

## Week 40, Lecture 132.<sup>1</sup> 2 Maccabees, 10:9-38.

**Context.** For the first part of the course we went back and forth between 1 and 2 Maccabees. We covered the events that led to Seleucid control of Israel after the death of Alexander the Great. We followed the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus IV in both books. We read both accounts of the death of Antiochus, and the purification and rededication of the Temple.

Then we went over most of 1 Maccabees 5, 6, 7, & 8, **the battles of Judas after the rededication of the Temple**. Then we read the first part of 1 Maccabees 9 up to the death and burial of Judas, 1 Macc 9:18-22. We now go back to 2 Maccabees and pick up the story there **after the rededication of the Temple, 2 Macc 10:1-9**. The rest of 2 Maccabees 10:10-15:39, the final 6 chapters, are dedicated to this last part of the career of Judas.

### 2 Maccabees 10:9-38 (Divisions from Doran)<sup>2</sup>

1. Dynastic Changes 10:9-13
2. Campaigns in Idumea 10:14-23
3. The Defeat of Timothy 10:24-38

**10:9-13 Dynastic Changes.** Antiochus IV, Epiphanes is dead. His son, Antiochus V, Eupator, is now king. A local ruler named Ptolemy, favorable to the Jews, becomes discouraged and commits suicide.

**No need to read the text aloud in class.**

And this was the end of Antiochus, called Epiphanes.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Now will we narrate the acts of Antiochus Eupator, who was the son of this wicked man, summarizing briefly the calamities of the wars. <sup>11</sup> Now when he had obtained to the crown, **he placed a certain Lysias in charge** of the affairs of his realm, and appointed him his chief governor of Coelesyria and Phoenicia. <sup>12</sup> Ptolemy, who was called Macron, choosing rather to do justice to the Jews because of the wrong that had been done to them, endeavored to continue peace with them. <sup>13</sup> As a result, being accused by the king's friends before Eupator, and called traitor at every word because he had abandoned Cyprus, which had been entrusted to him by Philometor, and gone over to Antiochus Epiphanes, and seeing that he was not in an honorable position, he was so discouraged that he poisoned himself and died.

### V. 11. He [i.e., Antiochus V] placed Lysias in charge . . .

Antiochus V, Eupator, was only 9 years old at this point. Lysias was his guardian. Lysias was calling the shots!

### 10:14-23, Campaigns in Idumea [you might hear a baby cooing in the background]<sup>4</sup>

But when Gorgias became governor of the region, he hired mercenaries, and continually stirred up war with the Jews. <sup>15</sup> At the same time the Idumeans, having gotten into their hands the most advantageous strongholds, kept **harassing the Jews**. Welcoming **those banished from Jerusalem**, they kept trying to stir up war. <sup>16</sup> Then those who were with Maccabeus, after they **had made public intercession, and prayed to God** to be their ally, rushed against the strongholds of the Idumeans. <sup>17</sup> Attacking vigorously, they took the strongholds, pushed back all who fought upon the wall, and slew all who fell into their hands. They killed no fewer than twenty thousand.

### V. 15, Harassing “the Jews.”

“The Jews” does not mean all of the Jewish people. It means those who agree with the Maccabees.

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<sup>1</sup> Lectures numbered consecutively. This is this week's 1st lecture, but its number reflects its place in the **total** sequence.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Doran, “The Second Book of Maccabees,” *New Interpreter's Bible* (Abingdon, 1996), Vol. 4, pp.259-264

<sup>3</sup> The English is based on Brenton's 19<sup>th</sup> century version, accessed via *BibleWorks*. At times I modify it to make it more literal. I have also Americanized (honour > honor) and updated (followeth > follows) the spelling.

<sup>4</sup> The secretary, who operates the camera, brought her baby to work today. The class had been asking to see him. He's only a few months old, but he was having such a “good day,” that I said he could stay in class as long as he did not “pitch a fit.”

In the NT John will use “the Jews” as a negative generalization for those who reject Jesus  
This author uses “the Jews” as a positive generalization for those who accept the Maccabees

Those who reject them are not really “Jews” as far as this author is concerned.

