his nephew Demetrius
	Antiochus V (boy king), son of Antiochus IV slain by his cousin Demetrius
Demetrius (son of Seleucus IV) deprived of throne by his uncle Antiochus IV gains throne by slaying his cousin, Antiochus V	

8:8-10. And the country of India, and Media and Lydia -- from their best provinces -- they took from him, and gave to King Eumenes: ⁹ and how **those from Greece** had determined to come and destroy them; ¹⁰ but that they [the Romans], having learned of the [Greek] plan, sent against the Greeks a general, and fighting with them slew many of them, and carried away as captives their wives and their children, and despoiled them, and took possession of their lands, and pulled down their strong holds, and enslaved them to this day:

Verses 9-10. These verses refer to the conquest of Corinth by Rome in 146 B.C. ¹²

This was long after the death of Judas.

In this respect, some of the information supposedly reported to Judas is anachronistic.

8:11-16. It was told him besides, how they [the Romans] destroyed and brought under their dominion all other kingdoms and isles that at any time resisted them; but with their friends and such as relied upon them they maintained friendship: ¹² and they had conquered kingdoms both far and near, so that as all who heard of their reputation were afraid of them: ¹³ Also that those whom they wish to help and to make kings, they make kings; but those whom they wish, they depose; and that they were greatly exalted: ¹⁴ Despite all this none of them wore a crown or was clothed in purple as a sign of authority; [this is the time of the Roman Republic, before the Empire] ¹⁵ Moreover [it was told to Judas] how the Romans had made for themselves a senate house, wherein three hundred and twenty men sat in council daily, consulting always for the people, to govern them well: ¹⁶ And that they committed their government to **one man every year**, who ruled over all their country, and that all were obedient to that one, and that there was **neither envy nor jealousy** among them.

Verse 16. “**One Man.**” Actually there were **two** consuls in the Roman system.

This shows some lack of familiarity with the Roman system of government by our author.

Perhaps¹³ some of the naïveté of the passage might reflect lack of contact with flesh-and-blood Romans.

An Idealistic Description

Doran regards the description of the Romans as “utopian.”¹⁴ He comments on verses 10 and 16

The Romans are said to have been attacked by **aggressive kings** [i.e., the Greeks], a statement that does not adequately account for Roman ambition and expansion. . . .

The claim that there was **no envy or jealousy** among the Romans neglects the competition among leading families, the legislation passed in 181 BCE against bribery in elections, and the numerous prosecutions of leading figures.¹⁵

Week 39, Lecture 130. 1 Macc 8:17-32, Dealings with Rome

8:17-21. In consideration of these things, Judas chose **Eupolemus** the son of John, the son of Accos, and **Jason** the son of Eleazar, and sent them to Rome, to make a treaty of friendship and an alliance with them, ¹⁸ And to entreat them that they would take the yoke from them; for

¹² John Collins, *Daniel, 1-2 Maccabees*, Old Testament Message, vol. 15 (Michael Glazier, 1981) page 206.

¹³ Ibid. 206.

¹⁴ Robert Doran, “The First Book of Maccabees,” in *New Interpreter’s Bible*, vol. 4 (Abingdon, 1996) 102.

¹⁵ Ibid., 104-105.

they saw that the kingdom of the Greeks did oppress Israel with servitude. ¹⁹ They went therefore to Rome, which was a very great journey, and came into the senate, where they spoke and said. ²⁰ Judas Maccabeus with his brothers, and the people of the Jews, have sent us to you, to make a treaty and peace with you, and that we might be registered your allies and friends. ²¹ So that matter pleased the Romans well.

Eupolemus & Jason. The Jewish legates to Rome have Greek names.

They would have had to be fluent in the Greek language to serve as ambassadors.

Greek had become the “international language” west of Persia (Iran) after Alexander the Great. There was no “absolute rift” between the Maccabees & Hellenizing Jews who accepted some Greek culture.¹⁶ According to 2 Macc 2:23, that work is a condensation of a 5-volume work by **Jason** of Cyrene. It is possible, but by no means certain, that this is the same Jason who served as ambassador.

8:22-32, Message from the Roman Senate to the Jews.

