
Μακκαβαίων Β' □ 2ND MACCABEES

INTRODUCTION

The *Second Book of Maccabees*, like the First, is not in the Jewish Canon of Scripture but is considered deuterocanonical by the Catholic and Orthodox Churches. The book is *not* the continuation of 1st Maccabees but is in part parallel to it: its starting point is a little earlier (the end of the reign of Seleucus IV, father of Antiochus Epiphanes) but it ends with the defeat of Nicanor by Judas Maccabaeus. So, it covers only about 15 years, corresponding to the first 7 chapters of 1M. *Second Maccabees* narrates the events of Jewish history during the persecution of three Seleucid kings: Seleucus IV, Antiochus IV Epiphanes and Antiochus Eupator.

Although *2nd Maccabees* parallels Chs 1–7 of *1st Maccabees*, it is distinguished by its style and point of view. The author addresses the reader directly, in the manner of Greek historians, providing theological guidance. The stories are told with dramatic artistry and vivid detail. Like the Greek historians, the author guides the reader using elaborate speeches of its central characters (6:24–28, 7:27–29, 30–38, 15:22–23). Judas' campaign of liberation is supported by apparitions from heaven and concluded by divine intervention (2:19–22); the persecution manifests God's faithful love, bringing his people to their senses before their sin brings final ruin (6:12–17). He writes for the Jews of Alexandria, to awaken their solidarity with their Palestinian brothers.

The book is important for its affirmation of the resurrection of the dead (7:9, 14:46), sanctions in the afterlife (6:26), prayer for the dead (12:38, 41–46ff), the spiritual fruits of martyrdom (6:18–7:41), and the intercession of the saints (15:12–16). Other OT writings had left these teachings vague: but these teachings justify the authority accorded to Second Maccabees by the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

AUTHORSHIP AND DATES

Originally written in Greek, *2nd Maccabees* claims to be a summary of the work of Jason of Cyrene (2:19–32) and is preceded by two letters from the Jews of Jerusalem (1:1–2:18). The work was translated into Latin, Syriac and Armenian in antiquity. Since the last event to be reported is the death of Nicanor, Jason of Cyrene's work must have been composed soon after 160 BCE. If the original author added the two introductory letters (although this is disputed), the date of the work in its present, reduced form can be fixed from a hint in 1:10 as being 124 BCE.

The historical value of the book should not be underestimated. Although the author (or an editor, perhaps) has accepted the apocryphal stories contained in the letter of 1:10–2:18 and has reproduced the moving stories of Heliodorus (Ch. 3), of the martyrdom of Eleazar (6:18–31) and of the seven brothers (Ch. 7), the general agreement with 1M guarantees the historicity of the events reported by these independent sources. On one important point, where the books diverge, 2M is the more accurate: 1M 6:1–13 puts the purification of the Temple before the death of Antiochus IV, 2M 9:1–29 puts it after; a recently published Babylonian tablet proves 2M right: Antiochus died in October/November 164 BCE, before the re-dedication of the Temple at the end of December that year. Nonetheless, the abbreviator, rather than Jason, is responsible for one serious error: to a letter of Antiochus V (2M 11:22–26) he has added other letters (11–12:29) and story events belonging to reign of Antiochus IV, which ought to be between Chs 8 & 9.

Μακκαβαίων Β' Ι

¹ Τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς τοῖς κατ' Αἴγυπτον Ἰουδαίοις χαίρειν οἱ ἀδελφοὶ οἱ ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οἱ ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ τῆς Ἰουδαίας εἰρήνην ἀγαθὴν·

² καὶ ἀγαθοποιήσαι ὑμῖν ὁ θεὸς καὶ μνησθεῖν τῆς διαθήκης αὐτοῦ τῆς πρὸς Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ τῶν δούλων αὐτοῦ τῶν πιστῶν· ³ καὶ δώῃ ὑμῖν καρδίαν πᾶσιν εἰς τὸ σέβεσθαι αὐτὸν καὶ ποιεῖν αὐτοῦ τὰ θελήματα καρδίᾳ μεγάλῃ καὶ ψυχῇ βουλομένη· ⁴ καὶ διανοίξαι τὴν καρδίαν ὑμῶν ἐν τῷ νόμῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τοῖς προσταγμασιν καὶ εἰρήνην ποιήσαι· ⁵ καὶ ἐπακούσαι ὑμῶν τῶν δεήσεων καὶ καταλλαγείῃ ὑμῖν καὶ μὴ ὑμᾶς ἐγκαταλίποι ἐν καιρῷ πονηρῷ· ⁶ καὶ νῦν ὧδέ ἐσμεν προσευχόμενοι περὶ ὑμῶν.

⁷ βασιλεύοντος Δημητρίου ἔτους ἑκατοστοῦ ἑξηκοστοῦ ἐνάτου ἡμεῖς οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι γεγράφαμεν ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ θλίψει καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀκμῇ τῇ ἐπελθούσῃ ἡμῖν ἐν τοῖς ἔτεσιν τούτοις ἀφ' οὗ

2 MACCABEES 1

¹ "To their brothers, the Jews living in Egypt, from their brothers, the Jews in Jerusalem and Judaea, greetings and untroubled peace.

² "May God do good deeds to you and may he remember his Covenant with Abraham, and with Isaac, and with Jacob, his faithful servants. ³ May he give to you all a heart to worship him and to do his will, with a generous mind and a willing spirit. ⁴ May he open your hearts to his Law and to his commandments, and may he bring peace to you. ⁵ May he listen to your prayers and be reconciled with you, and may he not abandon you in time of evil. ⁶ We are now praying for you here.

⁷ During the reign of Demetrius, in the one hundred and sixty-ninth year, we Jews wrote to you as follows, "In the extremity of trouble that befell us in the years after Jason and

2 MACCABEES 1

- ¹ The 2 opening letters (1:1–2:18) are invitations to celebrate the Feast of Dedication (1M 4:59). The 1st part of 2M, to 10:8, provides the justification for this feast. There had long been Jewish colonies in Egypt: the best known is the one at Elephantine, dating to the early 6th Century BCE. About 150 BCE, the priest Onias IV, son of the Onias III killed at Daphne (4:33ff) founded a temple in Leontopolis, a smaller model of the Temple in Jerusalem (1M 10:20).
- ² See Gn 15:18, 26:3, 35:12, Lv 26:27–45.
- ³ The WEBBE ends this verse with, "with a strong heart and a willing soul."
- ⁴ In place of 'commandments', the WEBBE has 'statutes'.
- ⁵ To live outside Judaea was thought of as divine punishment.
- ⁶ For this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB reads, "Such is our prayer for you."
- ⁷ The reference is to an earlier letter, written by the Egyptian Jews in the 169th year of the Seleucid era (142 BCE, 1M 1:10), about the misfortunes of the Judaeans as a result of Jason's defection (see 2M 4:7ff).

ἀπέστη Ἰάσων καὶ οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀγίας γῆς καὶ τῆς βασιλείας ⁸ καὶ ἐνεπύρισαν τὸν πυλῶνα καὶ ἐξέχεαν αἷμα ἀδῶον· καὶ ἐδεήθημεν τοῦ κυρίου καὶ εἰσηκούσθημεν καὶ προσηνέγκαμεν θυσίαν καὶ σεμίδαλιν καὶ ἐξήψαμεν τοὺς λύχνους καὶ προεθήκαμεν τοὺς ἄρτους.

⁹ καὶ νῦν ἵνα ἄγητε τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς σκηνοπηγίας τοῦ Χασελευ μηνός. ἔτους ἑκατοστοῦ ὀγδοηκοστοῦ καὶ ὀγδόου.

¹⁰ Οἱ ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις καὶ οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ ἡ γερουσία καὶ Ἰουδας Ἀριστοβούλῳ διδασκάλῳ Πτολεμαίου τοῦ βασιλέως, ὅντι δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ τῶν χριστῶν ἱερέων γένους, καὶ τοῖς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ Ἰουδαίοις χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν.

¹¹ ἐκ μεγάλων κινδύνων ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ σεσωσμένοι μέγας εὐχαριστοῦμεν αὐτῷ ὡς ἂν πρὸς βασιλέα παρατασσόμενοι·

¹² αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐξέβρασεν τοὺς παραταξαμένους ἐν τῇ ἀγίᾳ πόλει. ¹³ εἰς τὴν Περσίδα γενόμενος γὰρ ὁ ἡγεμὼν καὶ ἡ περὶ αὐτὸν ἀνυπόστατος δοκοῦσα εἶναι δύναμις κατεκόπησαν ἐν τῷ τῆς Ναναίας ἱερῷ, παραλογισμῷ χρησαμένων τῶν περὶ

his associates had betrayed the Holy Land and the kingdom, ⁸ burning down the Temple gateway and shedding innocent blood, we prayed to the Lord and were then heard; and we then offered a sacrifice, with wheat-flour, we lit the lamps and we set out the loaves."

⁹ "And now see that you keep the Feast of Shelters in the month of Chislev, in the year one hundred and eighty-eight."

¹⁰ "The people of Jerusalem and of Judaea, the senate and Judas, to Aristobulus, tutor to King Ptolemy and one of the family of the anointed priests, and to the Jews in Egypt, greetings and good health.

¹¹ "Having been saved by God from great peril, we give him great thanks for taking our side against the king; ¹² for, he drove out those who fought against the Holy City. ¹³ For, when their leader reached Persia with his seemingly irresistible army, he was cut to pieces in the temple of Nanaea, by a deception employed by the priests who served

⁸ See 1M 4:38, 1:60–61 and 13:1–42. The WEBBE has 'bread' in place of 'loaves'.

⁹ This 'Feast of Shelters' (in 124 BCE, see also v. 18) in the month of Chislev (December) is the Feast of Dedication (see #1M 4:59); it resembles the Feast of Shelters of the month Tishri (October) – see 2M 10:6, Lv 23:34ff, hence this 'alternative' name.

¹⁰ The 2nd letter purports to be a document 40 years older than the first, being an invitation (v. 18) to the actual dedication of the Temple, which occurred on 25 Chislev 148 of the Seleucid era (15 December 164 BCE). The content combines rumours about the death of Antiochus Epiphanes with popular traditions about Nehemiah and Jeremiah. The author does not guarantee its historical accuracy.

¹¹ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "Having been saved by God out of great perils, as men arrayed against a king, we thank him greatly."

¹² After 'threw out', the WEBBE adds 'into Persia'.

¹³ 'Nanaea' was a Mesopotamian goddess assimilated to the Ephesian Artemis. The temple that Antiochus IV proposed to plunder was that of Artemis in Elymais.

τὴν Ναναίαν ἱερέων. ¹⁴ ὥς γὰρ συνοικήσων αὐτῇ παρεγένετο εἰς τὸν τόπον ὃν τε Ἀντίοχος καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ φίλοι χάριν τοῦ λαβεῖν τὰ χρήματα πλείονα εἰς φερνῆς λόγον ¹⁵ καὶ προσελθόντων αὐτὰ τῶν ἱερέων τοῦ Ναναίου κακείνου προσελθόντος μετ' ὀλίγων εἰς τὸν περίβολον τοῦ τεμένου, συγκλείσαντες τὸ ἱερόν, ὥς εἰσῆλθεν Ἀντίοχος, ¹⁶ ἀνοίξαντες τὴν τοῦ φατνώματος κρυπτὴν θύραν βάλλοντες πέτρους συνεκραύνωσαν τὸν ἡγεμόνα καὶ μέλη ποιήσαντες καὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς ἀφελόντες τοῖς ἔξω παρέρριψαν. ¹⁷ κατὰ πάντα εὐλογητὸς ἡμῶν ὁ θεός, ὃς παρέδωκεν τοὺς ἀσεβήσαντας.

¹⁸ μέλλοντες ἄγειν ἐν τῷ Χασελευ πέμπτη καὶ εἰκάδι τὸν καθαρισμόν τοῦ ἱεροῦ δέον ἡγησάμεθα διασαφῆσαι ὑμῖν, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἄγητε σκηνοπηγίας καὶ τοῦ πυρός, ὅτε Νεεμίας ὁ οἰκοδομήσας τό τε ἱερόν καὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον ἀνήνεγκεν θυσίας. ¹⁹ καὶ γὰρ ὅτε εἰς τὴν Περσικὴν ἤγοντο ἡμῶν οἱ πατέρες, οἱ τότε εὐσεβεῖς ἱερεῖς λαβόντες ἀπὸ τοῦ πυρός τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου λαθραίως κατέκρυψαν ἐν κοιλώματι φρέατος τάξιν ἔχοντος ἄνυδρον, ἐν ᾧ κατησφαλίσαντο ὥστε πᾶσιν ἄγνωστον εἶναι τὸν τόπον. ²⁰ διελθόντων δὲ ἐτῶν ἱκανῶν, ὅτε

the Nanaea. ¹⁴ On the pretext of marrying her, Antiochus came to the place with his friends, intending to take its many treasures as a dowry. ¹⁵ The priests of Nanaea had put these on display and, when Antiochus for his part had entered the temple precincts with only a small retinue, the priests shut him in, ¹⁶ opened a trap door hidden in the ceiling and struck the leader down by hurling stones like thunderbolts. They then cut him into pieces and threw his head to those who were waiting outside. ¹⁷ Blessed in all things be our God, who has delivered the sacrilegious over to death.

¹⁸ “As we shall be celebrating the purification of the Temple of the twenty-fifth of Chislev, we thought it proper to notify you, so you too may keep it, as you do the Feast of Shelters and the fire that appeared when Nehemiah, the builder of the Temple and the altar, offered sacrifice. ¹⁹ For, when our fathers were deported to Persia, the pious priests of the time took some fire from the altar and hid it secretly in a hole like a dry well, where they made sure the place was unknown to anyone. ²⁰ When many years had passed, in God’s good time,

¹⁴ In place of ‘many treasure’, the WEBBE has ‘a large part of the treasures’.

¹⁵ The WEBBE has ‘within the walls of the sacred precinct’ in place of ‘the temple precinct’.

¹⁶ The NRSV, following the LXX, has ‘heads’ (a scribal error induced by the plural ‘pieces’) in place of ‘head’ (here following the Peshitta & NJB). This popular account of the death of Antiochus corresponds neither to that of 9:1ff nor to that of 1M 6:1ff.

¹⁷ The WEBBE ends this verse, “who handed over those who had committed impiety.”

¹⁸ The object of this anecdote (vv. 18–36) is to show that the sanctuary in Jerusalem has lost none of its privileges, since it has even preserved the original sacred fire (see Lv 6:5–6).

¹⁹ The Jews were actually deported to Babylonia, which later became part of the Persian Empire.

²⁰ The ‘king’ was probably Artaxerxes I (464–423 BCE). In place of ‘to us that’, the NJB has the conjectural ‘that in fact’.