Similarly, “Those banished from Jerusalem” would be **Jewish people who did not agree with the Maccabees.**

**Intercession and Prayer.** The author is at pains to highlight the piety of Judas and his followers.  
He gives less importance to military strategy, and more importance to the help of God.

**10:18-23.** When no fewer than 9,000 had fled together into two very strong towers, well-equipped to sustain a siege, <sup>19</sup> Maccabeus left Simon [brother of Judas] and **Joseph**, and also **Zacchaeus** and those who were with him -- a sufficient number to besiege them -- and departed himself to places more in need of help. <sup>20</sup> Now those who were with Simon, being greedy, were persuaded by money offered by some of those who were in the tower. They took 70,000 drachmas, and let some of them escape. <sup>21</sup> But when it was told Maccabeus what had been done, he called the commanders of the people together, and accused those who had sold their brothers for money, and set their enemies free. <sup>22</sup> He slew those who had become traitors, and immediately took the two towers. <sup>23</sup> And having success with arms in all he undertook, he slew in the two strongholds more than 20,000.

**V. 19, Joseph & Zacchaeus.** Collins sees here a variant version of the story of Joseph & Azariah in 1 Macc 5:56-60. There it was desire for military glory that led the two commanders to make an unauthorized attack. Here they are motivated by greed for ransom.

**The Response of Judas.** He executes those who accepted a ransom payment for “selling out” their brothers. Is the “take no prisoners” attitude of Judas a morally superior position? That is the assessment of our author.

**10:24-38, The Defeat of Timothy.** The author describes the huge army of Timothy.

The pagans rely on rage for success; the Jews rely on prayer and the help of God. **No need to read paragraph aloud.**

**10:24-28.** Now Timothy, whom the Jews had previously defeated, when he had gathered a great multitude of foreign forces, and more than a few cavalry out of Asia, came as though he would take Judea by force of arms. <sup>25</sup> But when he drew near, those with Maccabeus turned in prayer to God, and sprinkled earth upon their heads, and girded their loins with sackcloth. <sup>6</sup> They fell down at the foot of the altar, and besought him to be merciful to them, and to be an enemy to their enemies, and an adversary to their adversaries, as the law declares. <sup>27</sup> So after the prayer they took their weapons, and went a considerable distance from the city: and when they drew near to their enemies, they halted. <sup>28</sup> Right after sunrise, they joined in battle; the one side having both their valor and their refuge in the Lord as a pledge of their success and victory: the other side making rage their leader in battle.

**10:29-31.** But when the battle became fierce, there appeared to the enemies from heaven **five magnificent men** upon horses, with bridles of gold, and two of them led the Jews. <sup>30</sup> They took Maccabeus between them, and shielding him on every side with their own armor, they kept him safe. They shot arrows and thunderbolts against the enemies, who, being filled with confusion and blindness, were cut down. <sup>31</sup> Twenty thousand five hundred infantry were slain, and six hundred cavalry.

**Angelic Intervention.** There is nothing like this in any of the battles recorded in 1 Maccabees.

This is reminiscent of some scenes in the Iliad, where gods come down to the battlefield to protect their favorites.

**10:32-38.** As for Timothy himself, he fled into a well-fortified stronghold, called **Gazara**, where Chaereas was in command. <sup>33</sup> But those with Maccabeus laid siege against the fortress courageously for four days. <sup>34</sup> Those inside, relying on the strength of the place, blasphemed excessively, and uttered wicked words. <sup>35</sup> However, early on the fifth day twenty young men of Maccabeus' company, inflamed with anger because of the blasphemies, assaulted the wall valiantly, and with fierce courage killed all whom they encountered. <sup>36</sup> Others likewise ascending after them, while they were busy with those that were inside, burnt the towers, and kindling fires burnt the blasphemers alive; and others broke open the gates, and, having allowed the rest of the army inside, took the city. <sup>37</sup> They killed Timothy, who had hidden in a certain pit, along with Chaereas his brother, with Apollophanes. <sup>38</sup> When

this was done, they praised the Lord with psalms and thanksgiving, who had done such great things for Israel, and given them the victory.