8:22, Editor’s Introduction. And this is the copy of the epistle which the senate wrote back again in tables of brass, and sent to Jerusalem, that there they might have by them a memorial of peace and confederacy:

8:23-30, Roman-Jewish Relations. Good success be to the Romans, and to the people of the Jews, by sea and by land for ever: the sword also and enemy be far from them, ²⁴ If there come first any war upon the Romans or any of their allies throughout all their dominion, ²⁵ The people of the Jews shall help them, as the time shall be appointed, with all their heart: ²⁶ Neither shall they give any thing unto them that make war upon them, or aid them with food supplies, weapons, money, or ships, as it hath seemed good to the Romans; but they shall keep their treaties without taking any thing therefore. ²⁷ In the same manner also, if war come first upon the nation of the Jews, the Romans shall help them with all their heart, according as the time shall be appointed them: ²⁸ Neither shall food supplies be given to them that take part against them, or weapons, or money, or ships, as it has seemed good to the Romans; but they shall keep their treaties, and that without deceit. ²⁹ According to these articles did the Romans make a treaty with the people of the Jews. ³⁰ However if hereafter the one party or the other shall think suitable to add or diminish any thing, they may do it at their pleasures, and whatsoever they shall add or take away shall be ratified.

8:31-32, Demetrius has been warned. And as touching the evils that Demetrius is doing to the Jews, we have written to him, saying, Why have you made your yoke heavy upon our friends and allies the Jews? ³² If therefore they complain any more against you, we will do them justice, and fight with you by sea and by land.

Political Considerations -- Collins

From the Roman point of view, the Maccabees were worth encouraging as a nuisance to Demetrius. The Romans risked little in the treaty. Even if the concluding promise to defend the Jews was authentic (it is widely disputed), the Romans did not in fact act on it, and Demetrius never seems to have taken the threat seriously. A full century would elapse before the Romans intervened actively in the affairs of Judea.¹⁷

NT Background!

Attitude of 1 Maccabees to Gentiles

Collins contrasts 1 Maccabees with Daniel, who envisions the destruction of all the Gentiles.¹⁸

The immediate **enemies** of Israel were to be destroyed.

Other Gentiles could be useful, especially if they were far enough away.

A political goal of 1 Maccabees is to have Israel seen as one nation among the nations of the world.

Far Away.

The Romans were “far enough away” that the Jews thought they would never have to worry about them.

¹⁶ Collins, , *1-2 Maccabees*, 207.

¹⁷ Collins, *1-2 Maccabees*, 205-206.

¹⁸ Collins, , *1-2 Maccabees*, 207-208.

Analogy from Church History: the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals. [I gave this overview “off the cuff.”]

Their purpose was to defend local bishops against nearby archbishops and secular overlords.

They forged decrees -- purporting to go back to the early centuries -- enhancing papal power.

The forgery was successful. For many centuries these documents were regarded as genuine.

They greatly enhanced papal power.

The forgers figured that Rome was so far away -- plus the Alps were in the way! -- they would never have to worry about papal power getting too extensive!

You can get a little more detail from the [Wikipedia](#) article. Even better: a good book on Church History.

I was reminded by all of this by the thought that the Maccabees considered Rome to be **safely far away!**

Week 39, Lecture 131. 1 Macc 9:1-22, The Death of Judas Maccabee

Introduction. 1 Macc 9:1-22 tells of the final battle and death of Judas Maccabee.

The rest of the chapter, verses 23-73, tells of the beginning of the rule of his brother Jonathan.

This lecture will be concerned only with the first 22 verses.

We will then look at 2 Maccabees 10-16, the final chapters in 2 Maccabees.

These chapters cover the story of Judas after the purification of the Temple.

2 Maccabees does not tell the story of the Maccabees after the death of Judas.

After completing 2 Maccabees, we will return to 1 Maccabees for the stories of Jonathan and Simon.

9:1-6. When Demetrius heard that Nicanor and his host had fallen in battle, he sent Bacchides [pagan general] and Alcimus [Jewish high priest] into the land of Judea the second time, and with them the right wing of his army: ² They moved forward by the road to Gilgal, and encamped before Mesaloth, which is in Arbela, and after they had taken it, they killed many people. ³ And in first month of **the hundred fifty second year** they encamped before Jerusalem: ⁴ They set out from there, and went to Berea, with **20,000 infantry** and **2,000 cavalry**. ⁵ Now Judas had encamped at Elasa, and with him **3,000 chosen men**. ⁶ They saw the multitude of the other army -- that they were numerous-- and were greatly afraid; Many **deserted from the army**; there were left of them no more than **800 men**.