ἔδοξεν τῷ θεῷ, ἀποσταλεῖς Νεεμίας ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως τῆς Περσίδος τοὺς ἐκγόνους τῶν ἱερέων τῶν ἀποκρυψάντων ἔπεμψεν ἐπὶ τὸ πῦρ· ὡς δὲ διεσάφησαν ἡμῖν μὴ εὕρηκέναι πῦρ, ἀλλὰ ὕδωρ παχύ, ἐκέλευσεν αὐτοὺς ἀποβάψαντας φέρειν. ²¹ ὡς δὲ ἀνηνέχθη τὰ τῶν θυσιῶν, ἐκέλευσεν τοὺς ἱερεῖς Νεεμίας ἐπιρροᾶναι τῷ ὕδατι τὰ τε ξύλα καὶ τὰ ἐπικείμενα. ²² ὡς δὲ ἐγένετο τοῦτο καὶ χρόνος διήλθεν ὃς τε ἥλιος ἀνέλαμψεν πρότερον ἐπινεφῆς ὢν, ἀνήφθη πυρὰ μεγάλη ὥστε θουμάσαι πάντας. ²³ προσευχὴν δὲ ἐποίησαντο οἱ ἱερεῖς δαπανωμένης τῆς θυσίας, οἳ τε ἱερεῖς καὶ πάντες, καταρχομένου Ἰωναδου, τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν ἐπιφωνούντων ὡς Νεεμίου· ²⁴ ἦν δὲ ἡ προσευχὴ τὸν τρόπον ἔχουσα τοῦτον

Κύριε κύριε ὁ θεός, ὁ πάντων κτίστης, ὁ φοβερός καὶ ἰσχυρός καὶ δίκαιος καὶ ἐλεήμων, ὁ μόνος βασιλεὺς καὶ χρηστός, ²⁵ ὁ μόνος χορηγός, ὁ μόνος δίκαιος καὶ παντοκράτωρ καὶ αἰώνιος, ὁ διασώζων τὸν Ἰσραὴλ ἐκ παντὸς κακοῦ, ὁ ποιήσας τοὺς πατέρας ἐκλεκτοὺς καὶ ἀγιάσας αὐτούς, ²⁶ πρόσδεξαι τὴν θυσίαν ὑπὲρ παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ σου Ἰσραὴλ καὶ διαφύλαξον τὴν μερίδα σου καὶ καθαγιάσον. ²⁷ ἐπισυνάγαγε τὴν διασπορὰν ἡμῶν, ἐλευθέρωσον τοὺς δουλεύοντας ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, τοὺς

Nehemiah, commissioned by the king of Persia, sent the descendants of the priests who had hidden the fire to look for it. When they reported to us that they had found not fire but a thick liquid, Nehemiah ordered them to draw some out and bring it back. ²¹ When they had done this, Nehemiah ordered the priests to sprinkle this liquid on the wood and what lay on it. ²² When this was done, and when in due course the sun, which had previously been clouded over, shone out, a great fire flared up, to the astonishment of all. ²³ While the sacrifice was being burned, the priests offered prayer, Jonathon intoning with the priests and everyone, and the rest responding with Nehemiah. ²⁴ The prayer took this form,

“Lord, Lord God, Creator of all things, awesome, strong, just, merciful, the only king and benefactor, ²⁵ the only provider, who alone are just, almighty and everlasting, the deliverer of Israel from every evil, who made our fathers your chosen ones and sanctified them, ²⁶ accept this sacrifice on behalf of all your people Israel and protect your heritage and consecrate it. ²⁷ Gather together our scattered people, set free those in slavery among the heathen, look favourably on those

²¹ The WEBBE has ‘he’ in place of ‘Nehemiah’, here following the LXX (Νεεμίας).

²² In place of ‘in due course’, the WEBBE has ‘some time had passed’.

²³ In place of ‘the priests and everyone’ (here following the LXX and NRSV), the NJB, following the Vg, has ‘all the priests’.

²⁴ The WEBBE opens this verse with, “The prayer was like this...”

²⁵ Note the plural verb form here (‘are just’), reflecting the ‘plural of majesty’ for God.

²⁶ The WEBBE has ‘your own portion’ in place of ‘your heritage’.

²⁷ The NJB opens with ‘Bring’ in place of ‘Gather’, here following the WEBBE.

ἐξουθενημένους καὶ βδελυκτοὺς ἔπιθε, καὶ γνώτωσαν τὰ ἔθνη ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν. ²⁸ βασάνισον τοὺς καταδυναστεύοντας καὶ ἐξυβρίζοντας ἐν ὑπερηφανίᾳ. ²⁹ καταφύτευσον τὸν λαόν σου εἰς τὸν τόπον τὸν ἅγιόν σου, καθὼς εἶπεν Μωϋσῆς.

³⁰ Οἱ δὲ ἱερεῖς ἐπέψαλλον τοὺς ὕμνους. ³¹ καθὼς δὲ ἀνηλώθη τὰ τῆς θυσίας, καὶ τὸ περιλειπόμενον ὕδωρ ὁ Νεεμίας ἐκέλευσεν λίθους μείζονας καταχεῖν. ³² ὡς δὲ τοῦτο ἐγενήθη, φλόξ ἀνήθη. τοῦ δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου ἀντιλάμπαντος φωτὸς ἔδαπανήθη. ³³ ὡς δὲ φανερὸν ἐγενήθη τὸ πρᾶγμα, καὶ διηγγέλη τῷ βασιλεῖ τῶν Περσῶν ὅτι εἰς τὸν τόπον, οὗ τὸ πῦρ ἔκρυψαν οἱ μεταχθέντες ἱερεῖς, τὸ ὕδωρ ἐφάνη, ἀφ' οὗ καὶ οἱ περὶ τὸν Νεεμίαν ἤγγισαν τὰ τῆς θυσίας, ³⁴ περιφράξας δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἱερὸν ἐποίησεν δοκιμάσας τὸ πρᾶγμα. ³⁵ καὶ οἷς ἐχαρίζετο ὁ βασιλεὺς, πολλὰ διάφορα ἐλάμβανεν καὶ μετεδίδου. ³⁶ προσηγόρευσαν δὲ οἱ περὶ τὸν Νεεμίαν τοῦτο νεφθαρ, ὃ διερμηνεύεται καθαρισμός· καλεῖται δὲ παρὰ τοῖς πολλοῖς νεφθαι.

held in contempt or abhorrence, and let the heathen know that you are our God. ²⁸ Punish those who oppress us and affront us by their insolence, ²⁹ and plant your people firmly in your Holy Place, as Moses promised."

³⁰ "The priests then chanted hymns. ³¹ When the sacrifice had been burnt, Nehemiah ordered the remaining liquid to be poured over large stones; ³² and, when this was done, a flame flared up; but, when light shone from the altar, it went out.

³³ When the matter became known and the king of the Persians heard that, in the place where the exiled priests had hidden the fire, a liquid had appeared, with which Nehemiah and his people purified the sacrificial offerings, ³⁴ the king verified the facts, had the place enclosed, and made it sacred.

³⁵ To the people whom the king favoured, he exchanged many excellent gifts. ³⁶ Nehemiah and his people termed this stuff 'nephthar', which means 'purification', but it is commonly called 'naphtha'.

²⁸ The WEBBE ends with, "and in arrogance shamefully entreat us."

²⁹ The WEBBE ends with, "even as Moses said."

³⁰ At the end of this verse, here following the NRSV, the NJB adds, "accompanied by the harp."

³¹ The WEBBE opens with, "As soon as the sacrifice was consumed ..."

³² In place of 'when light shone', the NJB has 'when a blaze of light came'.

³³ This was what the king was told; the preceding account is different.

³⁴ Localities where miracles occurred were enclosed as sacred; the Persians considered fire holy.

³⁵ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "When the king would show favour to any, he would exchange many presents and give them some of this liquid."

³⁶ This verse presents an obscure popular etymology of the Persian word 'naphtha'. The story combines recollections of Persian fire worship (v. 34) with some knowledge of the properties of naphtha – crude petroleum – that impressed the Greek and Roman geographers and naturalists.

Μακκαβαίων Β' 2

¹ Εὐρίσκεται δὲ ἐν ταῖς ἀπογραφαῖς Ιερεμίας ὁ προφήτης ὅτι ἐκέλευσεν τοῦ πυρὸς λαβεῖν τοὺς μεταγενομένους, ὡς σεσήμανται, ² καὶ ὡς ἐνετείλατο τοῖς μεταγενομένοις ὁ προφήτης δοὺς αὐτοῖς τὸν νόμον, ἵνα μὴ ἐπιλάβωνται τῶν προσταγμάτων τοῦ κυρίου, καὶ ἵνα μὴ ἀποπλανηθῶσιν ταῖς διανοίαις βλέποντες ἀγάλματα χρυσᾶ καὶ ἀργυρᾶ καὶ τὸν περὶ αὐτὰ κόσμον. ³ καὶ ἕτερα τοιαῦτα λέγων παρεκάλει μὴ ἀποστῆναι τὸν νόμον ἀπὸ τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν.

⁴ ἦν δὲ ἐν τῇ γραφῇ ὡς τὴν σκηνὴν καὶ τὴν κιβωτὸν ἐκέλευσεν ὁ προφήτης χρηματισμοῦ γεννηθέντος αὐτῷ συνακολουθεῖν. ὡς δὲ ἐξῆλθεν εἰς τὸ ὄρος, οὗ ὁ Μωϋσῆς ἀναβὰς ἐδεάσατο τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ κληρονομίαν. ⁵ καὶ ἐλθὼν ὁ Ιερεμίας εὗρεν οἶκον ἀνθρώδῃ καὶ τὴν σκηνὴν καὶ τὴν κιβωτὸν καὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον τοῦ θυμιάματος εἰσῆνεγκεν ἐκεῖ

2 MACCABEES 2

¹ "It is also found in the records that the prophet Jeremiah ordered those who were carried away to take the fire, as we have described, ² and how, having given them the Law, the prophet warned the deportees never to forget the Lord's precepts, nor to be led astray in their minds by the sight of gold and silver statues or the finery adorning them. ³ Among other similar admonitions, he urged them not to let the Law depart from their hearts.

⁴ "The same writing also describes how the prophet, warned by an oracle, ordered the Tent and the Ark to go with him, when he set out for the mountain that Moses had climbed to survey God's heritage. ⁵ On his arrival, Jeremiah found a cave dwelling, into which he put the Tent, the Ark, and the altar of incense, then he sealed the entrance. ⁶ Some of his

2 MACCABEES 2

¹ Jeremiah is one of the great figures revered in Judaism (see 15:13-15). The Book of Lamentations was attributed to him, as also the 'Letter against the Idols' of Baruch Ch. 6, and several apocrypha. One of these apocrypha, now lost, recounted the events described in this passage. This description is not historical: the Tent of Meeting did not exist after the building of Solomon's Temple, the Ark disappeared when the Temple was destroyed (but see #4), and the historical Jeremiah did not regret it (Jr 3:16). The purpose of the narrative, however, is to assert the continuity of orthodox worship (see #1:18) and to associate this ceremony of dedication with the dedication of the first Temple by Solomon and of the Tent of Meeting by Moses (see vv. 8-12).

² In place of 'be led astray in their minds', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'let their thoughts be tempted'.

³ The WEBBE has 'such words' in place of 'similar admonitions'.

⁴ Solomon brought the Tent to Jerusalem with the Ark (1K 8:4). There is no further record in the OT of the Tent but the Ark was kept in the First Temple; according to Alexander Polyhistor (1st century BCE), perhaps from the historian Eupolemus, Jeremiah concealed the Ark after the Temple was destroyed in 587-586 BCE. The LXX here has 'but when he set out' - the text is probably corrupt.

⁵ The NJB has 'afterwards blocking up' in place of 'then he sealed', here following the WEBBE.

⁶ Vv. 6-7 give a 'convenient' explanation for the whereabouts of the Ark of the Covenant being unknown.

καὶ τὴν θύραν ἐνέφραξεν. ⁶ καὶ προσελθόντες τινὲς τῶν συνακολουθούντων ὥστε ἐπισημάνασθαι τὴν ὁδὸν καὶ οὐκ ἐδυνήθησαν εὗρεῖν. ⁷ ὡς δὲ ὁ Ιερεμίας ἔγνω, μεμψάμενος αὐτοῖς εἶπεν ὅτι Καὶ ἄγνωστος ὁ τόπος ἔσται, ἕως ἂν συναγάγῃ ὁ θεὸς ἐπισυναγωγὴν τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ ἰλεως γένηται. ⁸ καὶ τότε ὁ κύριος ἀναδείξει ταῦτα, καὶ ὀφθήσεται ἡ δόξα τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ἡ νεφέλη, ὡς ἐπὶ Μωυσῆ ἐδήλοῦτο, ὡς καὶ ὁ Σαλωμων ἠξίωσεν ἵνα ὁ τόπος καθαγιασθῇ μεγάλως.

⁹ διεσαφεῖτο δὲ καὶ ὡς σοφίαν ἔχων ἀνήνεγκεν θυσίαν ἐγκαινισμοῦ καὶ τῆς τελειώσεως τοῦ ἱεροῦ. ¹⁰ καθὼς καὶ Μωϋσῆς προσηύξατο πρὸς κύριον, καὶ κατέβη πῦρ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τὰ τῆς θυσίας ἐδαπάνησεν, οὕτως καὶ Σαλωμων προσηύξατο, καὶ καταβὰν τὸ πῦρ ἀνήλωσεν τὰ ὀλοκαυτώματα. ¹¹ καὶ εἶπεν Μωϋσῆς Διὰ τὸ μὴ βεβρωῖσθαι τὸ περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἀνηλώθη. ¹² ὡσαύτως καὶ ὁ Σαλωμων τὰς ὀκτὼ ἡμέρας ἤγαγεν.

¹³ ἐξηγοῦντο δὲ καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἀναγραφαῖς καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὑπομνηματισμοῖς τοῖς κατὰ τὸν Νεεμιαν τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ ὡς καταβαλλόμενος βιβλιοθήκην ἐπισυνήγαγεν τὰ περὶ τῶν βασιλέων βιβλία καὶ προφητῶν καὶ τὰ τοῦ Δαυὶδ καὶ

companions went back later to mark out the path but were unable to find it. ⁷ When Jeremiah learned this, he reproached them, saying, “The place is to remain unknown until God gathers his people together again and shows them his mercy. ⁸ Then the Lord will bring these things once more to light, and the glory of the Lord will be seen, and so will the cloud, as it was revealed in the time of Moses and when Solomon prayed that the place might be gloriously hallowed.”

⁹ “It was also recorded how he, in his wisdom, offered the sacrifice of the dedication and completion of the sanctuary. ¹⁰ As Moses had prayed to the Lord and fire had come down from heaven and consumed the sacrifice, so Solomon also prayed, and the fire from above consumed the burnt offerings. ¹¹ Moses had said, “Because the sacrifice for sin had not been eaten, it was burnt instead.” ¹² Solomon similarly observed the eight-day festival.

¹³ “In addition to the above, it was also recorded, both in these writings and in the Memoirs of Nehemiah, how Nehemiah founded a library and made a collection of the books dealing with the kings and the prophets, the writings

⁷ The WEBBE has ‘rebuked’ in place of ‘reproached’.

⁸ The NJB has ‘the holy place’ instead of ‘the place’ (following 1:29, 2:18, 8:17). The ‘glory’ and the ‘cloud’ indicated God’s presence.

⁹ The pronoun, ‘he’, here refers to Solomon (v. 8).

¹⁰ The NJB has ‘burned up’ in place of the 1st instance of ‘consumed’, here following the WEBBE.

¹¹ The meaning of this verse is obscure but see Lv 10:16–19 & 9:24.