### **The Death of Timothy.** Comment from Collins

The battles involving Timothy are highly confused, especially since Timothy appears still active in 2 Macc 12:10-25, although his death is reported in 10:27.<sup>5</sup>

### **The Capture of Gazara**

1 Macc 13:43 will attribute the capture of Gazara to **Simon** Maccabee after the death of Judas. Collins remarks: The difference may be due to a tendency in 2 Maccabees to maximize the glory of Judas.<sup>6</sup>

This tendency to give a victory of a lesser known soldier to a more famous soldier is found in the story of David. For example, who killed Goliath of Gath, whose spear was like a weaver's beam?

2 Sam 21:19 || 1 Chr 11:23 gives the victory to Elhanan

1 Samuel 17 gives the victory to David.

## **Week 40, Lecture 133.2 Maccabees 11**

### **2 Maccabees 11 (Divisions from Doran)<sup>7</sup>**

1. The Campaign of Lysias 11:1-12
2. 11:13-38, Peace Negotiations: These contain a series of letters  
16-21, Summary of Letters of General Lysias to the Jews  
22-26, Letter of the Boy-King Antiochus V to Lysias  
27-33, Letter of King Antiochus to the Jewish People  
34-38, Letter of the Romans to the Jews

**11:1-12, The Campaign of Lysias.** 2 Maccabees places this *after* the cleansing of the Temple.

The NABRE note states that the defeat of Lysias at Beth-zur probably occurred *before* the purification of the Temple. This would agree with the chronology of 1 Macc 4:26-35.

The author, for the first time, notes that Lysias is the guardian of the (boy) king.

He is also called his "kinsman," which is a courtly term of honor; it does not mean they were related.

The size of his army -- infantry, cavalry, elephants -- is immense.

**No need to read this paragraph in class.**

**11:1-5.** Not long after this, **Lysias the king's guardian and kinsman**, who also managed affairs, was greatly displeased at what had happened.<sup>2</sup> When he had gathered about eighty thousand men with all the cavalry, he came against the Jews, intending to make the city a Greek settlement,<sup>3</sup> and to levy tribute on the temple, as on the sacred places of the other nations, and to put the high priesthood up for sale every year:<sup>4</sup> Not at all considering the power of God but puffed up with his ten thousands of infantry, and his thousands of cavalry, and his eighty elephants.<sup>5</sup> So he came to Judea, and drew near to Beth-zur, which was a strong town, only about a half a mile [5 stadia] from Jerusalem, and he attacked it.

The people pray for **angelic help**. This is reminiscent of the Exodus, where the "angel of the Lord goes before Israel. In Exod 23:23 the LORD promises Moses, "my angel will go before you" to destroy those who resist Israel.

**No need to read this paragraph in class.**

**11:6-7.** Now when they that were with Maccabeus heard that he besieged the strongholds, they and all the people with lamentation and tears besought the Lord that he would **send a good angel** to

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<sup>5</sup> John Collins, *Daniel, 1-2 Maccabees*, Old Testament Message, vol. 15 (Michael Glazier, 1981) pp. 328-329.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 329.

<sup>7</sup> Doran, "Second Maccabees," *NIB*, Vol. 4, pp.264-270

deliver Israel. <sup>7</sup> Then Maccabeus himself first of all took weapons, exhorting the other that they would endanger themselves together with him to help their brothers: so they eagerly went forth.

**11:8-12.** And as they were at Jerusalem, there appeared before them on horseback one in white clothing, shaking his armor of gold. <sup>9</sup> Then they praised the merciful God all together, and took heart, insomuch that they were ready not only to fight with men, but with most cruel beasts, and to pierce through walls of iron. <sup>10</sup> Thus they marched forward in their amour, having an helper from heaven: for the Lord was merciful to them <sup>11</sup> And giving a charge upon their enemies like lions, they slew eleven thousand infantry, and sixteen hundred cavalry, and put all the other to flight. <sup>12</sup> Many of them also being wounded escaped naked; and Lysias himself fled away shamefully, and so escaped.