Verse 3. 152nd year (of the Greeks) = spring of 160 B.C.¹⁹

Collins sees a parallel to the scene in 1 Samuel 13, where Saul’s army was slipping away from him.²⁰

Judas is greatly outnumbered. **22,000 enemy** vs. **3,000**. His force shrinks to a mere **800**.

9:7-10. Judas saw that his army had deserted, and that the battle was imminent. His heart was broken because he had no time to regather them. He was discouraged, ⁸ but he said to those who remained, “Let us arise and go up against our enemies. Perhaps we may be able to do battle with them.” ⁹ But they tried to dissuade him, saying, “We shall never be able. So let’s save our lives now, and later we will return with our brothers and fight against them. We are only a few.” ¹⁰ Then Judas said, “God forbid [literally, may it not happen] that we should do this thing, and flee from them. If our time has come, **let’s die bravely** for our brothers and sisters, and **let’s not stain our honor**.”

Let us die bravely

Judas is not expecting divine help. He has no hope of resurrection. His goal is to **die with honor**.

¹⁹ NABRE note, which also states that this is by the “Temple Calendar.” Evidently the Temple calendar began the year in the Spring. I believe last week we had a passage where the civil calendar began in the Fall. Part of the dating problem in these books is knowing which calendar is being used.

²⁰ Collins, *1-2 Maccabees*, 209.

1 Maccabees does not raise the question of **after-life**, and certainly does not set any store by it. The after-life it treasures is the lasting good name. The **salvation** it seeks is not the personal salvation of the individual after death, but the communal salvation of family or people. . . . Death is inevitable. When his time has come, the main thing is to die bravely.²¹

Historical Note. This reflects traditional Israelite thought.

The only text in the Hebrew Bible that clearly teaches resurrection of individuals is Dan 12:1-3.

All NT texts that make claims otherwise are giving **new interpretations** to texts.

This includes statements attributed to Jesus.

Sirach (Jesus Ben Sira) who wrote in the 2nd century B.C. has no doctrine of any kind of afterlife.

The Book of Wisdom teaches the Greek idea of an immortal soul, but makes no mention of resurrection.

Later, post-biblical thought, will combine the Greek idea of immortal soul with the Jewish idea of resurrection.

9:11-13. The host of Bacchides marched out from their camp, and stood over against them. Their cavalry was divided into two troops. Their slingers and archers went ahead of their army. Those who marched in the lead were all mighty warriors. ¹² As for Bacchides, he was in the right wing. ¹³ The phalanx approached flanked by two units, and sounded their trumpets. Those with Judas' also sounded their trumpets, so that the earth shook at the noise of the armies, and the battle continued from morning till night.

Remarks on the Phalanx. This military formation was perfected by Alexander the Great.

With it, he was able to defeat forces that were vastly numerically superior to his own army.

9:14-18. When Judas perceived that Bacchides and the strength of his army were on the right side, he took with him all the brave-hearted men. ¹⁵ The right wing was crushed [by them? strange preposition --*apo* instead of *hupo*!], and they pursued them to Mount Azotus. ¹⁶ But when those in the left wing saw those in the right wing were crushed, they turned against Judas and those with him from behind: ¹⁷ The battle became intense, and many wounded fell on both sides. ¹⁸ Judas also fell, and the rest fled.

9:19-22. Then Jonathan and Simon took Judas their brother, and buried him in the tomb of his ancestors in Modein. ²⁰ They bewailed him, and all Israel made great lamentation for him, and mourned many days. They said: ²¹ **“How is the valiant one fallen, the savior of Israel!** ²² **Now the rest of the acts of Judas** and his wars, and the noble acts which he did, and his greatness, they are not written: for they were very many.

The Lament. V. 21 echoes David's lament for Jonathan and Saul, “How the mighty are fallen” (2 Sam 1:25).

Savior of Israel. This echoes the description of various judges.

Today we use “savior” only in a religious context.

In the ancient world, if you needed a “savior,” you usually needed either a **general** or a **doctor**.

And “**salvation**” would usually mean either “**victory**” or “**healing**.”

Formulaic Conclusion

V. 22 “Now the rest of the acts of Judas” echoes a phrase found in the books of kings.

Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon? (RSV)

The phrase to “the rest of the acts of X” occurs 41 times in the OT.²²

Notes to self. [Change page orientation here.](#)

[Post the Synopsis as a separate document.](#)

²¹ Collins, *1-2 Maccabees*, 210.