¹² For this verse, the WEBBE reads, “Likewise Solomon kept the eight days.”

¹³ Nehemiah’s library formed a collection of writings not considered canonical but as useful to the Jewish community.

ἐπιστολὰς βασιλέων περὶ ἀναθεμάτων. ¹⁴ ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ Ἰουδᾶς τὰ διαπεπτωκότα διὰ τὸν γεγονότα πόλεμον ἡμῶν ἐπισυνήγαγεν πάντα, καὶ ἔστιν παρ' ἡμῶν. ¹⁵ ὧν οὖν ἐὰν χρεῖαν ἔχητε, τοὺς ἀποκομιοῦντας ὑμῶν ἀποστέλλετε.

¹⁶ Μέλλοντες οὖν ἄγειν τὸν καθαρισμὸν ἐγράψαμεν ὑμῖν· καλῶς οὖν ποιήσετε ἄγοντες τὰς ἡμέρας. ¹⁷ ὁ δὲ θεὸς ὁ σώσας τὸν πάντα λαὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀποδοὺς τὴν κληρονομίαν πᾶσιν καὶ τὸ βασίλειον καὶ τὸ ἱεράτευμα καὶ τὸν ἁγιασμόν, ¹⁸ καθὼς ἐπηγγείλατο διὰ τοῦ νόμου· ἐλπίζομεν γὰρ ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ ὅτι ταχέως ἡμᾶς ἐλεήσει καὶ ἐπισυνάξει ἐκ τῆς ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν εἰς τὸν ἅγιον τόπον· ἐξείλετο γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἐκ μεγάλων κακῶν καὶ τὸν τόπον ἐκαθάρισεν.

¹⁹ Τὰ δὲ κατὰ τὸν Ἰουδαν τὸν Μακκαβαῖον καὶ τοὺς τούτου ἀδελφούς καὶ τὸν τοῦ ἱεροῦ τοῦ μεγίστου καθαρισμὸν καὶ τὸν τοῦ βωμοῦ ἐγκαινισμόν ²⁰ ἔτι τε τοὺς πρὸς Ἀντίοχον τὸν Ἐπιφανῆ καὶ τὸν τούτου υἱὸν Εὐπάτορα πολέμους ²¹ καὶ τὰς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ γενομένας ἐπιφανείας τοῖς ὑπὲρ τοῦ Ἰουδαϊσμοῦ φιλοτίμως ἀνδραγαθήσασιν, ὥστε τὴν ὅλην χώραν ὀλίγους

of David and the letters of the kings on the subject of offerings. ¹⁴ Similarly, Judas made a complete collection of the books dispersed in the late war, and these we still have. ¹⁵ If you need any of them, send someone to collect them.

¹⁶ "Since we are about to celebrate the purification, we now write, requesting you to observe the same days. ¹⁷ It is God, who has saved his whole people, and has conferred heritage, kingship, priesthood, and sanctification on all of us, ¹⁸ as he has promised in the Law. We have hope in him to be swift to show us mercy and gather us together from everywhere under heaven to the holy place, since he has rescued us from great evils and has purified it."

¹⁹ The story of Judas Maccabaeus and his brothers, the purification of the great temple, the dedication of the altar, ²⁰ along with the wars against Antiochus Epiphanes and his son Eupator, ²¹ and the celestial manifestations that came to hearten the brave champions of Judaism, so that, few though they were, they pillaged the whole country, routed the

¹⁴ The books of Judas Maccabaeus' library, like Nehemiah's, also never made the Jewish canon.

¹⁵ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "If therefore you have need of them, send some people to bring them to you."

¹⁶ The WEBBE has the last clause as a separate sentence, reading, "You will therefore do well if you celebrate the days."

¹⁷ 'Kingship' implies independence; the Hasmonaeans were not yet called kings.

¹⁸ After this verse, the WEBBE includes a dividing line, separating the two letters from the rest of the book.

¹⁹ The WEBBE has 'greatest' in place of 'great'.

²⁰ The NJB opens with 'together' in place of 'along'.

²¹ 'Manifestations' translates the Greek 'ἐπιφανείας'; true appearances, in contrast to Antiochus' boastful title Epiphanes ('god manifest'). This is the first known use of the term 'Judaism' for the religion, in contrast to Hellenism (4:13).

ὄντας λεηλατεῖν καὶ τὰ βάρβαρα πλήθῃ διώκειν, ²² καὶ τὸ περιβόητον καθ' ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην ἱερὸν ἀνακομίσασθαι καὶ τὴν πόλιν ἐλευθερῶσαι καὶ τοὺς μέλλοντας καταλύεσθαι νόμους ἐπανορθῶσαι, τοῦ κυρίου μετὰ πάσης ἐπεικειάς ἴλεω γενομένου αὐτοῖς, ²³ ὑπὸ Ἰάσωνος τοῦ Κυρηναίου δεδηλωμένα διὰ πέντε βιβλίων πειρασόμεθα δι' ἐνὸς συντάγματος ἐπιτεμεῖν. ²⁴ συνορῶντες γὰρ τὸ χύμα τῶν ἀριθμῶν καὶ τὴν οὔσαν δυσχέρειαν τοῖς θέλουσιν εἰσκυκλεῖσθαι τοῖς τῆς ἱστορίας διηγήμασιν διὰ τὸ πλήθος τῆς ὕλης ²⁵ ἐφροντίσαμεν τοῖς μὲν βουλομένοις ἀναγινώσκειν ψυχαγωγίαν, τοῖς δὲ φιλοφρονοῦσιν εἰς τὸ διὰ μνήμης ἀναλαβεῖν εὐκοπίαν, πᾶσιν δὲ τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσιν ὠφέλειαν. ²⁶ καὶ ἡμῖν μὲν τοῖς τὴν κακοπάθειαν ἐπιδεγμένοις τῆς ἐπιτομῆς οὐ ῥάδιον, ἰδρῶτος δὲ καὶ ἀγρυπνίας τὸ πρᾶγμα, ²⁷ καθάπερ τῷ παρασκευάζοντι συμπόσιον καὶ ζητοῦντι τὴν ἐτέρων λυσιτέλειαν οὐκ εὐχερές, ὅμως διὰ τὴν τῶν πολλῶν εὐχαριστίαν ἠδέως τὴν κακοπάθειαν ὑποίσομεν ²⁸ τὸ μὲν διακριβοῦν περὶ ἐκάστων τῷ

barbarian hordes, ²² recovered the sanctuary renowned the whole world over, freed the city and restored the laws by then all but abolished, the Lord showing his favour by all his gracious help to them – ²³ all this, already related in five books by Jason of Cyrene, we shall attempt to condense into a single work. ²⁴ Considering the confused mass of the numbers, and the difficulty awaiting those who wish to immerse themselves in historical records, ²⁵ we have aimed to provide, for those who merely want something to read, a saving of labour for those who enjoy committing things to memory, and profit for each and all. ²⁶ For us who have undertaken the drudgery of this abridgement, it has been no easy task but a matter of sweat and sleeplessness, ²⁷ comparable to the exacting task of someone organising a banquet, whose aim is to satisfy a variety of tastes. Nevertheless, for the sake of rendering a general service, we remain glad to endure this drudgery, ²⁸ leaving accuracy of detail to the

²² The NJB has 're-established' in place of 'restored', here following the WEBBE.

²³ The two reigns cover the years 175–162 BCE. But Jason – a man of letters belonging to the important Jewish community of Cyrenaica – had worked to a larger timescale: the victory over Nicanor occurred in March 160, under Demetrius I; while the episode of Heliodorus, with which the author begins his story, is set in the reign of Seleucus IV, elder brother of Antiochus Epiphanes and father of Demetrius I.

²⁴ In place of 'confused mass of the numbers', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'spate of figures and the difficulty encountered, because of the mass of material'. Another reading for 'difficulties' is 'weariness'.

²⁵ The NJB has 'at providing diversion' in place of 'to provide'.

²⁶ In place of 'sleeplessness', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'midnight oil'.

²⁷ The WEBBE has 'painful labour' in place of 'drudgery' (as also in v. 26), here following the NJB.

²⁸ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "leaving to the historian the exact handling of every particular, and again having no strength to fill in the outlines of our abridgement."

συγγραφεῖ παραχωρήσαντες, τὸ δὲ ἐπιπορεύεσθαι τοῖς ὑπογραμμοῖς τῆς ἐπιτομῆς διαπονοῦντες.²⁹ καθάπερ γὰρ τῆς καινῆς οἰκίας ἀρχιτέκτονι τῆς ὅλης καταβολῆς φροντιστέον, τῷ δὲ ἐγκαίειν καὶ Ζωγραφεῖν ἐπιχειροῦντι τὰ ἐπιτήδεια πρὸς διακόσμησιν ἐξεταστέον, οὕτως δοκῶ καὶ ἐπὶ ἡμῶν.³⁰ τὸ μὲν ἐμβατεύειν καὶ περίπατον ποιεῖσθαι λόγων καὶ πολυπραγμονεῖν ἐν τοῖς κατὰ μέρος τῷ τῆς ἱστορίας ἀρχηγέτῃ καθήκει.³¹ τὸ δὲ σύντομον τῆς λέξεως μεταδιώκειν καὶ τὸ ἐξεργαστικὸν τῆς πραγματείας παραιτεῖσθαι τῷ τὴν μετάφρασιν ποιουμένῳ συγχωρητέον.

³² ἐντεῦθεν οὖν ἀρξώμεθα τῆς διηγήσεως τοῖς προειρημένοις τοσοῦτον ἐπιζεύξαντες· εὐήθες γὰρ τὸ μὲν πρὸ τῆς ἱστορίας πλεονάζειν, τὴν δὲ ἱστορίαν ἐπιτεμεῖν.

historian, and concentrating our effort on tracing the outlines in this condensed version.²⁹ Just as the architect of a new house is responsible for the construction as a whole, while the man undertaking the ceramic painting has to take into consideration only the decorative requirements, so, I think, it is with us.³⁰ To make the subject his own, to explore its by-ways, to be meticulous about details, is the business of the original historian,³¹ but the person making the adaptation should be allowed to aim at conciseness of expression and to forgo any exhaustive treatment of his subject.

³² So, let us begin our narrative, without adding any more to what has been said above; there is no sense in expanding the preface to the history and curtailing the history itself.

²⁹ The WEBBE has 'master builder' in place of 'architect'.

³⁰ In place of 'original historian', the WEBBE has 'first author of the history'.

³¹ The WEBBE has 'brevity' in place of 'conciseness'.

³² The NJB has 'would be no sense' in place of 'is no sense'.

Μακκαβαίων Β' 3

¹ Τῆς ἁγίας πόλεως κατοικουμένης μετὰ πάσης εἰρήνης καὶ τῶν νόμων ὅτι κάλλιστα συντηρουμένων διὰ τὴν Ονίου τοῦ ἀρχιερέως εὐσέβειάν τε καὶ μισοπονηρίαν ² συνέβαινεν καὶ αὐτοὺς τοὺς βασιλεῖς τιμᾶν τὸν τόπον καὶ τὸ ἱερόν ἀποστολαῖς ταῖς κρατίσταις δοξάζειν ³ ὥστε καὶ Σέλευκον τὸν τῆς Ἀσίας βασιλέα χορηγεῖν ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων προσόδων πάντα τὰ πρὸς τὰς λειτουργίας τῶν θυσιῶν ἐπιβάλλοντα δαπανήματα. ⁴ Σίμων δὲ τις ἐκ τῆς Βενιαμὶν φυλῆς προστάτης τοῦ ἱεροῦ καθεσταμένος διηνέχθη τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ περὶ τῆς κατὰ τὴν πόλιν ἀγορανομίας· ⁵ καὶ νικῆσαι τὸν Ονίαν μὴ δυνάμενος ἦλθεν πρὸς Ἀπολλώνιον Θαρσεοῦ τὸν κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν καιρὸν Κοίλης Συρίας καὶ Φοινίκης στρατηγόν ⁶ καὶ προσήγγειλεν περὶ τοῦ χρημάτων ἀμυδρήτων γέμειν τὸ ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις γαζοφυλάκιον ὥστε τὸ πλῆθος τῶν διαφόρων ἀναρίθμητον εἶναι, καὶ μὴ προσήκειν αὐτὰ πρὸς τὸν τῶν θυσιῶν λόγον, εἶναι δὲ δυνατόν ὑπὸ τὴν τοῦ

2 MACCABEES 3

¹ While the holy city was inhabited in all peace and the laws were observed as perfectly as possible, owing to the piety of Onias the High Priest and his hatred of wickedness, ² it came about that even the kings honoured the place and glorified the Temple with the noblest presents, ³ even to the extent that Seleucus king of Asia defrayed from his own revenues all the expenses arising out of the sacrificial liturgy. ⁴ However, a certain Simon, of the tribe of Benjamin, on being appointed administrator of the Temple, came into conflict with the High Priest over the regulation of the city markets. ⁵ Unable to get the better of Onias, he went off to Apollonius, son of Thraseos, who was at that time governor of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia, ⁶ and made out to him that the Treasury in Jerusalem was full of untold wealth, that the amount contributed was incalculable and out of all proportion to expenditure on the sacrifice, but that it could all be brought

2 MACCABEES 3

¹ The High Priest was Onias III, son of Simon II, whose praises are sung in Si 50:1ff; Onias also has his eulogy, in 2M 4:4–6, 15:12.

² The author has retained this colourful episode from Jason's book as illustrative of his thesis, set out in v. 39.

³ Ptolemy II and Ptolemy III of Egypt, as well as Antiochus III of Syria, had also in the previous century honoured the Temple by their presents. See 1M 10:39ff (on Demetrius I). Seleucus IV Philopator, son of Antiochus III, reigned 187–175 BCE; the events of 3:1–4:6 were in his reign.

⁴ The NJB, following the *Vetus Latina*, has 'Bilgah' in place of 'Benjamin', here following the LXX (*Βενιαμιν*) and NRSV. This was a priestly line (see Ne 12:5, 18). The 'administrator' was responsible for Temple finances. Simon was a grandson of Tobias, who married a sister of Onias II. When Onias II refused to pay tribute to Egypt, Ptolemy III took away his civil authority and appointed Joseph, son of Tobias, 'administrator of the Temple'; his son Simon succeeded him.

⁵ In place of 'son of Thraseos', the NRSV & WEBBE have 'of Tarsus'. Apollonius was removed from office at the death of Seleucus IV in 175 BCE.

⁶ The NJB has 'groaning with' in place of 'full of', here following the WEBBE.