**God's Angel Appears.** Their prayers are answered!

The portrayals of battle in 1 Maccabees are more "realistic." There are no heavenly visions.

Such visions, however, were not just a biblical literary form. Hellenistic historiographers used them as well.

The most famous is probably the story of Constantine's vision of a cross with the promise: *In hoc signo vincis*.

**11:13-38, Peace Negotiations.** Lysias enters into peace negotiations.

**11:13-15.** Lysias was not stupid. He reflected on his loss, and realized that the Hebrews could not be defeated, because the Almighty God fought for them.

He proposes reasonable terms. **No need to read the rest of this paragraph in class.**

So he sent a messageto them, <sup>14</sup> and persuaded them to agree to all reasonable conditions, and promised that he would persuade the king that he must needs be a friend to them. <sup>15</sup> Then Maccabeus consented to all that Lysias desired, being careful of the common good; and whatsoever Maccabeus wrote to Lysias concerning the Jews, the king granted it.

But **Lysias is not done!** He will return in chapter 13. Collins notes that the peace was short-lived.

When Maccabeus seized the Temple this was probably regarded as a violation of the terms of peace.

The author of 2 Maccabees, placing this **after** the cleansing of the Temple, rather than **before** it, avoids this problem.

**Remarks from Collins.**

2 Maccabees can project a belief in the invincibility of the Jews because it never acknowledges their defeats--the one at Beth-Zechariah (1 Mac 6:32-47) or the more embarrassing one at the hands of Bacchides in which Judas was killed (1 Mac 9:1-122). This refusal to face up to the fact that even the pious Judas was defeated is surely a significant deficiency in 2 Maccabees. Evidently the author was concerned with **effect** rather than with **objective truth**.<sup>8</sup>

Without visions and dreams there is no hope. [*the baby of the camera operator starts cooing!*]

Still one has to wonder about political and religious statements made "for effect" which ignore "objective truth."

**Four Letters.** Here the narrator inserts 4 letters into his narrative, as part of his description of the peace negotiations.

There are historical problems with the dating of these letters.

By inserting them here, our author places them all during the reign of the boy-king Antiochus V.

Many scholars think some of them belong to the time of Antiochus IV, before the purification of the Temple.

But scholars disagree on the exact dating.

It was when I realized this, I gave up on the project of a **detailed** chronological comparison of 1 & 2 Maccabees.

**1. Letters from Lysias to the Jews.**

**11:16-21.** Letters were written to the Jews from Lysias to this effect:

Lysias to the **multitude** of the Jews, greetings <sup>17</sup> John and Absalom [Jewish names], who were sent from you, delivered me the petition subscribed, and made request for the performance of the contents thereof. <sup>18</sup> Therefore whatever things were appropriate to be reported to the king, I have declared

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<sup>8</sup> Collins, *1-2 Maccabees*, 332.

them, and he has granted what is appropriate. <sup>19</sup> And if then you will keep yourselves loyal to the state, hereafter also will I endeavor to be a means of your good. <sup>20</sup> But of the details I have given order both to these [i.e., your ambassadors] and the other that came from me, to communicate with you. <sup>21</sup> Farewell. The **hundred forty-eighth year**, the twenty-fourth day of the month **Dioscorinthius**.

### Addressed to the “Multitude” of the Jews.

Multitude is not an official government designation. It does not recognize any particular “local authority” in Judea.

**The hundred forty-eighth year = 164 B.C.** Letter # 3 also dates from this year.

This was the year of the death of Antiochus IV.

A problem is that nobody knows for sure what the month of **Dioscorinthius** corresponds to.

I would guess that the name means “Zeus of Corinth.”

**The Peace is Conditional.** Lysias is not writing to Judas Maccabee. He is writing to “the Jews.”

Lysias is demanding that the Jews remain loyal to the Seleucid Empire. That did not happen!