²² RSV translation: 1 & 2 Kings, 31 times; 2 Chronicles, 9 times; this reference in 1 Maccabees. Searching the Greek: *kai ta loipa ton logon* (and the rest of the words [of] x) results in 32 hits in 1 & 2 Kings; 2 in 2 Chronicles, and 1 Macc 16:23. The phrase in this verse uses the synonym *perissa* instead of *loipa* for “rest” so it is not an exact repetition of the common phrase.

Appendix: Synopsis of 1 & 2 Maccabees

This synopsis is based on McEleney's article "1-2 Maccabees" *JBC*. 461-486.²³

Black type indicates the information comes from 1 Maccabees, [Blue type from the outline for 2 Maccabees](#).

Event	Reference	Reference
Preliminary Materials		
I. Preamble		
A. Alexander and the Diadochoi ²⁴		
12-year reign of Alexander the Great (336-323 B.C.)		
High Priest Onias I writes letters to Rome & Sparta (ca. 300 B.C.) ²⁵		
Ptolemies, Rulers of Egypt, also rule Judea (ca. 310 B.C.)		
Seleucids replace Ptolemies as rulers of Judea (198 B.C.)		
Onias III begins to rule as High Priest (196 B.C.) ²⁶		
[Romans impose Tribute on Antiochus III (188 B.C.) ²⁷]		
Antiochus IV seizes power (175 B.C.)	1 Macc 1:10	
II. The Epitomist's Preface		2 Macc 2:19-32
III. The Decline of the High Priesthood ²⁸		2 Macc 3:1-4:6
A. Episode of Heliodorus		2 Macc 3:1-40
B. Simon's Plot against Onias		2 Macc 4:1-6
B. Hellenizers	1 Macc 1:11-15	
C. Jason, the High Priest, Introduces Hellenism		2 Macc 4:7-20
Jason becomes High Priest (175 B.C.) ²⁹		4:10
D. Antiochus is Received by Jason in Jerusalem		2 Macc 4:21-22
E. Menelaus as High Priest (172 B.C.) ³⁰		2 Macc 4:23-50
C. Antiochus' First Campaign in Egypt (169 B.C.) ³¹	1 Macc 1:16-19	
D. Antiochus Despoils the Temple	1 Macc 1:20-24a	

²³ This article is substantially reproduced in the *NJBC*, pages 421-446. **Updated with Dates from the notes to the NABRE**

²⁴ *Diadochoi* is the Greek word for the "successors" to Alexander the Great. Sometimes called *Diodochoi*, the Latin form of the Greek.

²⁵ NABRE note to 1 Macc 12:7; McEleney, "1-2 Maccabees," *NJBC* 422.

²⁶ **NABRE note to 2 Macc 3:1.**

²⁷ Tribute is the motive for the need for cash by Antiochus IV, see NABRE note to 2 Macc 8:10. See also NABRE note to 1 Macc 8:6.

²⁸ **NABRE Note to 2 Macc 3:3. Seleucus IV, Philopator, reigned from 187 - 175. B.C.** Antiochus IV followed him.

²⁹ **NABRE Note to 2 Macc 3:1 states that the rule the High Priest Onias ended in 175.B.C.**

³⁰ NABRE Note to 2 Macc 4:23. Menelaus begins his reign as High Priest in 172 B.C.

³¹ Date from NABRE note to 2 Macc 5:1.