βασιλέως ἐξουσίαν πεσεῖν ταῦτα. ⁷ συμμείζας δὲ ὁ Ἀπολλώνιος τῷ βασιλεῖ περὶ τῶν μηνυθέντων αὐτῷ χρημάτων ἐνεφάνισεν· ὁ δὲ προχειρισάμενος Ἡλιόδωρον τὸν ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων ἀπέστειλεν δοῦς ἐντολὰς τὴν τῶν προειρημένων χρημάτων ἐκκομιδὴν ποιήσασθαι. ⁸ εὐθέως δὲ ὁ Ἡλιόδωρος ἐποίητο τὴν πορείαν, τῇ μὲν ἐμφάσει ὡς τὰς κατὰ Κοίλην Συρίαν καὶ Φοινίκην πόλεις ἐφοδεῦσαι, τῷ πράγματι δὲ τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως πρόθεσιν ἐπιτελεῖν. ⁹ παραγεννηθεῖς δὲ εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα καὶ φιλοφρόνως ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως τῆς πόλεως ἀποδεχθεῖς ἀνέθετο περὶ τοῦ γεγονότος ἐμφανισμοῦ, καὶ τίνος ἕνεκεν πάρεστιν διεσάφησεν· ἐπυνθάνετο δὲ εἰ ταῖς ἀληθείαις ταῦτα οὕτως ἔχοντα τυγχάνει. ¹⁰ τοῦ δὲ ἀρχιερέως ὑποδείξαντος παρακαταθήκας εἶναι κτηρῶν τε καὶ ὀρφανῶν, ¹¹ τινὰ δὲ καὶ Ὑρκανοῦ τοῦ Τωβίου σφόδρα ἀνδρὸς ἐν ὑπεροχῇ κειμένου – οὕτως ἦν διαβάλλων ὁ δυσσεβὴς Σιμων – , τὰ δὲ πάντα ἀργυρίου τετρακόσια τάλαντα, χρυσίου δὲ διακόσια. ¹² ἀδίκηθῃναι δὲ τοὺς πεπιστευκότας τῇ τοῦ τόπου ἀγιωσύνῃ καὶ τῇ τοῦ τετιμημένου κατὰ τὸν σύμπαντα κόσμον ἱεροῦ σεμνότητι καὶ ἀσυλίᾳ παντελῶς ἀμήχανον εἶναι. ¹³ ὁ δὲ Ἡλιόδωρος, δι' ἃς

under the control of the king. ⁷ Apollonius met the king and told him about the wealth that had been disclosed to him; whereupon the king selected Heliodorus, his chancellor, and sent him with instructions to effect the removal of the reported wealth. ⁸ Heliodorus lost no time in setting out, ostensibly to inspect the towns of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia, but in fact to accomplish the king's purpose. ⁹ On his arrival in Jerusalem, and after a hospitable reception from the High Priest and the city, he announced what had been disclosed, thus revealing the reason for his presence, and asked if this was indeed the true situation. ¹⁰ The High Priest explained that there were funds set aside for widows and orphans, ¹¹ with some belonging to Hyrcanus son of Tobias, a man occupying a very exalted position, and that the whole sum, in contrast to what the evil Simon had alleged, amounted to four hundred talents of silver and two hundred of gold. ¹² He also added that it was entirely out of the question that an injustice should be done to those who had put their trust in the sanctity of the place and in the inviolable majesty of a Temple venerated throughout the entire world. ¹³ However,

⁷ The WEBBE has 'a command' in place of 'instructions'.

⁸ Throughout the book, the WEBBE has 'Coelesyria' in place of 'Coele-Syria'.

⁹ In place of 'High Priest and the city', the NRSV has 'High Priest of the city'.

¹⁰ The WEBBE has 'deposits of' in place of 'funds set aside for'.

¹¹ 'Tobias' was governor of Ammanitis (see #1M 5:13).

¹² The WEBBE ends with, "honoured over all the world."

¹³ The NJB has 'peremptorily' before 'insisted'.

εἶχεν βασιλικὰς ἐντολάς, πάντως ἔλεγεν εἰς τὸ βασιλικὸν ἀναλημπτέα ταῦτα εἶναι. ¹⁴ ταξάμενος δὲ ἡμέραν εἰσῆγει τὴν περὶ τούτων ἐπίσκεψιν οἰκονομήσων· ἦν δὲ οὐ μικρὰ κατ' ὅλην τὴν πόλιν ἀγωνία. ¹⁵ οἱ δὲ ἱερεῖς πρὸ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου ἐν ταῖς ἱερατικαῖς στολαῖς ῥίψαντες ἑαυτοὺς ἐπεκαλοῦντο εἰς οὐρανὸν τὸν περὶ παρακαταθήκης νομοθετήσαντα τοῖς παρακαταθεμένοις ταῦτα σῶα διαφυλάξαι. ¹⁶ ἦν δὲ ὁρῶντα τὴν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως ἰδέαν τιτρώσκεσθαι τὴν διάνοιαν· ἡ γὰρ ὄψις καὶ τὸ τῆς χροᾶς παρηλλαγμένον ἐνέφαινε τὴν κατὰ ψυχὴν ἀγωνίαν. ¹⁷ περιεκέχυτο γὰρ περὶ τὸν ἄνδρα δέος τι καὶ φρικασμὸς σώματος, δι' ὧν πρόδηλον ἐγίνετο τοῖς θεωροῦσιν τὸ κατὰ καρδίαν ἐνεστὸς ἄλγος. ¹⁸ ἔτι δὲ ἐκ τῶν οἰκιῶν ἀγγεληδὸν ἐξεπήδων ἐπὶ πάνδημον ἰκετείαν διὰ τὸ μέλλειν εἰς καταφρόνησιν ἔρχεσθαι τὸν τόπον. ¹⁹ ὑπεζωσμέναι δὲ ὑπὸ τοὺς μαστοὺς αἱ γυναῖκες σάκκους κατὰ τὰς ὁδοὺς ἐπλήθυνον· αἱ δὲ κατάκλειστοι τῶν παρθένων, αἱ μὲν συνέτρεχον ἐπὶ τοὺς πυλῶνας, αἱ δὲ ἐπὶ τὰ τεῖχη, τινὲς δὲ διὰ τῶν θυρίδων διεξέκυπτον. ²⁰ πᾶσαι δὲ προτείνουσαι τὰς χεῖρας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐποιοῦντο τὴν

Heliodorus, because of his instructions from the king, insisted that the funds must be confiscated for the royal exchequer. ¹⁴ Fixing a day for the purpose, he went in to draw up an inventory of the funds. There was no small distress throughout the city; ¹⁵ the priests in their sacred vestments prostrated themselves before the altar and prayed to Heaven, to the Author of the law governing deposits, to preserve these funds intact for the depositors. ¹⁶ The appearance of the High Priest was enough to pierce the heart of the beholder, his expression and his altered colour betraying the anguish of his soul; ¹⁷ the man was so overwhelmed by fear and bodily trembling that those who saw him could not possibly mistake the distress he was suffering. ¹⁸ People rushed headlong from the houses, intent on making public supplication because of the indignity threatening the holy place. ¹⁹ Women thronged the streets swathed in sackcloth below their breasts; girls secluded indoors came running, some to the doorways, some to the city walls, while others leaned out of the windows; ²⁰ and, stretching out their hands

¹⁴ The NJB has 'little consternation' in place of 'small distress', here following the WEBBE.

¹⁵ The WEBBE has 'called upon' in place of 'prayed to'.

¹⁶ Another reading for 'pierce the heart' is 'wound the mind'.

¹⁷ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "For a terror and a shuddering of the body had come over the man, by which the pain that was in his heart was plainly shown to those who looked at him."

¹⁸ Temples, whether pagan or Jewish, were considered inviolate.

¹⁹ The WEBBE has 'virgins' in place of 'girls', here following the NJB.

²⁰ Before 'supplication', the WEBBE adds 'solemn'.

λιτανείαν· ²¹ ἔλεεῖν δ' ἦν τὴν τοῦ πλήθους παμμιγῆ πρόπτωσιν τὴν τε τοῦ μεγάλως ἀγωνιῶντος ἀρχιερέως προσδοκίαν. ²² οἱ μὲν οὖν ἐπεκαλοῦντο τὸν παγκρατῆ κύριον τὰ πεπιστευμένα τοῖς πεπιστευκόσιν σῶα διαφυλάσσειν μετὰ πάσης ἀσφαλείας. ²³ ὁ δὲ Ἡλιόδωρος τὸ διεγνωσμένον ἐπετέλει.

²⁴ αὐτόθι δὲ αὐτοῦ σὺν τοῖς δορυφόροις κατὰ τὸ γαζοφυλάκιον ἦδη παρόντος ὁ τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης ἐξουσίας δυνάστης ἐπιφάνειαν μεγάλην ἐποίησεν ὥστε πάντας τοὺς κατατολμήσαντας συνελθεῖν καταπλαγέντας τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ δύναμιν εἰς ἔκλυσιν καὶ δειλίαν τραπήναι. ²⁵ ὥφθη γάρ τις ἵππος αὐτοῖς φοβερόν ἔχων τὸν ἐπιβάτην καὶ καλλίστη σαγῇ διακεκοσμημένος, φερόμενος δὲ ῥύδην ἐνέσεισεν τῷ Ἡλιοδώρῳ τὰς ἐμπροσθίους ὀπλάς· ὁ δὲ ἐπικαθήμενος ἐφαίνετο χρυσοῦν πανοπλίαν ἔχων. ²⁶ ἔτεροι δὲ δύο προσεφάνησαν αὐτῷ νεανῖαι τῇ ῥώμῃ μὲν ἐκπρεπεῖς, κάλλιστοι δὲ τὴν δόξαν, διαπρεπεῖς δὲ τὴν περιβολήν, οἳ καὶ περιστάντες ἐξ ἑκατέρου μέρους ἐμαστίγουν αὐτὸν ἀδιαλείπτως πολλὰς ἐπιρριπτοῦντες αὐτῷ πληγὰς. ²⁷ ἄφνω δὲ πεσόντα πρὸς τὴν γῆν καὶ πολλῷ σκότει περιχυθέντα

to Heaven, they all made supplication. ²¹ It was pitiful to see the people crowding together to prostrate themselves and the anxiety of the High Priest in his deep distress. ²² While they were calling on the Almighty Lord to preserve the deposits intact for the depositors, in full security, ²³ Heliodorus set about his appointed task.

²⁴ He had already arrived with his bodyguard near the Treasury, when the Sovereign of spirits and of every power caused so great an apparition that all who had dared to accompany Heliodorus were dumbfounded at the power of God and fainted in terror. ²⁵ A horse richly caparisoned and carrying a fearsome rider appeared before their eyes. Rearing violently, it struck at Heliodorus with its forefeet. The rider was seen to be accoutred entirely in gold. ²⁶ Two other young men of outstanding strength and radiant beauty, magnificently apparelled, appeared to him at the same time and, taking their stand on each side of him, flogged him unremittingly, inflicting stroke after stroke. ²⁷ Suddenly, Heliodorus fell to the ground, enveloped in thick darkness. His men came to his rescue and placed him on a stretcher,

²¹ In place of 'anxiety ... distress', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'foreboding ... anguish'.

²² The NJB has 'all-powerful' in place of the proper name, 'Almighty', here following the WEBBE.

²³ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "Heliodorus went on to execute that which had been decreed."

²⁴ The NJB ends with, "reduced to abject terror;" here, we follow the WEBBE.

²⁵ This may be a description of a vision of 'the Angel of Death'.

²⁶ It is not entirely clear but these two 'young men' may also have been angels (cf. #25).

²⁷ The NJB has 'litter' in place of 'stretcher', here following the WEBBE.

συναρπάσαντες καὶ εἰς φορεῖον ἐνθύντες ²⁸ τὸν ἄρτι μετὰ πολλῆς παραδρομῆς καὶ πάσης δορυφορίας εἰς τὸ προειρημένον εἰσελθόντα γαζοφυλάκιον ἔφερον ἀβοήθητον ἑαυτῷ καθεστῶτα φανερῶς τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ δυναστείαν ἐπεγνωκότες.

²⁹ καὶ ὁ μὲν διὰ τὴν θείαν ἐνέργειαν ἄφωνος καὶ πάσης ἐστερημένος ἐλπίδος καὶ σωτηρίας ἔρριπτο, ³⁰ οἱ δὲ τὸν κύριον εὐλόγουν τὸν παραδοξάζοντα τὸν ἑαυτοῦ τόπον, καὶ τὸ μικρῷ πρότερον δέους καὶ ταραχῆς γέμον ἱερὸν τοῦ παντοκράτορος ἐπιφανέντος κυρίου χαρᾶς καὶ εὐφροσύνης ἐπεπλήρωτο. ³¹ ταχὺ δὲ τινες τῶν τοῦ Ἡλιοδώρου συνήθων ἠξίουσαν τὸν Ονίαν ἐπικαλέσασθαι τὸν ὑψιστον καὶ τὸ ζῆν χαρίσασθαι τῷ παντελῶς ἐν ἐσχάτῃ πνοῇ κειμένῳ.

³² ὑποπτος δὲ γενόμενος ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς μήποτε διάλημψιν ὁ βασιλεὺς σχῆν κακουργίαν τινὰ περὶ τὸν Ἡλιοδώρον ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων συντετελέσθαι προσήγαγεν θυσίαν ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ ἀνδρὸς σωτηρίας. ³³ ποιουμένου δὲ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως τὸν ἱλασμόν οἱ αὐτοὶ νεανῖαι πάλιν ἐφάνησαν τῷ Ἡλιοδώρῳ ἐν ταῖς αὐταῖς ἐσθήσεσιν ἐστολισμένοι καὶ στάντες εἶπον Πολλὰς Ονία τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ χάριτας ἔχε, διὰ γὰρ αὐτόν σοι κεχάρισται

²⁸ this man who but a moment before had made his way into the Treasury, as we said above, with a great retinue and his whole bodyguard; and, as they carried him away, powerless to help himself, they openly acknowledged the sovereign power of God.

²⁹ While he lay prostrate under the divine visitation, speechless and bereft of all hope of deliverance, ³⁰ they blessed the Lord who had miraculously glorified his own place; and the Temple, which a little while before had been filled with terror and alarm, was filled with joy and gladness after the Almighty Lord appeared. ³¹ Some of Heliodorus' friends implored Onias to entreat the Most High to grant the man his life, lying as he did at the very point of death.

³² The High Priest, afraid that the king might suspect the Jews of some foul play concerning Heliodorus, did indeed offer a sacrifice for the man's recovery. ³³ While the High Priest was performing the rite of atonement, the same young men again appeared to Heliodorus, wearing the same apparel and, standing beside him, said, "Be very grateful to Onias the High Priest, since it is for his sake that the Lord has granted

²⁸ The translation of the WEBBE implies that it was Heliodorus, not his guards, who were made to acknowledge the power of God.

²⁹ The NJB has the name, 'Heliodorus', in place of the pronoun, 'he', though the name is not in the Greek text here.

³⁰ Jewish and gentile literature of the Graeco-Roman period is full of these 'epiphanies' and 'theophanies', illustrative of divine omnipotence. In 2M, the interventions take the form either of apparitions or of victories against overwhelming odds.

³¹ The 'Most High' (Gn 14:18) is a title often used by non-Jews (Dn 3:26, Mk 5:7).

³² The WEBBE has 'treachery' in place of 'foul play'.

³³ The appearance (and disappearance, v. 34) and words of the 'young men' here seem to support the idea that they are angels (cf. #25, #26).

τὸ ζῆν ὁ κύριος· ³⁴ σὺ δὲ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ μεμαστιγωμένος διάγγελλε πᾶσι τὸ μεγαλεῖον τοῦ θεοῦ κράτος. ταῦτα δὲ εἰπόντες ἀφανεῖς ἐγένοντο.