### 2. Letter of the boy King Antiochus V to General Lysias.

**11:22-26.** <sup>22</sup> Now the king's letter contained these words:

King Antiochus to his brother Lysias sends greeting: <sup>23</sup> Since our father is translated to the gods, [Recall the scene of *I Claudius* when Augustus says, “I think I am becoming a god!”] A our will is, that they that are in our realm live quietly, that every one may attend upon his own affairs. <sup>24</sup> We understand also that the Jews would not consent to our father, to be brought to the custom of the Gentiles, but had rather keep their own manner of living: for the which cause they require of us, that we should suffer them to live after their own laws. <sup>25</sup> Wherefore our mind is, that this nation shall be in rest, and we have determined **to restore to them their temple**, that they may live according to the customs of their forefathers. <sup>26</sup> You shall do well therefore to send to them, and grant them peace, that when they are certified of our mind, they may be of good comfort, and ever go cheerfully about their own affairs.

**Insights from Collins.** He sees this as the “heart of the problem.”<sup>9</sup>

It is incomprehensible to the Seleucids that the Jews would prefer their own customs!

Contemporary remark: How often have Americans been astonished when people have been ungrateful for the “democracy and freedom” we have brought to them!

Hellenizing Jews would have been disappointed. [*getting a little “cooing interference from the baby!”*]

Many other Jews would have been satisfied with religious freedom, without political independence.

The true radicals would be satisfied with nothing less than political independence, along with religious freedom.

Final remark on “**to restore to them their temple**.” The king is probably simply recognizing a *fait accompli*.

### 3. Letter of King Antiochus to the Jews. Scholars think this letter is by King Antiochus IV, not his son!

**11:27-33.** And the letter of the king to the nation of the Jews was after this manner:

**King Antiochus** sends greeting to the **council**, and the **rest of the Jews**: <sup>8</sup> If you are faring well, we have our desire; we are also in good health. <sup>29</sup> Menelaus [the Jewish High Priest, appointed by the Seleucids] declared to us, that your desire was to return home, and to follow your own business: <sup>30</sup> Wherefore they that will depart shall have safe conduct till the thirtieth day of Xanthicus with security. <sup>31</sup> And the Jews shall use their own kind of meats and laws, as before; and none of them any manner of ways shall be molested for things ignorantly done. <sup>32</sup> I have sent also Menelaus, that he may comfort you. <sup>33</sup> Fare well. In the **hundred forty-eighth year** [= 164 B.C.], and the fifteenth day of the month Xanthicus.

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<sup>9</sup> Collins, *1-2 Maccabees*, 334.

### Observations by Collins.

This third letter, by Antiochus Epiphanes [dead 2 chapters ago in 2 Maccabees! PJM] is an interesting attempt to drain Judas' support by repealing the prohibition of the Jewish food laws. Significantly, Epiphanes makes no apology for what he has done. He merely pardons the Jews who have resisted him.<sup>10</sup>

The fact that his son will eventually have to make more concessions shows that he did not defuse the situation.

### 4. Letter of the Romans to the Jews.

<sup>34</sup> The **Romans** also sent to them a letter containing these words:

Quintus Memmius and Titus Manlius, ambassadors of the Romans, send greeting to the **people** of the Jews. <sup>35</sup> Whatsoever Lysias the king's cousin hath granted, therewith we also are well pleased. <sup>36</sup> But touching such things as he judged to be referred to the king, after you have considered them, send someone to us, that we may speak in agreement with you, for we are now going to Antioch.

<sup>37</sup> Therefore send some with speed, that we may know what is your mind. <sup>38</sup> Farewell. This hundred and eight and fortieth year, the fifteenth day of the month Xanthicus.)

This letter is the **earliest evidence of contact** between the Romans and the Jews. [accidentally omitted]

It shows they were taking an active interest in the affairs of the Seleucid Empire.<sup>11</sup>

### The "people" of the Jews.

In contrast to the letter from Lysias (Letter # 1) the Romans call the Jews a "people" rather than a "multitude." Rome is supporting -- for the time being! -- the national aspirations of the Jews.