IV. B. Antiochus Despoils the Temple		2 Macc 5:15-23³²
E. Dirge	1 Macc 1:24b-28	
IV. A. Antiochus Punishes Jerusalem (167 B.C.)³³		2 Macc 5:1-14
F. Apollonius Attacks Jerusalem (167 B.C.)	1 Macc 1:29-35	
C. Apollonius Attacks Jerusalem		2 Macc 5:23b-26
IV. D. Judas Maccabeus in the Desert		2 Macc 5:27
G. Dirge	1 Macc 1:36-40	
H. Antiochus Proscribes Judaism & Imposes Pagan Practices	1 Macc 1:41-51a	
I. The Execution of Antiochus' Edict (December 6, 167 B.C.)³⁴	1 Macc 1:51b-64 1:54	
E. Antiochus Imposes Hellenism		2 Macc 6:1-11
F. The Epitomist's Evaluation		2 Macc 6:12-17
G. The Martyrdom of Eleazar		2 Macc 6:18-31
H. The Martyrdom of the Mother and Her Seven Sons		2 Macc 7:1-42
II. Mattathias Begins Active Resistance	1 Macc 2:1-70	
A. Mattathias' Lament	1 Macc 2:1-14	
B. Resistance Flares	1 Macc 2:15-28	
C. The Slaughter on the Sabbath and Its Sequel	1 Macc 2:29-41	
D. The Hasideans	1 Macc 2: 42-48	
E. Mattathias' Testament (166 B.C.)³⁵	1 Macc 2:49-70	
III. Judas Maccabeus Takes Command of the Struggle	1 Macc 3:1-9:22	
A. Praise of Judas	1 Macc 3:1-9	
B. Judas Defeats Apollonius and Seron	1 Macc 3:10-26	no parallel
C. Antiochus Goes East (Spring, 165 B.C.)³⁶	1 Macc 3:27-37	
D. Judas Defeats Gorgias and Nicanor	1 Macc 3:38-4:27	
E. Judas Defeats Lysias at Beth-zur ³⁷	1 Macc 4:28-35	
V. A. Judas Organizes Resistance to the Persecution		2 Macc 8:1-7
B. Judas Defeats Gorgias and Nicanor		2 Macc 8:8-29, 34-36 [30-33, next]

³² "Although 2 Mc 5:15-21 places this event after the **second** campaign in Egypt, Dan 11:2-30 (esp. 28) shows it to belong after the **first**." McEleney, "1-2 Maccabees," *JBC*, 466.

³³ NABRE note to 2 Macc 5:1.

³⁴ NABRE note to 1 Macc 1:54.

³⁵ NABRE note to 1 Macc 2:70.

³⁶ NABRE note to 1 Macc 3:37.

³⁷ 1 Maccabees places this battle **before** the dedication of the Temple. 2 Maccabees places it **after** the dedication of the Temple.

C. Judas' Other Victories [Commentators argue these verses are out of order]³⁸

2 Macc 8:30-33?

The Death of Antiochus³⁹

III. H. The Death of Antiochus Epiphanes	1 Macc 6:1-17 ⁴⁰	
V. D. The Death of the Persecutor		2 Macc 9:1-29

Purification & Dedication of the Temple (Hanukkah)

III. F. The Purification & Dedication of the Temple (Dec 14, 164 B.C.)	1 Macc 4:36-61 ⁴¹	
V. E. Judas Purifies the Temple		2 Macc 10:1-9
I. B. "Second" ⁴² of Two Letters to the Jews of Egypt (164 B.C.)		2 Macc 1:10b-2:18

From the Dedication of the Temple to the Death of Judas (1 Macc 5:1-9:22; 2 Macc 10:10-15:39)

III. G. Judas Battles with Neighboring Peoples	1 Macc 5:1-68	
a. Idumea	1 Macc 5:3-5	
b. Ammon	1 Macc 5:6-8	
c. Gilead	1 Macc 5:9-13, 24-54	
d. Galilee	1 Macc 5:14-23	
e. The Land of the Philistines	1 Macc 5:55-68	
[H. The Death of Antiochus Epiphanes	1 Macc 6:1-17 ⁴³	Already done – see previous page].
I. Siege of the Citadel (Oct. 163 – 162 B.C.) ⁴⁴	1 Macc 6:18-27 ⁴⁵	
J. Lysias' Second Campaign in Judah	1 Macc 6:28-63	
K. The Expedition of Bacchides and Alcimus (Spring, 161 B.C.) ⁴⁶	1 Macc 7:1-25	
L. The Defeat of Nicanor (March 27, 160 B.C.) ⁴⁷	1 Macc 7:26-50	

³⁸ McEleney, *JBC, NJBC, #27:74*. Doran ("2 Maccabees," *NIB*, 4.249-250) also argues that they are out of order, even though they have been literarily integrated into the context.

³⁹ 1 Maccabees places this **after** the dedication of the Temple; 2 Maccabees places it **before** the dedication of the Temple. McEleney (*JBC*, 27:38) argues that the order of 2 Maccabees is better.

⁴⁰ Belongs **before** the Purification and Dedication of the Temple (III. F.) according to McEleney.

⁴¹ Although 1 Mc narrates the Temple's dedication following the early victories of Judas, the death of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (6:1-16 and the accession of Antiochus V Eupator (6:17) preceded this event. 2 Mc retains the right sequence. McEleney, "1-2 Maccabees," *JBC*, 469. See also notes to 1 Macc 4:52 and 6:16.