³⁵ ὁ δὲ Ἡλιόδωρος θυσίαν ἀνενέγκας τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ εὐχὰς μεγίστας εὐξάμενος τῷ τὸ ζῆν περιποιήσαντι καὶ τὸν Ονιαν ἀποδεξάμενος ἀνестρατοπέδευσεν πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα.

³⁶ ἐξεμαρτύρει δὲ πᾶσιν ἅπερ ἦν ὑπ’ ὅψιν τεθεαμένος ἔργα τοῦ μεγίστου θεοῦ. ³⁷ τοῦ δὲ βασιλέως ἐπερωτήσαντος τὸν Ἡλιόδωρον ποῖός τις εἴη ἐπιτήδειος ἔτι ἅπαξ διαπεμφθῆναι εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, ἔφησεν ³⁸ Εἴ τινα ἔχεις πολέμιον ἢ πραγμάτων ἐπίβουλον, πέμψον αὐτὸν ἐκεῖ, καὶ μεμαστιγωμένον αὐτὸν προσδέξῃ, ἐάνπερ καὶ διασωθῇ, διὰ τὸ περὶ τὸν τόπον ἀληθῶς εἶναί τινα θεοῦ δύναμιν· ³⁹ αὐτὸς γὰρ ὁ τὴν κατοικίαν ἐπουράνιον ἔχων ἐπόπτης ἐστὶν καὶ βοηθὸς ἐκείνου τοῦ τόπου καὶ τοὺς παραγινόμενους ἐπὶ κακώσει τύπτων ἀπολλύει. ⁴⁰ καὶ τὰ μὲν κατὰ Ἡλιόδωρον καὶ τὴν τοῦ γαζοφυλακίου τήρησιν οὕτως ἐχώρησεν.

you your life. ³⁴ As for you, who have been scourged by Heaven, you must proclaim to all men the grandeur of God’s power.” So, saying, they vanished.

³⁵ Heliodorus made sacrifice to the Lord and made most solemn vows to the preserver of his life, and then took leave of Onias and marched his forces back to the king. ³⁶ He testified to all men about the works of the supreme God that he had seen with his eyes. ³⁷ When the king asked Heliodorus what sort of man would be the right person to send to Jerusalem on a second occasion, he replied, ³⁸ “If you have some enemy or anyone disloyal to the state, send him there, and you will get him back well flogged, if he survives at all, since some peculiarly divine power attaches to the holy place. ³⁹ He who has his dwelling in heaven watches over the place and defends it, and he strikes down and destroys those who come to harm it.” ⁴⁰ This was the outcome of the affair of Heliodorus and the preservation of the Treasury.

³⁴ The WEBBE ends with, “When they had spoken these words, they vanished out of sight.”

³⁵ The literal translation of ‘most solemn’ is ‘greatest’ (the WEBBE has ‘great’).

³⁶ The WEBBE has ‘greatest’ in place of ‘supreme’.

³⁷ For ‘right sort of man’, the WEBBE has ‘sort of man fit’.

³⁸ The WEBBE has ‘power of God’ in place of ‘divine power’.

³⁹ In place of ‘defends’, the WEBBE has ‘helps’.

⁴⁰ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, “This was the history of Heliodorus and the keeping of the treasury.”

Μακκαβαίων Β' 4

¹ Ὁ δὲ προειρημένος Σιμων ὁ τῶν χρημάτων καὶ τῆς πατρίδος ἐνδείκτης γεγονὼς ἐκακολόγει τὸν Ονιαν, ὡς αὐτὸς τε εἶη τὸν Ἡλιόδωρον ἐπισεσικῶς καὶ τῶν κακῶν δημιουργὸς καθεστηκώς, ² καὶ τὸν εὐεργέτην τῆς πόλεως καὶ τὸν κηδεμόνα τῶν ὁμοεθνῶν καὶ ζηλωτὴν τῶν νόμων ἐπίβουλον τῶν πραγμάτων ἐτόλμα λέγειν. ³ τῆς δὲ ἔχθρας ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον προβαινούσης ὥστε καὶ διὰ τινος τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ Σιμωνος δεδοκιμασμένων φόνους συντελεῖσθαι, ⁴ συνορῶν ὁ Ονίας τὸ χαλεπὸν τῆς φιλονεικίας καὶ Ἀπολλώνιον Μενεσθέως τὸν Κοίλης Συρίας καὶ Φοινίκης στρατηγὸν συναύξοντα τὴν κακίαν τοῦ Σιμωνος, ⁵ πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα διεκομίσθη οὐ γινόμενος τῶν πολιτῶν κατήγορος, τὸ δὲ σύμφορον κοινῇ καὶ κατ' ἰδίαν παντὶ τῷ πλήθει σκοπῶν. ⁶ ἑώρα γὰρ ἄνευ βασιλικῆς προνοίας ἀδύνατον εἶναι τυχεῖν εἰρήνης ἔτι τὰ πράγματα καὶ τὸν Σιμονα παῦλαν οὐ λημψόμενον τῆς ἀνοίας. ⁷ Μεταλλάξαντος δὲ τὸν βίον Σελεύκου καὶ παραλαβόντος τὴν βασιλείαν Ἀντιόχου τοῦ προσαγορευθέντος Ἐπιφανοῦς

2 MACCABEES 4

¹ The aforementioned Simon, the informer against the funds and against his country, slandered Onias, saying he had been responsible for the assault on Heliodorus, had been the real cause of this misfortune. ² He dared to name this benefactor of the city, this protector of his compatriots, this zealot for the laws, as an enemy of the public good. ³ This hostility reached such proportions that murders were committed by one of Simon's agents ⁴ and, at this point, Onias, recognising how mischievous this rivalry was, and aware that Apollonius son of Menestheus, the general commanding Coele-Syria and Phoenicia, was encouraging Simon in his malice, ⁵ went to see the king, not to play the accuser of his fellow citizens, but having the public and private welfare of the entire people at heart. ⁶ He saw that, without some intervention by the king, an orderly administration would no longer be possible, nor would Simon put a stop to his folly. ⁷ When Seleucus had departed this life and Antiochus styled Epiphanes had succeeded to the kingdom, Jason, brother of

2 MACCABEES 4

- ¹ Simon's implication was that Onias had frightened Heliodorus by means of some trick.
- ² The NJB opens with 'Simon now had the effrontery' in place of 'He dared', here following the WEBBE.
- ³ The NJB has 'some of' in place of 'one of', here following the WEBBE.
- ⁴ Compare 4:21, 3:5. The Greek as commonly read means Apollonius, as being the governor ... Phoenicia, did rage, and increase *etc.*
- ⁵ The literal translation of 'entire people' is 'multitude'.
- ⁶ The WEBBE has 'madness' in place of 'folly'.
- ⁷ The new king was Antiochus IV (175-164 BCE), brother of Seleucus IV. The death of Seleucus, engineered by Heliodorus in 175 BCE, defeated the aspirations of Onias. Joshua, his brother, showed his approval of the Hellenising policy by changing his name to Jason.

ὑπενόθευσεν Ἰάσων ὁ ἀδελφὸς Ονίου τὴν ἀρχιερωσύνην
⁸ ἐπαγγειλάμενος τῷ βασιλεῖ δι' ἐντεύξεως ἀργυρίου
τάλαντα ἑξήκοντα πρὸς τοῖς τριακοσίοις καὶ προσόδου τινὸς
ἄλλης τάλαντα ὀγδοήκοντα. ⁹ πρὸς δὲ τούτοις ὑπισχνεῖτο καὶ
ἕτερα διαγράφειν πεντήκοντα πρὸς τοῖς ἑκατόν, ἐὰν
ἐπιχωρηθῇ διὰ τῆς ἐξουσίας αὐτοῦ γυμνάσιον καὶ ἐφηβεῖον
αὐτῷ συστήσασθαι καὶ τοὺς ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις Ἀντιοχεῖς
ἀναγράψαι. ¹⁰ ἐπινεύσαντος δὲ τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς
κρατήσας εὐθέως πρὸς τὸν Ἑλληνικὸν χαρακτῆρα τοὺς
ὁμοφύλους μετέστησε. ¹¹ καὶ τὰ κείμενα τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις
φιλάνθρωπα βασιλικά διὰ Ἰωάννου τοῦ πατρὸς Εὐπολέμου
τοῦ ποιησαμένου τὴν πρεσβείαν ὑπὲρ φιλίας καὶ συμμαχίας
πρὸς τοὺς Ῥωμαίους παρώσας καὶ τὰς μὲν νομίμους
καταλύων πολιτείας παρανόμους ἐθισμοὺς ἐκαίνιζεν.
¹² ἀσμένως γὰρ ὑπ' αὐτὴν τὴν ἀκρόπολιν γυμνάσιον
καθίδρυσεν καὶ τοὺς κρατίστους τῶν ἐφήβων ὑποτάσσων ὑπὸ
πέτασον ἤγαγεν. ¹³ ἦν δ' οὕτως ἀκμή τις Ἑλληνισμοῦ καὶ
πρόσβασις ἀλλοφυλισμοῦ διὰ τὴν τοῦ ἀσεβοῦς καὶ οὐκ

Onias, usurped the High Priesthood: ⁸ he approached the
king with a promise of three hundred and sixty talents of
silver, with eighty talents to come from another fund. ⁹ He
further committed himself to paying another hundred and
fifty, if the king would empower him to set up a gymnasium
and youth centre, and to enrol the people of Jerusalem as
citizens of Antioch. ¹⁰ When the king gave his assent, Jason,
as soon as he had seized power, imposed the Greek way of
life on his fellow countrymen. ¹¹ He suppressed the liberties
that the kings had graciously granted to the Jews at the
insistence of John, father of the Eupolemus who was later to
be sent on an embassy to negotiate a treaty of friendship and
alliance with the Romans and, overthrowing the lawful
institutions, introduced new usages contrary to the Law.
¹² He went so far as to found a gymnasium at the very foot of
the Citadel, and to fit out the noblest of his young men in the
petasos. ¹³ Godless wretch that he was and no true High
Priest, Jason set no bounds to his impiety; indeed, the

⁸ In place of 'another fund', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'some other source of revenue'.

⁹ The 'youth centre' was an organisation of youths between 18 and 20 years of age for military, physical and, to some extent, cultural training.

¹⁰ Like Alexander the Great and his successors, Antiochus promoted the Greek way of life in order to strengthen his kingdom through cultural unity; this involved worship of other gods.

¹¹ For 'liberties that the kings had graciously granted', the WEBBE has 'royal ordinances of special favour'.

¹² The 'Citadel', or acropolis, of the period, where the Syrian garrison was stationed, overlooked the northwest corner of the Temple court (see Ne 7:2), later becoming the Antonia of Herod the Great. The sports ground was therefore adjacent to the sanctuary. The 'petasos', a broad-rimmed hat worn by athletes, was the conventional headdress of Hermes, their patron; headgear has usually had national or religious significance in the East.

¹³ The LXX lacks 'true'; Jason got the office by bribery and did not keep the Mosaic Law.

ἀρχιερέως Ἰάσωνος ὑπερβάλλουσιν ἀναγνείαν ¹⁴ ὥστε μηκέτι περὶ τὰς τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου λειτουργίας προθύμους εἶναι τοὺς ἱερεῖς, ἀλλὰ τοῦ μὲν νεὼ καταφρονοῦντες καὶ τῶν θυσιῶν ἀμελοῦντες ἔσπευδον μετέχειν τῆς ἐν παλαιστρη παρανόμου χορηγίας μετὰ τὴν τοῦ δίσκου πρόσκλησιν, ¹⁵ καὶ τὰς μὲν πατέρας τιμὰς ἐν οὐδενὶ τιθέμενοι, τὰς δὲ Ἑλληνικὰς δόξας καλλίστας ἡγούμενοι. ¹⁶ ὧν καὶ χάριν περιέσχευεν αὐτοὺς χαλεπὴ περίστασις, καὶ ὧν ἐζήλουν τὰς ἀγωγὰς καὶ καθ' ἅπαν ἤθελον ἐξομοιοῦσθαι, τούτους πολεμίους καὶ τιμωρητὰς ἔσχον. ¹⁷ ἀσεβεῖν γὰρ εἰς τοὺς θεοὺς νόμους οὐ ῥάδιον, ἀλλὰ ταῦτα ὁ ἀκόλουθος καιρὸς δηλώσει.

¹⁸ Ἀγομένου δὲ πενταετηρικοῦ ἀγῶνος ἐν Τύρῳ καὶ τοῦ βασιλέως παρόντος ¹⁹ ἀπέστειλεν Ἰάσων ὁ μισαρὸς θεωροὺς ὡς ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων Ἀντιοχεῖς ὄντας παρακομίζοντας ἀργυρίου δραχμὰς τριακοσίας εἰς τὴν τοῦ Ἡρακλέους θυσίαν, αἱ καὶ ἡξίωσαν οἱ παρακομίσαντες μὴ χρῆσθαι εἰς θυσίαν διὰ τὸ μὴ καθήκειν, εἰς ἑτέραν δὲ καταθέσθαι δαπάνην. ²⁰ ἔπεσε μὲν οὖν ταῦτα διὰ μὲν τὸν ἀποστείλαντα εἰς τὴν τοῦ

Hellenising process reached such a pitch ¹⁴ that the priests ceased to show any interest in serving the altar; but, scorning the Temple and neglecting the sacrifices, they would hurry, on the stroke of the gong, to take part in the distribution, forbidden by the Law, of the oil on the exercise ground; ¹⁵ setting no store by the honours of their fathers, they esteemed Greek glories best of all. ¹⁶ However, all this brought its own retribution; the very people whose way of life they envied, whom they sought to resemble in everything, proved to be their enemies and executioners. ¹⁷ It is no small thing to violate the divine laws, as the period that followed will demonstrate.

¹⁸ On the occasion of the quinquennial games at Tyre in the king's presence, ¹⁹ the vile Jason sent sacred envoys, citizens of Antioch from Jerusalem, taking with them three hundred silver drachmas for the sacrifice to Hercules. Yet, even those who brought the money did not think it would be right to spend it on the sacrifice and decided to reserve it for some other purpose; ²⁰ and so, what the sender had intended for

¹⁴ The 'oil' was that with which the athletes rubbed themselves; their instructors distributed it.

¹⁵ The NJB has 'fatherland' in place of 'fathers', here following the WEBBE.

¹⁶ The WEBBE has 'calamity' in place of 'retribution'.

¹⁷ For the interpretation of disaster as the result of forsaking the Torah, see 1K 17:5–18, 2Ch 36:11–21, Ne 9.

¹⁸ For 'quinquennial', both the NJB and NRSV have 'quadrennial' but the Greek word (πενταετηρικοῦ) quite clearly relates to **five** years; the WEBBE reads 'games that came every five years'.

¹⁹ 'Hercules' was the Greek name for the god Melkart of Tyre.

²⁰ 'Triremes' were war vessels manned by three benches of rowers. In place of 'at the suggestion of the bearers', the WEBBE has 'on account of present circumstances'.

Ἡρακλέους θυσίαν, ἔνεκεν δὲ τῶν παρακομιζόντων εἰς τὰς τῶν τριηρέων κατασκευάς.