They are a useful nuisance to the Seleucids.

## Week 40, Lecture 134.2 Maccabees 12

### 2 Maccabees 12 (Divisions from Doran) <sup>12</sup>

The Jews are ready for peace, but their neighbors will not allow them to live in peace.

**No need to read this paragraph in class.**

**12:1-2.** When these treaties were made, Lysias went to the king, and the Jews were about their farming. <sup>2</sup> But of the governors of several places, Timothy, and Apollonius the son of Gennaesus, also Hieronymus, and Demophon, and beside them Nicanor the governor of Cyprus, would not suffer them to be quiet and live in peace.

There is a **slaughter in Joppa** (near modern Tel Aviv).

The pagans invite the Jews to go for a ride on ships. They then drown over 200 of them.

This would be one of the earliest records of a pogrom against Jews, a problem that will persist for millennia!

**No need to read this paragraph in class.**

**12:3-4.** The men of Joppa also did such an ungodly deed: they prayed the Jews that dwelt among them to go with their wives and children into the boats which they had prepared, as though they had meant them no hurt. <sup>4</sup> Who accepted of it according to the common decree of the city, as being desirous to live in peace, and suspecting nothing: but when they were gone forth into the deep, they drowned no less than two hundred of them.

### The Response of Judas.

**12:5-9.** When Judas heard of this cruelty done to his countrymen, he commanded those that were with him to get ready. <sup>6</sup> And calling upon God the righteous Judge, he came against those murderers of his brothers. He burnt the harbor by night, and set the boats on fire, and those that fled there he slew. <sup>7</sup> Then, because the [gate to the] town was locked up, he withdrew, intending to return to uproot [=

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<sup>10</sup> Collins, *1-2 Maccabees*, 334.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Doran, "Second Maccabees," *NIB*, Vol. 4, pp.271-277

totally wipe out] the population of city of Joppa. <sup>8</sup> But when he heard that the Jamnians were minded to do something similar to the Jews who dwelt among them, <sup>9</sup> he came upon the Jamnians also by night, and set fire on the haven and the navy, so that the light of the fire was seen at Jerusalem 30 miles [240 stadia] away.

**Comments.** Each stade was about 600 feet.

These night attacks appear to be guerilla raids -- some might even say "terrorist attacks."

Judas does not appear to have the forces to conduct a campaign in broad daylight at this point.

**Judas is attacked by Arabs.** He defeats them.

In contrast to totally wiping them out, he accepts their promises of future help. They might be useful allies.

**No need to read this paragraph in class.**

**12:10-12.** Now when they had gone about a mile [literally 9 stadia] from there in their journey toward Timothy, no fewer than five thousand men on foot and five hundred horsemen of the Arabians set upon him. <sup>11</sup> Whereupon there was a very sore battle; but Judas' side by the help of God got the victory; so that the nomads of Arabia, being overcome, besought Judas for peace, promising both to give him cattle, and to pleasure him otherwise. <sup>12</sup> Then Judas, thinking indeed that they would be profitable in many things, granted them peace: whereupon they shook hands, and so they departed to their tents.

**Slaughter at Caspin.** When this battle was over, a lake a mile wide seemed to be filled with blood.

**No need to read this paragraph in class.**

**12:13-16.** He went also about to make a bridge to a certain strong city, which was fenced about with walls, and inhabited by people of divers countries; and the name of it was Caspin. <sup>14</sup> But they that were within it put such trust in the strength of the walls and provision of victuals, that they behaved themselves rudely toward them that were with Judas, railing and blaspheming, and uttering such words as were not to be spoken. <sup>15</sup> Wherefore Judas with his company, calling upon the great Lord of the world, who without rams or engines of war did cast down Jericho in the time of Joshua, gave a fierce assault against the walls, <sup>16</sup> And took the city by the will of God, and made unspeakable slaughters, insomuch that **a lake a quarter of a mile (2 stadia) wide near adjoining hereunto, being filled full, was seen running with blood.**

**Battles against Charax and Karnion.** Judas slays 25,000 of the enemy.

The Greek *Karnion* is probably from the Semitic *Karnaim*, which would mean "two horns."