⁴² Two letters appear in the Preface of 2 Maccabees (1:1-2:18). This one, the "second" in the text, was actually written 40 years **before** the "first" one (1:1-9).

⁴³ Belongs **before** the Purification and Dedication of the Temple (III. F.) according to McEleney.

⁴⁴ NABRE note to 6:20.

⁴⁵ Picking up chapter 6. We did 6:1-17, the death of Antiochus, **before** the Purification of the Temple, where most scholars put it chronologically.

⁴⁶ NABRE note to 1 Macc 7:1-3.

M. Judas' Treaty with the Romans	1 Macc 8:1-32
N. The Defeat and Death of Judas	1 Macc 9:1-22
Demetrius encamps against Jerusalem (April/May 160 B.C.)	9:3 ⁴⁸
VI. A. Suicide of Ptolemy Macron	2 Macc 10:10-13 ⁴⁹
B. Judas Fights in Idumea	2 Macc 10:14-23
C. "Judas" Defeats Timothy	2 Macc 10:34-38 ⁵⁰
D. Victory over Lysias at Beth-zur – the “1st campaign” of Lysias ⁵¹	2 Macc 11:1-15; 12:1
E. Three Letters (164 B.C.)	2 Macc 11:16-21,27-38 [22-26 below] ⁵²
F. The Battles with Neighboring Peoples	2 Macc 12:2-45
G. Lysias' Second Campaign in Judah (163 B.C.)	2 Macc 13:1-26
Death of High Priest Menelaus (162 B.C.)	13:7
E. Letter	2 Macc 11:22-26 ⁵³
H. The Accession of Demetrius I Soter (161-B.C.) ⁵⁴	2 Macc 14:1-2
I. The Hostility of Alcimus ⁵⁵	2 Macc 14:3-11
J. Judas and Nicanor	2 Macc 14:12-36
K. The Death of Razis (no parallel in 1 Maccabees)	2 Macc 14:37-46
L. The Defeat of Nicanor	2 Macc 15:1-37a
M. Epilogue of the Epitomist	2 Macc 15:37-39
IV. Jonathan Continues the Struggle	1 Macc 9:23-12:54
A. Jonathan Succeeds Judas as Leader	1 Macc 9:23-34
B. Jonathan Avenges His Brother John	1 Macc 9:35-42
C. Bacchides Ambushes Jonathan	1 Macc 9: 43-49
D. Bacchides Fortifies Judea; Alcimus Dies	1 Macc 9:50-57
Alcimus orders Temple destruction (May 159 B.C.) ⁵⁶	9:54

⁴⁷ NABRE note to 1 Macc 7:49.

⁴⁸ NABRE note to 1 Macc 9:3.

⁴⁹ Picking up 2 Maccabees 10. These verses follow immediately 10:1-9, 2 Maccabees' version of the Purification of the Temple.

⁵⁰ McEleney, (484) argues that this victory belongs to Simon, and is misplaced. The name "Judas" does not appear in the passage.

⁵¹ 1 Maccabees places this battle **before** the dedication of the Temple. 2 Maccabees places it **after** the dedication of the Temple.

⁵² According to McEleney ("1-2 Maccabees," 484), "The three letters in vv. 16,21, 27-33, and 34-38 belong to the peace negotiations following Lysias' campaign. The letter in vv. 22-26 belongs to Eupator's reign). That would put 2 Macc 11:22-26 chronologically after 13:1-26.

⁵³ "The Letter of 2 Mc 11:22-26 belongs here chronologically." McEleney, "1-2Maccabees," 485.

⁵⁴ According to McEleney (446), he ruled from 161-160 B.C.

⁵⁵ "2 Mc omits Bacchides' expedition." Ibid.