²¹ Ἀποσταλέντος δὲ εἰς Αἴγυπτον Ἀπολλωνίου τοῦ Μενεσθέως διὰ τὰ πρωτοκλίσια τοῦ Φιλομήτορος βασιλέως μεταλαβὼν Ἀντίοχος ἀλλότριον αὐτὸν τῶν αὐτοῦ γεγονέναι πραγμάτων τῆς καθ' αὐτὸν ἀσφαλείας ἐφρόντιζεν· ὅθεν εἰς Ἰοππὴν παραγενόμενος κατήντησεν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα. ²² μεγαλομερῶς δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἰάσωνος καὶ τῆς πόλεως ἀποδεχθεὶς μετὰ θαυμάσιας καὶ βοῶν εἰσεδέχθη, εἶθ' οὕτως εἰς τὴν Φοινίκην κατεστρατοπέδευσεν.

²³ Μετὰ δὲ τριετῇ χρόνον ἀπέστειλεν Ἰάσων Μενέλαον τὸν τοῦ προσημαινομένου Σιμωνος ἀδελφὸν παρακομιζόντα τὰ χρήματα τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ περὶ πραγμάτων ἀναγκαίων ὑπομνηματισμοὺς τελέσοντα. ²⁴ ὁ δὲ συσταθεὶς τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ δοξάσας αὐτὸν τῷ προσώπῳ τῆς ἐξουσίας εἰς ἑαυτὸν κατήντησεν τὴν ἀρχιερωσύνην ὑπερβαλὼν τὸν Ἰάσωνα τάλαντα ἀργυρίου τριακόσια. ²⁵ λαβὼν δὲ τὰς βασιλικὰς ἐντολὰς παρεγένετο τῆς μὲν ἀρχιερωσύνης οὐδὲν ἄξιον φέρων, θυμοὺς δὲ ὤμοῦ τυράννου καὶ θηρὸς βαρβάρου ὀργὰς ἔχων.

the sacrifice to Hercules, was in fact applied, at the suggestion of the bearers, to the construction of triremes.

²¹ Apollonius son of Menestheus had been sent to Egypt to attend the wedding of King Philometor. Antiochus, having learnt that the latter had become hostile to his affairs, began thinking about his own safety: that was why he had come to Joppa. He then moved to Jerusalem, ²² where he was given a magnificent welcome by Jason and the city and escorted in by torchlight with acclamation. After which, he marched his army into Phoenicia.

²³ When three years had passed, Jason sent Menelaus, brother of the Simon mentioned above, to convey the money to the king and to complete negotiations on various essential matters. ²⁴ However, Menelaus, when presented to the king, flattered him by his own appearance of authority, and so secured the High Priesthood for himself, outbidding Jason by three hundred talents of silver. ²⁵ He returned with the royal mandate, bringing nothing worthy of the High Priesthood and supported only by the fury of a cruel tyrant and the rage

²¹ This was the marriage of Ptolemy VI Philometor with his sister Cleopatra II. In place of 'wedding' (here following the *NJB*), the *NRSV* has 'coronation' and the *WEBBE* has 'enthronement' (172 BCE); the meaning of the Greek (literally 'presidency') is uncertain. His advisers abandoned Cleopatra's (I) policy, became hostile to Syria and claimed Palestine.

²² Phoenicia, administratively speaking, included the coast of Palestine. 'Joppa' (modern Jaffa, 65 Km from Jerusalem) may have been the king's headquarters.

²³ The 'money' was the annual tribute (see v. 8, 1M 11:28) and possibly other sums promised as well (see v. 9).

²⁴ 'Menelaus' reigned from about 172 to 162 BCE, when he was executed (13:3-8) and replaced by Alcimus (14:3-14).

²⁵ The *WEBBE* has 'animal' in place of 'beast'.

²⁶ καὶ ὁ μὲν Ἰάσων ὁ τὸν ἴδιον ἀδελφὸν ὑπονοθεύσας ὑπονοθευθεὶς ὑφ' ἐτέρου φυγὰς εἰς τὴν Ἀμμανίτιν χώραν συνήλαστο. ²⁷ ὁ δὲ Μενέλαος τῆς μὲν ἀρχῆς ἐκράτει, τῶν δὲ ἐπηγγελημένων τῷ βασιλεῖ χρημάτων οὐδὲν εὐτάκει· ²⁸ ποιουμένου δὲ τὴν ἀπαίτησιν Σωστράτου τοῦ τῆς ἀκροπόλεως ἐπάρχου, πρὸς τοῦτον γὰρ ἦν ἡ τῶν διαφορῶν προᾶξις· δι' ἣν αἰτίαν οἱ δύο ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως προσεκλήθησαν, ²⁹ καὶ ὁ μὲν Μενέλαος ἀπέλιπεν τῆς ἀρχιερωσύνης διάδοχον Λυσίμαχον τὸν ἑαυτοῦ ἀδελφόν, Σώστρατος δὲ Κράτητα τὸν ἐπὶ τῶν Κυπρίων.

³⁰ Τοιούτων δὲ συνεστηκότων συνέβη Ταρσεῖς καὶ Μαλλώτας στασιάζειν διὰ τὸ Ἀντιοχίδι τῇ παλλακῇ τοῦ βασιλέως ἐν δωρεᾷ δεδόσθαι. ³¹ θᾶπτον οὖν ὁ βασιλεὺς ἤκεν καταστεῖλαι τὰ πράγματα καταλιπὼν τὸν διαδεχόμενον Ἀνδρόνικον τῶν ἐν ἀξιώματι κειμένων. ³² νομίσας δὲ ὁ Μενέλαος εἰληφέναι καιρὸν εὐφυῆ χρυσώματά τινα τῶν τοῦ ἱεροῦ νοσφισάμενος ἐχαρίσατο τῷ Ἀνδρονίκῳ καὶ ἕτερα ἐτύγγανεν πεπρακὼς εἰς τε Τύρον καὶ τὰς κύκλῳ πόλεις. ³³ ἃ καὶ σαφῶς ἐπεγνωκὼς ὁ Ονίας ἀπήλεγχεν ἀποκεχωρηκὼς

of a savage beast. ²⁶ Thus Jason, who had supplanted his own brother, was in turn supplanted by a third, and obliged to take refuge in Ammanitis. ²⁷ As for Menelaus, he secured the office but defaulted altogether on the sums promised to the king, ²⁸ although Sostratus, the commandant of the Citadel, whose business it was to collect the revenue, kept demanding payment. The two of them in consequence were summoned before the king, ²⁹ Menelaus leaving his brother Lysimachus as deputy High Priest, while Sostratus left Crates, the commander of the Cypriots, to act for him.

³⁰ While all this was going on, the people of Tarsus and Mallus revolted, because they had been given as a present to Antiochis, the king's concubine. ³¹ So, the king hurried off to settle the affair, leaving Andronicus, one of high rank, to act as his deputy. ³² Thinking he had a favourable opportunity, Menelaus abstracted a number of golden vessels from the Temple and presented them to Andronicus and managed to sell others to Tyre and the surrounding cities. ³³ When Onias had clear evidence of this, he retired to a place of sanctuary

²⁶ For 'in Ammanitis' (Ἀμμανίτιν), the WEBBE reads 'in the country of the Ammonites'.

²⁷ The WEBBE includes the words 'although Sostratus ... kept demanding payment' (here in v. 28) as part of this verse.

²⁸ In place of 'commandant', the WEBBE has 'governor'.

²⁹ The 'Cypriots' were mercenary soldiers. The WEBBE has 'successor' in place of 'deputy' (as also in v. 31).

³⁰ 'Mallus' was on the Pyramus River, east of 'Tarsus' (3:5). Hellenistic kings often provided a wife or concubine with a regular income by giving her a city. Antiochus, being extravagant (see #1M 3:30), was often in need of money.

³¹ The literal translation of 'deputy' is 'successor'.

³² After 'had', the NJB adds 'found'.

³³ 'Daphne', about 8 Km from Antioch, had a sanctuary to Apollo and Artemis.

εἰς ἄσυλον τόπον ἐπὶ Δάφνης τῆς πρὸς Ἀντιόχειαν κειμένης.
³⁴ ὅθεν ὁ Μενέλαος λαβὼν ἰδίᾳ τὸν Ἀνδρόνικον παρεκάλει
χειρώσασθαι τὸν Ονιαν· ὁ δὲ παραγενόμενος ἐπὶ τὸν Ονιαν
καὶ πεισθεὶς ἐπὶ δόλῳ καὶ δεξιασθεὶς μεθ' ὅρκων δοὺς δεξιάν,
καίπερ ἐν ὑποψία κείμενος, ἔπεισεν ἐκ τοῦ ἄσylvου προελθεῖν,
ὃν καὶ παραχρῆμα παρέκλεισεν οὐκ αἰδεσθεὶς τὸ δίκαιον.
³⁵ δι' ἣν αἰτίαν οὐ μόνον Ἰουδαῖοι, πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων
ἐθνῶν ἐδείναζον καὶ ἐδυσφόρουν ἐπὶ τῷ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἀδίκῳ
φόνῳ.

³⁶ τοῦ δὲ βασιλέως ἐπανελθόντος ἀπὸ τῶν κατὰ Κιλικίαν
τόπων ἐνετύγχανον οἱ κατὰ πόλιν Ἰουδαῖοι
συμμισητοπονηρούντων καὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ὑπὲρ τοῦ παρὰ λόγον
τὸν Ονιαν ἀπεκτονῆσθαι. ³⁷ ψυχικῶς οὖν ὁ Ἀντίοχος
ἐπιλυπηθεὶς καὶ τραπεὶς ἐπὶ ἔλεος καὶ δακρύσας διὰ τὴν τοῦ
μετηλλαχότος σωφροσύνην καὶ πολλὴν εὐταξίαν ³⁸ καὶ
πυρωθεὶς τοῖς θυμοῖς παραχρῆμα τὴν τοῦ Ἀνδρονίκου
πορφύραν περιελόμενος καὶ τοὺς χιτῶνας περιροήσας
περιαγαγὼν καθ' ὅλην τὴν πόλιν ἐπ' αὐτὸν τὸν τόπον, οὗπερ
τὸν Ονιαν ἡσέβησεν, ἐκεῖ τὸν μαιιφόνον ἀπεκόσμησεν τοῦ
κυρίου τὴν ἀξίαν αὐτῷ κόλασιν ἀποδόντος.

at Daphne near Antioch and reproved him. ³⁴ Menelaus then
had a quiet word with Andronicus, urging him to get rid of
Onias. Andronicus sought out Onias and, resorting to the
trick of offering him his right hand on oath, succeeded in
persuading him, despite the latter's suspicions, to leave the
sanctuary; whereupon, in defiance of all justice, he
immediately put him to death. ³⁵ The result was that not only
Jews, but also many people of other nationalities, were
appalled and outraged by the unjust murder of this man.

³⁶ On the king's return from the region of Cilicia, the Jews of
the capital and those Greeks who shared their hatred of the
crime, appealed to him about the unjustified murder of
Onias. ³⁷ Antiochus was profoundly grieved and filled with
pity, and he wept for the prudence and moderation of the
dead man. ³⁸ Burning with indignation, he immediately
stripped Andronicus of the purple, tore his garments off him
and, parading him through the length of the city, rid the
world of the assassin on the very spot where he had laid
impious hands on Onias, the Lord dealing out to him the
punishment he deserved.

³⁴ Before 'suspicions', the NJB adds 'lingering'.

³⁵ The murder was considered 'unjust' because he had been lured from a place protected by the gods.

³⁶ The WEBBE has 'wickedness' in place of 'crime'.

³⁷ For 'prudence and moderation', the WEBBE reads 'sober and well-ordered life'.

³⁸ Onias is the 'Anointed Prince' of Dn 9:25ff and the 'Prince of the Covenant' of Dn 11:22. His death opens the 7th and final week of years, the mid-point of which is marked by the cessation of sacrifice and the installation of the 'appalling abomination' (Dn 9:27, see 2M 1:9, 6:2, 10:5, 1M 1:54, 4:52, Dn 7:25, 8:11-14, 11:31, 12:11ff). This period of 3½ yr is fact, since it gave the author of the Book of Daniel reason to transpose the prophecy of Jeremiah (Jr 25:11-12, 29:10). The date given in 1M 1:54 (December 167 BCE) shows that the murder of Onias occurred in the summer of 170.

³⁹ Γενομένων δὲ πολλῶν ἱεροσυλημάτων κατὰ τὴν πόλιν ὑπὸ τοῦ Λυσιμάχου μετὰ τῆς τοῦ Μενελάου γνώμης καὶ διαδοθείσης ἔξω τῆς φήμης ἐπισυνήχθη τὸ πλῆθος ἐπὶ τὸν Λυσίμαχον χρυσωμάτων ἤδη πολλῶν διενηνεγμένων. ⁴⁰ ἐπεγειρομένων δὲ τῶν ὄχλων καὶ ταῖς ὀργαῖς διεμπιπλαμένων καθοπλίσας ὁ Λυσίμαχος πρὸς τρισχιλίους κατήρξατο χειρῶν ἀδίκων προηγησαμένου τινὸς Αὐρανοῦ προβεβηκότος τὴν ἡλικίαν, οὐδὲν δὲ ἤττον καὶ τὴν ἄνοιαν. ⁴¹ συνιδόντες δὲ καὶ τὴν ἐπίθεσιν τοῦ Λυσιμάχου συναρπάσαντες οἱ μὲν πέτρους, οἱ δὲ ξύλων πάχῃ, τινὲς δὲ ἐκ τῆς παρακειμένης σποδοῦ δρασσόμενοι φύρδην ἐνετίνασσαν εἰς τοὺς περὶ τὸν Λυσίμαχον. ⁴² δι' ἣν αἰτίαν πολλοὺς μὲν αὐτῶν τραυματίας ἐποίησαν, τινὰς δὲ καὶ κατέβαλον, πάντας δὲ εἰς φυγὴν συνήλασαν, αὐτὸν δὲ τὸν ἱερόσυλον παρὰ τὸ γαζοφυλάκιον ἐχειρώσαντο.

⁴³ περὶ δὲ τούτων ἐνέστη κρίσις πρὸς τὸν Μενέλαον. ⁴⁴ καταντήσαντος δὲ τοῦ βασιλέως εἰς Τύρον ἐπ' αὐτοῦ τὴν δικαιολογίαν ἐποίησαντο οἱ πεμφθέντες τρεῖς ἄνδρες ὑπὸ τῆς γερουσίας. ⁴⁵ ἤδη δὲ λελειμμένος ὁ Μενέλαος ἐπηγγείλατο

³⁹ Now, when many sacrilegious thefts in the city had been committed by Lysimachus, with the connivance of Menelaus and, when the facts became widely known, the populace rose against Lysimachus, who had already disposed of many pieces of gold plate. ⁴⁰ The infuriated mob was becoming menacing, and Lysimachus armed nearly three thousand men and took aggressive action; the troops were led by a certain Auranus, a man advanced in years and no less in folly. ⁴¹ Recognising this act of aggression as the work of Lysimachus, some snatched up stones, others cudgels, while others scooped up handfuls of ashes lying at hand, and all hurled everything indiscriminately at Lysimachus' men, ⁴² to such effect that they wounded many of them, even killing a few, and routed them all; the author of the sacrilege himself they killed near the Treasury.

⁴³ As a result of this, an accusation was laid against Menelaus.