Often the fertility goddess Astarte was depicted with two horns.

Of note, is that Timothy, portrayed as killed in chapter 10, is the main adversary here.

The author of 2 Maccabees probably thinks this is a different Timothy.

Most scholars think it was the same person, and that the story is chronologically out of order.

**No need to read this paragraph in class.**

**12:17-26.** Having withdrawn about 95 miles [750 stadia] from there, they came to **Charax** to the Jews that are called Toubians. <sup>18</sup> But as for Timothy, they found him not in the places: for before he had dispatched any thing, he departed from there, having left a very strong garrison in a certain hold. <sup>19</sup> Howbeit Dositheus and Sosipater, who were of Maccabeus' captains, went forth, and slew those that Timothy had left in the fortress, above ten thousand men. <sup>20</sup> And Maccabeus ranged his army by bands, and set them over the bands, and went against **Timothy**, who had about him an hundred and twenty thousand men of foot, and two thousand and five hundred horsemen. <sup>21</sup> Now when Timothy had knowledge of Judas' coming, he sent the women and children and the other baggage to a fortress called Karnion: for the town was hard to besiege, and uneasy to come unto, by reason of the narrowness of all the places. <sup>22</sup> But when Judas his first band came in sight, the enemies, being smitten with fear and terror through the appearing of him who sees all things, fled headlong, one running this way, another that way, so as that they were often hurt by their own men, and wounded with the points of their own swords. <sup>23</sup> Judas also was very earnest in pursuing them, killing those wicked wretches, of whom he slew about thirty thousand men. <sup>24</sup> Moreover Timothy himself fell into the hands of Dositheus and Sosipater, whom he besought with much craft to let him go with his life,

because he had many of the Jews' parents, and the brethren of some of them, who, if they put him to death, should not be regarded.<sup>25</sup> So when he had assured them with many words that he would restore them without hurt, according to the agreement, they let him go for the saving of their brethren.<sup>26</sup> Then Maccabeus marched forth to **Karnion**, and to the temple of **Atargatis**, and there he slew twenty-five thousand people.

**Battle against Ephron.** Judas slays another 25,000 of the enemy.

No need to read this paragraph in class.

**12:27-28.** And after he had put to flight and destroyed them, Judas removed the host toward **Ephron**, a strong city, wherein Lysias abode, and a great multitude of divers nations, and the strong young men kept the walls, and defended them mightily: wherein also was great provision of engines and darts.<sup>28</sup> But when Judas and his company had called upon Almighty God, who with his power breaks the strength of his enemies, they won the city, and slew twenty-five thousand of them that were within,

**Mercy at Scythopolis** (biblical Beth-shan)

**12:29-31.** From there they departed to Scythopolis, which lies 75 miles [600 stadia] from Jerusalem,<sup>30</sup> But when the Jews that dwelt there had testified that the Scythopolitans dealt lovingly with them, and entreated [!! probably a typo for "had treated] them kindly in the time of their adversity;<sup>31</sup> they gave them thanks, desiring them to be friendly still to them: and so they came to Jerusalem, the feast of the weeks [= Pentecost] approaching.

**The Battle of Adullam.** Judas is once more victorious.

Gorgias flees -- only because a Jew trying to drag him off his horse has his arm severed.

No need to read this paragraph in class.

**12:32-42a.** And after the feast, called Pentecost, they went forth against Gorgias the governor of Idumea,<sup>33</sup> Who came out with three thousand men of foot and four hundred horsemen.<sup>34</sup> And it happened that in their fighting together a few of the Jews were slain.<sup>35</sup> At which time Dositheus, one of Bacenor's company, who was on horseback, and a strong man, was still upon Gorgias, and taking hold of his coat drew him by force; and when he would have taken that cursed man alive, a horseman of Thrace coming upon him smote off his shoulder, so that Gorgias fled to Marisa.<sup>36</sup> Now when they that were with Gorgias had fought long, and were weary, Judas called upon the Lord, that he would shew himself to be their helper and leader of the battle.<sup>37</sup> And with that he began in his own language, and sung psalms with a loud voice, and rushing unawares upon Gorgias' men, he put them to flight.<sup>38</sup> So Judas gathered his host, and came into the city of Adullam, And when the seventh day came, they purified themselves, as the custom was, and kept the sabbath in the same place.