E. Jonathan Escapes and Frustrates Bacchides Jonathan at Michmash (157-152 B.C.) ⁵⁷	1 Macc 9:58-73 9:73	
F. Alexander Balas Claims Demetrius' Throne (152 B.C.) ⁵⁸	1 Macc 10:1-14	
G. Jonathan Backs Alexander Balas, Becomes High Priest (Oct. 152 B.C.) ⁵⁹	1 Macc 10:15-50	
H. At Alexander's Marriage, Jonathan is Promoted (151-150 B.C.) ⁶⁰	1 Macc 10:51-66	
I. Jonathan Defeats Apollonius, the General of Demetrius II (147 B.C.) ⁶¹ Rome crushes revolt of Achaean League (146 B.C.) ⁶²	1 Macc 10:67-89	
J. The Alliance Between Demetrius II and Ptolemy	1 Macc 11:1-13	
K. The Deaths of Alexander and Ptolemy (145 B.C.) ⁶³	1 Macc 11:14-19	
L. Jonathan's Pact with Demetrius	1 Macc 11:20-37	
M. Trypho's Intrigue against Demetrius	1 Macc 11:38-40	
N. Jonathan Aids Demetrius	1 Macc 11:41-53	
O. Jonathan's Alliance with Trypho	1 Macc 11:54-62	
P. War Between Jonathan and Demetrius	1 Macc 11:63-74	
Q. Treaties of Friendship with the Romans and Spartans	1 Macc 12:1-23	
R. Military Activities of Jonathan and Simon	1 Macc 12:24-38	
S. The Capture of Jonathan	1 Macc 12:39-54	
V. Simon as Leader of the Jews	1 Macc 13:1-16:24	
A. Simon Becomes Leader of the Jews	1 Macc 13:1-11	
B. Simon Blocks Trypho	1 Macc 13:12-24	
VI. C. "Judas" Defeats Timothy		2 Macc 10:34-38 ⁶⁴
C. Simon Constructs a Family Monument at Modein	1 Macc 13:25-30	
D. Simon Joins Demetrius II 170 th year = March 142 – April 141 B.C. ⁶⁵	1 Macc 13:31-42 13:41	
E. The Capture of Gazara and the Citadel (June 3, 141 B.C.) ⁶⁶	1 Macc 13:43-53	

⁵⁶ NABRE note to 1 Macc 9:54.

⁵⁷ NABRE note to 1 Macc 9:73.

⁵⁸ NABRE note to 1 Macc 10:1.

⁵⁹ NABRE note to 1 Macc 10:21.

⁶⁰ NABRE Note to 1 Macc 10:57.

⁶¹ NABRE Note to 1 Macc 10:67.

⁶² Referred to the "Eulogy of the Romans" in 1 Maccabees 8. See NABRE note to 1 Macc 8:9-10.

⁶³ NABRE Note to 1 Macc 11:67.

⁶⁴ McEleney, (484) argues that this victory belongs to Simon, and is misplaced. The name "Judas" does not appear in the passage.

⁶⁵ NABRE note to 1 Macc 13:41.

F. Demetrius II Is Captured by the Parthians (141/140 B.C.) ⁶⁷	1 Macc 14:1-3
G. The Glory of Simon	1 Macc 14:4-15
H. Renewal of the Alliances with Rome and Sparta (142 B.C.) ⁶⁸	1 Macc 14:16-24
Simon expels Seleucid Troops from Jerusalem Citadel (141 B.C.) ⁶⁹	
I. Decree of the Jews Honoring Simon (Sept. 13, 140 B.C.) ⁷⁰	1 Macc 14:25-49
J. Antiochus VII Grants Simon Privileges & Besieges Trypho (138 B.C.) ⁷¹	1 Macc 15:1-14
K. The Return of the Embassy Sent to Rome	1 Macc 15:15-24
L. Antiochus Breaks His Alliance with Simon	1 Macc 15:25-36
M. John Hyrcanus and Judas defeat Cendebaeus	1 Macc 15:37-16:10
N. The Murder of Simon and His Two Sons (Jan-Feb 134 B.C.) ⁷²	1 Macc 16:11-22
O. Conclusion to 1 Maccabees	1 Macc 16:23-24
John Hyrcanus, Ruler & High Priest (134-104 B.C.) ⁷³	16:23-24

Later Events

I. A. "First" Letter to the Jews of Egypt (124 B.C.)

2 Macc 1:1-10a

⁶⁶ NABRE note to 1 Macc 13:51.

⁶⁷ NABRE note to 1 Macc 14:1.

⁶⁸ NABRE note to 1 Macc 14:16.

⁶⁹ Antiochus IV had installed the garrison; it was not until 141 B.C. that Simon expelled it (NABRE Note to 1 Macc 1:33).

⁷⁰ NABRE note to 1 Macc 14:27.

⁷¹ NABRE note to 1 Macc 15:10.

⁷² NABRE note to 1 Macc 16:14.

⁷³ NABRE note to 1 Macc 16:23-24.