⁴⁴ When the king came to Tyre, three men sent by the Senate pleaded their case before him. ⁴⁵ Menelaus, seeing himself defeated, promised much money to Ptolemy son of Dory-

³⁹ The NJB rearranges this verse, reading, "Now Lysimachus, with the connivance of Menelaus, had committed many sacrilegious thefts in the city; and, when the facts became widely known, the populace rose against Lysimachus, who had already disposed of many pieces of gold plate."

⁴⁰ For 'Auranus' (Αὐρανοῦ), the WEBBE reads 'Hauran'.

⁴¹ The 'ashes' were those of sacrifices; the riot took place in the Temple court.

⁴² In place of 'author of the sacrilege', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'sacrilegious thief'.

⁴³ The NJB has 'legal proceedings were taken' in place of 'an accusation was laid'.

⁴⁴ The NJB has 'deputed' in place of 'sent', here following the WEBBE.

⁴⁵ 'Dorymenes' had fought for Ptolemy IV against Antiochus III; his son 'Ptolemy' had been governor of Cyprus and deserted to Antiochus IV.

χρήματα ἱκανὰ τῷ Πτολεμαίῳ Δορυμένους πρὸς τὸ πείσαι τὸν βασιλέα. ⁴⁶ ὅθεν ἀπολαβὼν ὁ Πτολεμαῖος εἰς τι περίστυλον ὡς ἀναψύξοντα τὸν βασιλέα μετέθηκεν, ⁴⁷ καὶ τὸν μὲν τῆς ὅλης κακίας αἴτιον Μενέλαον ἀπέλυσεν τῶν κατηγορημένων, τοῖς δὲ ταλαιπώροις, οἵτινες, εἰ καὶ ἐπὶ Σκυθῶν ἔλεγον, ἀπελύθησαν ἀκατάγνωστοι, τούτοις θάνατον ἐπέκρινεν. ⁴⁸ ταχέως οὖν τὴν ἄδικον ζημίαν ὑπέσχον οἱ περὶ πόλεως καὶ δήμων καὶ τῶν ἱερῶν σκευῶν προηγορήσαντες. ⁴⁹ δι' ἣν αἰτίαν καὶ Τύριοι μισοπονηρήσαντες τὰ πρὸς τὴν κηδείαν αὐτῶν μεγαλοπρεπῶς ἐχορήγησαν. ⁵⁰ ὁ δὲ Μενέλαος διὰ τὰς τῶν κρατούντων πλεονεξίας ἔμενεν ἐπὶ τῇ ἀρχῇ ἐπιφυόμενος τῇ κακίᾳ μέγας τῶν πολιτῶν ἐπίβουλος καθεστώς.

menes, that he might win over the king. ⁴⁶ Ptolemy then took the king aside into a cloister, as if for a breath of fresh air, and persuaded him to change his mind; ⁴⁷ the king then dismissed the charges against Menelaus, the cause of all this evil, while he condemned to death the other poor wretches who, had they pleaded even before Scythians, would have been freed un-condemned. ⁴⁸ Those who had championed the cause of the city, the townships and the sacred vessels soon suffered this unjust penalty. ⁴⁹ Some Tyrians even were so moved by the crime that they provided generously for their funeral, ⁵⁰ while, through the greed of the powerful, Menelaus remained in office, growing in wickedness and established as the chief enemy of his fellow citizens.

⁴⁶ Presumably, the king took Ptolemy's bribe – which must have been substantial, indeed.

⁴⁷ The 'Scythians' (Co 3:11) lived in what is now southern Russia and were proverbial for their brutality.

⁴⁸ Some ancient authorities read 'people' in place of 'townships'.

⁴⁹ In place of 'generously', the NJB has 'sumptuously' and the WEBBE has 'magnificently'.

⁵⁰ The WEBBE has 'covetous dealings' in place of 'greed', here following the NJB.

Μακκαβαίων Β' 5

¹ Περὶ δὲ τὸν καιρὸν τοῦτον τὴν δευτέραν ἔφοδον ὁ Ἀντίοχος εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἐστεῖλατο. ² συνέβη δὲ καθ' ὅλην τὴν πόλιν σχεδὸν ἑφ' ἡμέρας τεσσαράκοντα φαίνεσθαι διὰ τῶν ἀέρων τρέχοντας ἵππεῖς διαχρύσους στολὰς ἔχοντας καὶ λόγχας σπειρηθὸν ἐξωπλισμένους καὶ μαχαιρῶν σπασμούς ³ καὶ ἵλας ἵππων διατεταγμένας καὶ προσβολὰς γινομένας καὶ καταδρομὰς ἐκατέρων καὶ ἀσπίδων κινήσεις καὶ καμάκων πλήθη καὶ βελῶν βολὰς καὶ χρυσέων κόσμων ἐκλάμψεις καὶ παντοίους θωρακισμούς. ⁴ διὸ πάντες ἡξίου ἐπ' ἀγαθῷ τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν γεγενῆσθαι.

⁵ γενομένης δὲ λαλιᾶς ψευδοῦς ὡς μετηλλαχότος Ἀντίοχου τὸν βίον παραλαβὼν ὁ Ἰάσων οὐκ ἐλάττους τῶν χιλίων αἰφνιδίως ἐπὶ τὴν πόλιν συνετελέσατο ἐπίθελον· τῶν δὲ ἐπὶ τῷ τείχει συνελασθέντων καὶ τέλος ἦδη καταλαμβανομένης τῆς πόλεως ὁ Μενέλαος εἰς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν ἐφυγάδευσεν. ⁶ ὁ

2 MACCABEES 5

¹ At about this time, Antiochus was preparing for his second attack on Egypt. ² It then happened, that all over the city for nearly forty days, there were apparitions of horsemen galloping through the air in cloth of gold, troops of lancers fully armed, ³ squadrons of cavalry in order of battle, attacks and charges this way and that, a flourish of shields, a forest of pikes, a brandishing of swords, a hurling of missiles, a glittering of golden accoutrements and armour of all kinds. ⁴ Therefore, everyone prayed that this manifestation might prove a good omen.

⁵ When a false report arose that Antiochus was dead, Jason took at least a thousand men and launched an unexpected attack on the city. When the walls had been breached and the city was finally on the point of being taken, Menelaus took refuge in the Citadel. ⁶ But Jason slaughtered his fellow

2 MACCABEES 5

- ¹ According to the author of 2M, the violent intervention of Antiochus IV (vv. 11ff) was provoked by sedition in Jerusalem (vv. 5ff) and he dates the event to 168 BCE, during the second Egyptian expedition. The order of 1M is preferable: the sack of the Temple after the 1st expedition in 169 BCE (1M 1:16–24); sedition in the summer of 168 put down in 167 by Apollonius the ‘tribute collector’ (1M 1:29–35 and also 2M 5:24–26).
- ² For, “there were apparitions of horsemen galloping through the air,” here following the NJB, the WEBBE has, “cavalry appeared in the midst of the sky in swift motion.”
- ³ For this verse, here (loosely) following the NJB, the WEBBE reads, “drawing swords, squadrons of cavalry in array, encounters and pursuits of both armies, shaking shields, multitudes of lances, throwing of missiles, flashing of golden trappings, and putting on all sorts of armour.”
- ⁴ The use of heavenly apparitions is favourite literary device of the author (3:25, 10:29,30, 11:8); he promises them in his preface (2:21); compare an analogous apparition before the ruin of the Temple in 70 CE, reported by Josephus in his ‘Jewish War’.
- ⁵ The WEBBE has ‘rumour’ in place of ‘report’.
- ⁶ Thinking that Antiochus was dead, Jason planned, with Egyptian help, to recover the High Priesthood.

δὲ Ἰάσων ἐποιεῖτο σφαγὰς τῶν πολιτῶν τῶν ἰδίων ἀφειδῶς οὐ συννοῶν τὴν εἰς τοὺς συγγενεῖς εὐημερίαν δυσημερίαν εἶναι τὴν μεγίστην, δοκῶν δὲ πολεμίων καὶ οὐχ ὁμοεθνῶν τρόπαια καταβάλλεσθαι. ⁷ τῆς μὲν ἀρχῆς οὐκ ἐκράτησεν, τὸ δὲ τέλος τῆς ἐπιβουλῆς αἰσχύνην λαβὼν φυγὰς πάλιν εἰς τὴν Ἀμμανίτιν ἀπῆλθεν. ⁸ πέρας οὖν κακῆς καταστροφῆς ἔτυχεν. ἐγκληθεὶς πρὸς Ἀρέταν τὸν τῶν Ἀράβων τύραννον πόλιν ἐκ πόλεως φεύγων διωκόμενος ὑπὸ πάντων στυγούμενος ὡς τῶν νόμων ἀποστάτης καὶ βδελυσσόμενος ὡς πατρίδος καὶ πολιτῶν δῆμιος εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἐξεβράσθη, ⁹ καὶ ὁ συχνοὺς τῆς πατρίδος ἀποξενώσας ἐπὶ ξένης ἀπώλετο πρὸς Λακεδαιμονίους ἀναχθεὶς ὡς διὰ τὴν συγγένειαν τευξόμενος σκέπης. ¹⁰ καὶ ὁ πλῆθος ἀτάφων ἐκρίψας ἀπένδητος ἐγενήθη καὶ κηδείας οὐδ' ἥστινοσοῦν οὔτε πατρῶου τάφου μετέσχεν. ¹¹ Προσπεσόντων δὲ τῷ βασιλεῖ περὶ τῶν γεγονότων διέλαβεν ἀποστατεῖν τὴν Ἰουδαίαν· ὅθεν ἀναξεύξας ἐξ Αἰγύπτου τεθνηριωμένος τῇ ψυχῇ ἔλαβεν τὴν μὲν πόλιν δοριάλωτον ¹² καὶ ἐκέλευσεν τοῖς στρατιώταις κόπτειν ἀφειδῶς τοὺς ἐμπίπτοντας καὶ τοὺς εἰς τὰς οἰκίας ἀναβαίνοντας κατασφάζειν. ¹³ ἐγένετο δὲ νέων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων ἀναίρεσις,

citizens without mercy, not thinking that success against his own countrymen was the greatest disaster; rather, he saw himself winning trophies from an enemy, not from his fellow countrymen. ⁷ Even so, he did not seize power; and, in the end, his conspiracy brought him nothing but shame, and he fled once more to Ammanitis. ⁸ So, he met with a miserable end: imprisoned by Aretas, the Arab prince, fleeing from town to town, hunted by all men, hated for overthrowing the laws, abhorred as the butcher of his land and his countrymen, he drifted to Egypt. ⁹ He who had exiled so many from their homeland perished in exile, having travelled to Sparta, hoping that, for kinship's sake, he might find harbour there. ¹⁰ He who had thrown out so many unburied now had none to mourn him: no funeral, no place in the tomb of his fathers. ¹¹ When the king came to hear of what had happened, he concluded that Judaea was in revolt. He therefore marched from Egypt, raging like a wild beast, and began by storming the city. ¹² He then ordered his soldiers to cut down without mercy those who came in their way, and to butcher all who took refuge in their houses. ¹³ It was a massacre of young and

⁷ The NJB has 'machinations' in place of 'conspiracy', here following the WEBBE.

⁸ The NRSV has 'accused' in place of 'imprisoned'. The NJB, following the *Vetus Latina*, has 'from his town' in place of 'from town to town', here following the LXX. 'Aretas' was king of Nabataean Arabia, south and east of Palestine; his capital was Petra.

⁹ Rejected in Egypt, Jason fled to Sparta (1M 12:7).

¹⁰ On leaving the dead unburied, see #1M 7:17 and 1K 13:22.

¹¹ He was 'raging like a wild beast' because the Romans had forced him out of Egypt (#1M 1:20); his foreign and domestic programs were collapsing.

¹² The NJB has 'everyone they encountered' in place of 'those who came in their way', here following the WEBBE.

¹³ The WEBBE has 'virgins' in place of 'young girls'.

ἀνήβων τε καὶ γυναικῶν καὶ τέκνων ἀφανισμός, παρθένων τε καὶ νηπίων σφαγαί. ¹⁴ ὅκτω δὲ μυριάδες ἐν ταῖς πάσαις ἡμέραις τρισὶν κατεφθάρησαν, τέσσαρες μὲν ἐν χειρῶν νομαῖς, οὐχ ἥττον δὲ τῶν ἐσφαγμένων ἐπράθησαν.

¹⁵ οὐκ ἄρκεσθεις δὲ τούτοις κατετόλμησεν εἰς τὸ πάσης τῆς γῆς ἁγιώτατον ἱερὸν εἰσελθεῖν ὁδηγὸν ἔχων τὸν Μενέλαον τὸν καὶ τῶν νόμων καὶ τῆς πατρίδος προδότην γεγονότα ¹⁶ καὶ ταῖς μιαραῖς χερσὶν τὰ ἱερά σκεύη λαμβάνων καὶ τὰ ὑπ' ἄλλων βασιλέων ἀνατεθέντα πρὸς αὔξησιν καὶ δόξαν τοῦ τόπου καὶ τιμὴν ταῖς βεβήλοις χερσὶν συσσύρων.

¹⁷ καὶ ἐμετεωρίζετο τὴν διάνοιαν ὁ Ἀντίοχος οὐ συνορῶν ὅτι διὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας τῶν τὴν πόλιν οἰκούντων ἀπώργισται βραχέως ὁ δεσπότης, διὸ γέγονεν περὶ τὸν τόπον παρόρασις. ¹⁸ εἰ δὲ μὴ συνέβη προσενέχεσθαι πολλοῖς ἁμαρτήμασιν, καθάπερ ἦν ὁ Ἡλιόδωρος ὁ πεμφθεὶς ὑπὸ Σελεύκου τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπὶ τὴν ἐπίσκεψιν τοῦ γαζοφυλακίου, οὗτος προαχθεὶς παραχρῆμα μαστιγωθεὶς ἀνετράπη τοῦ θράσους. ¹⁹ ἀλλ' οὐ διὰ τὸν τόπον τὸ ἔθνος, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ ἔθνος τὸν τόπον ὁ κύριος ἐξελέξατο. ²⁰ διόπερ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ τόπος συμμετασχὼν τῶν τοῦ ἔθνους δυσπετημάτων γενομένων

old, a slaughter of women and children, a butchery of young girls and infants. ¹⁴ There were eighty thousand victims in the course of those three days, forty thousand dying by violence and as many again being sold into slavery.

¹⁵ Not content with this, he had the audacity to enter the holiest Temple in the entire world, with Menelaus, that traitor to the laws and to his country, as his guide; ¹⁶ with impure hands, he seized the sacred vessels; with impious hands, he seized the offerings presented by other kings to enhance the glory and dignity of the holy place.

¹⁷ Antiochus was so elated in spirit and did not realise that the Lord was temporarily angry at the sins of the inhabitants of the city, hence his unconcern for the holy place. ¹⁸ Had they not been involved in many sins, Antiochus too, like Heliodorus when King Seleucus sent him to inspect the Treasury, would have been flogged the moment he arrived and checked in his presumption. ¹⁹ The Lord, however, had not chosen the people for the sake of the holy place, but the holy place for the sake of the people; ²⁰ and so the holy place itself, having shared the disasters that befell the people, in due

¹⁴ The WEBBE opens this verse with, "In a total of three days, eighty thousand were destroyed."

¹⁵ The WEBBE does not capitalize 'Temple'.