**Aftermath of the Battle of Adullam.**

**12:39-42a.** And upon the day following, as the use had been, Judas and his company came to take up the bodies of them that were slain, and to bury them with their kinsmen in their fathers' graves.<sup>40</sup> Now under the coats of every one that was slain they found **things consecrated to the idols** of the Jamnians, which is forbidden the Jews by the law. Then every man saw that this was the cause wherefore they were slain.<sup>41</sup> All men therefore praising the Lord, the righteous Judge, who had opened the things that were hid,<sup>42</sup> prayed, and beseeched him that the sin committed might wholly be put out of remembrance.

**A Theological Reason for the Death of Judas' Soldiers.** They were wearing pagan amulets as protective charms. Think of the chances that this is historical!

**V. 42 Historical Reason for the Prayer for Forgiveness by Judas.**

The most obvious purpose for the sacrifice is to atone for the sins of the dead, so that the army, or the people, will not be punished for them. . . . To some degree the guilt is collective.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Collins, *1-2 Maccabees*, 341.

**12:42b-45.** Besides, that noble Judas exhorted the people to keep themselves from sin, for as they saw before their eyes the things that came to pass for the sins of those that were slain. <sup>43</sup> And when he had made a gathering throughout the company to the sum of two thousand drachms of silver, he sent it to Jerusalem to offer a sin offering, doing therein very well and honestly, in that **he was mindful of the resurrection:** <sup>44</sup> For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. <sup>45</sup> And also in that he perceived that there was great favor laid up for those that died godly, it was an holy and good thought. Whereupon he made a expiation for the dead, that they might be delivered from sin.

### **Reason Given by of the Author of 2 Maccabees for the Prayer by Judas.**

The author does not link the action of Judas with the ancient idea of collective guilt.

Rather he links it with a new idea: his faith in resurrection of the dead! He claims Judas Maccabee shares his belief! This new Jewish belief is found here (2 Maccabees) and Daniel.

Praying for the dead in this Jewish worldview = prayer that they will be counted righteous at the resurrection

**Later, post-biblical theology** will use this as an argument for the existence of Purgatory.

Once the Greek idea of the immortality of the soul enters in, prayer for the dead takes on new meaning!

Why do we pray for the dead? They must “need our help.” How do our prayers help them *right now*?

They must be in a place where they are being “purified,” i.e., Purgatory.

Purgatory is essentially a theological deduction based on the practice of praying for the dead --  
once you **also** have the doctrine of the immortality of the soul!

The **practice**, praying for the dead, is **more ancient** than the **theological explanation**.

### **Fast Forward to the Reformation.**

Catholics are arguing for praying for the dead, getting indulgences on their behalf.

They are supporting these arguments by appealing to the Second Book of Maccabees!

The Protestant response is to reject the canonicity of this book.

Another response (theoretically) would have been to insist that this was a **misinterpretation** of Maccabees!

However, no scholars, Catholic or Protestant had “historical consciousness” until after the Enlightenment.

This 18<sup>th</sup> century movement was still centuries away at the time of the Reformation.

### **Review of the Historical Development of Thought. Prayer for the dead is:**

Step 1, is for the sake of the living, to protect **us** from the “collective guilt” of **their** sins.

Step 2, is an expiation for **their** sins so that **they** will be counted righteous **in the future**, on the “Last Day.”

Step 3, is to help **them right now** to be purified of their sins, to “get them out of Purgatory.”

The **practice** is ancient. The **theological explanation** has been “updated” several times.

Often in theology **practice precedes explanation!**