¹⁶ For 'impure' and 'impious', the WEBBE has, respectively, 'polluted' and 'profane'.

¹⁷ Before 'Lord', the WEBBE adds 'Sovereign'.

¹⁸ In place of 'flogged', the WEBBE has 'scourged'.

¹⁹ The choice of God falls first on his people, only second on religious institutions: a remarkable anticipation of the Gospel (Jr 7:14, Mk 2:27).

²⁰ The NJB & WEBBE agree on the terms, 'Almighty' and 'great Sovereign', used here.

ὑστερον εὐεργετημάτων ἐκοινώνησεν, καὶ ὁ καταλειφθεὶς ἐν τῇ τοῦ παντοκράτορος ὀργῇ πάλιν ἐν τῇ τοῦ μεγάλου δεσπότη καταλλαγῇ μετὰ πάσης δόξης ἐπανωρθώθη.

²¹ Ὁ γοῦν Ἀντίοχος ὀκτακόσια πρὸς τοῖς χιλίοις ἀπενεγκάμενος ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ τάλαντα θᾶπτον εἰς τὴν Ἀντιόχειαν ἐχωρίσθη οἰόμενος ἀπὸ τῆς ὑπερηφανίας τὴν μὲν γῆν πλωτὴν καὶ τὸ πέλαγος πορευτὸν θέσθαι διὰ τὸν μετεωρισμὸν τῆς καρδίας. ²² κατέλιπεν δὲ καὶ ἐπιστάτας τοῦ κακοῦν τὸ γένος, ἐν μὲν Ἱεροσολύμοις Φίλιππον, τὸ μὲν γένος Φρύγα, τὸν δὲ τρόπον βαρβαρώτερον ἔχοντα τοῦ καταστήσαντος, ²³ ἐν δὲ Γαριζιν Ἀνδρόνικον, πρὸς δὲ τούτοις Μενέλαον, ὃς χειρίστα τῶν ἄλλων ὑπερῆρετο τοῖς πολίταις, ἀπεχθῆ δὲ πρὸς τοὺς πολίτας Ἰουδαίους ἔχων διάθεσιν.

²⁴ ἔπεμψεν δὲ τὸν Μυσάρχην Ἀπολλώνιον μετὰ στρατεύματος, δισμυρίου δὲ πρὸς τοῖς δισχιλίοις, προστάξας τοὺς ἐν ἡλικίᾳ πάντας κατασφάζαι, τὰς δὲ γυναῖκας καὶ τοὺς νεωτέρους πωλεῖν. ²⁵ οὗτος δὲ παραγενόμενος εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα καὶ τὸν εἰρηνικὸν ὑποκριθεὶς ἐπέσχεν ἕως τῆς ἁγίας ἡμέρας τοῦ σαββάτου καὶ λαβὼν ἀργοῦντας τοὺς Ἰουδαίους τοῖς ὑφ' ἑαυτὸν ἐξοπλησίαν παρήγγειλεν ²⁶ καὶ τοὺς ἐξελθόντας

course also shared their good fortune; having been abandoned by the Almighty in his anger, once the great Sovereign was placated, it was reinstalled in all its glory.

²¹ As for Antiochus, when he had extracted one thousand eight hundred talents from the Temple, he hurried back to Antioch, thinking in his arrogance that he could sail over dry land and walk over the sea, because his heart was lifted up.

²² However, he left officials behind to plague the nation: in Jerusalem, Philip, a Phrygian by race, and by nature more barbarous than the man who appointed him; ²³ on Mount Gerizim, Andronicus; and, besides these, Menelaus, who lorded it over his countrymen worse than all the others, in his rooted hostility to the Jews.

²⁴ He also sent the captain of the Mysians, Apollonius, with an army of twenty-two thousand, with orders to kill all men in of age and to sell the women and children. ²⁵ Arriving in Jerusalem and posing as a man of peace, this man waited until the holy day of the Sabbath and then, taking advantage of the Jews as they rested from work, ordered his men to parade fully armed; ²⁶ all those who came out to watch he put

²¹ The NJB has 'to make the dry land navigable and the sea passable on foot'; here, we loosely follow the WEBBE.

²² 'Philip the Phrygian', who appears in 6:11 and 8:8, is not the same man as Philip, the King's Friend, of 9:29 and 1M 6:14.

²³ 'Andronicus' (not the one of 4:31ff) was, like Philip, a representative of the royal authority in a town. The Greek text of vv. 23–24 is uncertain; the WEBBE ends v. 23 with, "Having a malicious mind towards the Jews whom he had made his citizens," and continues the sentence into the following verse.

²⁴ The opening pronoun here refers to the king. For 'captain of the Mysians', the WEBBE has 'lord of pollution'.

²⁵ The WEBBE has 'pretending to be' in place of 'posing as'.

²⁶ In place of 'to watch' the WEBBE has 'to the spectacle'.

πάντας ἐπὶ τὴν θωρίαν συνεξεκέντησεν καὶ εἰς τὴν πόλιν
σὺν τοῖς ὅπλοις εἰσδραμὼν ἱκανὰ κατέστρωσεν πλῆθη.

²⁷ Ἰουδᾶς δὲ ὁ καὶ Μακκαβαῖος δέκατός που γεννηθεὶς καὶ
ἀναχωρήσας εἰς τὴν ἔρημον θηρίων τρόπον ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσιν
διέζῃ σὺν τοῖς μετ' αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὴν χορτώδη τροφὴν
σιτούμενοι διετέλουν πρὸς τὸ μὴ μετασχεῖν τοῦ μολυσμοῦ.

to the sword; then, rushing into the city with his armed
troops, he cut down an immense number of people.

²⁷ Judas, also known as Maccabaeus, however, with about
nine others, withdrew into the desert. He lived like the wild
animals in the hills with his companions, eating nothing but
wild plants to avoid contracting defilement.

²⁷ The author rearranges the events related in 1M 1:53, 2:28.

Μακκαβαίων Β' 6

¹ Μετ οὐ πολὺν δὲ χρόνον ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ βασιλεὺς γέροντα Ἀθηναῖον ἀναγκάζειν τοὺς Ἰουδαίους μεταβαίνειν ἀπὸ τῶν πατρίων νόμων καὶ τοῖς τοῦ θεοῦ νόμοις μὴ πολιτεύεσθαι, ² μολῦναι δὲ καὶ τὸν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις νεὼ καὶ προσονομάσαι Διὸς Ὀλυμπίου καὶ τὸν ἐν Γαριζίν, καθὼς ἐτύγχανον οἱ τὸν τόπον οἰκοῦντες, Διὸς Ξενίου. ³ χαλεπὴ δὲ καὶ τοῖς ὅλοις ἦν δυσχερὴς ἡ ἐπίτασις τῆς κακίας. ⁴ τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἱερὸν ἀσωτίας καὶ κώμων ὑπὸ τῶν ἐθνῶν ἐπεπληροῦτο ῥαθυμούντων μεθ' ἐταιρῶν καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς περιβόλοις γυναιξὶ πλησιαζόντων, ἔτι δὲ τὰ μὴ καθήκοντα ἔνδον εἰσφερόντων. ⁵ τὸ δὲ θυσιαστήριον τοῖς ἀποδισταλμένοις ἀπὸ τῶν νόμων ἀθεμίτοις ἐπεπλήρωτο. ⁶ ἦν δ' οὔτε σαββατίζειν οὔτε πατρῶους ἑορτάς διαφυλάττειν οὔτε ἀπλῶς Ἰουδαῖον ὁμολογεῖν εἶναι, ⁷ ἤγοντο δὲ μετὰ πικρᾶς ἀνάγκης εἰς τὴν κατὰ μῆνα τοῦ βασιλέως γενέθλιον ἡμέραν ἐπὶ σπλαγχνισ-

2 MACCABEES 6

¹ Not long after, the king sent Gerontes the Athenian to force the Jews to violate their ancestral customs and live no longer by the laws of God; ² and to profane the Temple in Jerusalem and dedicate it to Olympian Zeus, and the one on Mount Gerizim to Zeus, Patron of Strangers, as did the inhabitants of the latter place. ³ The advent of these evils was painfully hard to bear. ⁴ The Temple was filled with revelling and debauchery by the gentiles, who dallied with prostitutes and had intercourse with women in the sacred precincts, introducing other indecencies besides. ⁵ The altar was loaded with victims proscribed by the Law as profane. ⁶ A man could not keep the Sabbath or observe the traditional feasts, or so much as admit to being a Jew. ⁷ People were driven by harsh compulsion to take part in the monthly sacrifice for the king's birthday; when the feast of Dionysus occurred, they

2 MACCABEES 6

- ¹ The NRSV has 'an Athenian senator' in place of 'Gerontes the Athenian' and the WEBBE has 'an old man of Athens'. Other ancient authorities read 'Antiochian' in place of 'Athenian'. What had been voluntary (4:9-17) was now enforced (see 1M 1:41-64 and the footnotes thereto).
- ² The NJB, following Josephus, ends the verse with 'as the inhabitants of the latter place had requested'. 'Olympian Zeus' was now identified with the God of Israel and probably with Antiochus. To 'profane the Temple', they set up a statue or pagan altar (1M 1:54). The Samaritans, descendants of the ten northern tribes and Assyrian settlers (2K 17:6, 24), had built the temple on Mount Gerizim.
- ³ After 'hard', the NJB adds 'for all the people'.
- ⁴ In the Graeco-Roman period, temple precincts comprised porticoes and banqueting rooms for ritual meals, which often involved orgies. Another reading for 'dallied with prostitutes' is 'idled with their fellows'.
- ⁵ After 'altar', the NJB adds 'of sacrifice'.
- ⁶ The NJB opens with, "No one might keep;" here, we follow the WEBBE.
- ⁷ 'Dionysus' was the god of wine and the grape harvest; 'ivy' was one of his symbols.

μόν, γενομένης δὲ Διονυσίων ἑορτῆς ἡναγκάζοντο κισσοὺς ἔχοντες πομπεύειν τῷ Διονύσῳ.⁸ ψήφισμα δὲ ἐξέπεσεν εἰς τὰς ἀστυγείτονας Ἑλληνίδας πόλεις Πτολεμαίου ὑποδεμένου τὴν αὐτὴν ἀγωγὴν κατὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἄγειν καὶ σπλαγχνίζειν,⁹ τοὺς δὲ μὴ προαιρουμένους μεταβαίνειν ἐπὶ τὰ Ἑλληνικὰ κατασφάζειν. παρῆν οὖν ὁρᾶν τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ταλαιπωρίαν.

¹⁰ δύο γὰρ γυναῖκες ἀνήχθησαν περιτετμηκυῖαι τὰ τέκνα· τούτων δὲ ἐκ τῶν μαστῶν κρεμάσαντες τὰ βρέφη καὶ δημοσίᾳ περιαγαγόντες αὐτὰς τὴν πόλιν κατὰ τοῦ τείχους ἐκρήμνισαν. ¹¹ ἕτεροι δὲ πλησίον συνδραμόντες εἰς τὰ σπήλαια λεληθότως ἄγειν τὴν ἐβδομάδα μηνυθέντες τῷ Φιλίππῳ συνεφλογίσθησαν διὰ τὸ εὐλαβῶς ἔχειν βοηθῆσαι ἑαυτοῖς κατὰ τὴν δόξαν τῆς σεμνοτάτης ἡμέρας.

¹² Παρακαλῶ οὖν τοὺς ἐντυγχάνοντας τῇδε τῇ βίβλῳ μὴ συστέλλεσθαι διὰ τὰς συμφοράς, λογίζεσθαι δὲ τὰς τιμωρίας μὴ πρὸς ὀλεθρον, ἀλλὰ πρὸς παιδείαν τοῦ γένους ἡμῶν εἶναι· ¹³ καὶ γὰρ τὸ μὴ πολὺν χρόνον ἔᾶσθαι τοὺς δυσσεβοῦντας, ἀλλ' εὐθέως περιπίπτειν ἐπιτίμοις, μεγάλης εὐεργεσίας σημεῖόν ἐστιν. ¹⁴ οὐ γὰρ κατὰπερ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐθνῶν

were forced to wear ivy wreaths and walk in the procession in honour of Dionysus.⁸ A decree was issued at the request of the people of Ptolemais for the neighbouring Greek cities, enforcing the same conduct on the Jews there, obliging them to eat the sacrificial meals,⁹ and that they should kill those who did not willingly conform to Greek customs. So, it was clear that disaster was imminent.

¹⁰ So, two women were charged for circumcising their children. They publicly paraded them round the town, babies hung at their breasts, then hurled them over the city wall. ¹¹ Others, who assembled in nearby caves to keep the seventh day secretly, were betrayed to Philip and were all burnt together, since their piety would not allow them to defend themselves, out of respect for the holy day.

¹² Now, I urge anyone who may read this book not to be dismayed at these calamities but to reflect that such visitations are intended not to destroy our race but to discipline it. ¹³ Indeed, when evildoers are not left for long to their own devices but incur swift retribution, it is a sign of great benevolence. ¹⁴ In the case of other nations, the Master

⁸ 'People of Ptolemais' is conjectural; the LXX has 'people of the Ptolemies'. The Greek city of Ptolemais, ancient Acco (modern Acre, a coastal city 13 Km north of Mt Carmel) was hostile to the Jews (see 13:25, 1M 5:15, 12:48).

⁹ Another reading for 'willingly' is 'choose to'.

¹⁰ Chapters 6–7 are the earliest martyrologies, a type of writing later popular in Christianity, designed to encourage the faithful when persecuted.

¹¹ A different explanation is given in 1M 2:29–41.

¹² For 'anyone who may read', the WEBBE has 'those who read'.

¹³ The WEBBE lacks the phrase, 'to their own devices'.

¹⁴ In place of 'Master', the WEBBE has 'Sovereign Lord'.

ἀναμένει μακροθυμῶν ὁ δεσπότης μέχρι τοῦ καταντήσαντας αὐτοὺς πρὸς ἐκπλήρωσιν ἁμαρτιῶν κολάσαι, οὕτως καὶ ἐφ’ ἡμῶν ἔκρινεν εἶναι, ¹⁵ ἵνα μὴ πρὸς τέλος ἀφικομένων ἡμῶν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ὕστερον ἡμᾶς ἐκδικῇ. ¹⁶ διόπερ οὐδέποτε μὲν τὸν ἔλεον ἀφ’ ἡμῶν ἀφίστησιν, παιδεύων δὲ μετὰ συμφορᾶς οὐκ ἐγκαταλείπει τὸν ἑαυτοῦ λαόν. ¹⁷ πλὴν ἕως ὑπομνήσεως ταῦθ’ ἡμῖν εἰρήσθω· δι’ ὀλίγων δ’ ἐλευστέον ἐπὶ τὴν διήγησιν.

¹⁸ Ελεάζαρος τις τῶν πρωτευόντων γραμματέων, ἀνὴρ ἥδη προβεβηκὼς τὴν ἡλικίαν καὶ τὴν πρόσοψιν τοῦ προσώπου κάλλιστος, ἀναχανὼν ἠναγκάζετο φαγεῖν ὕειον κρέας. ¹⁹ ὁ δὲ τὸν μετ’ εὐκλείας θάνατον μᾶλλον ἢ τὸν μετὰ μύσους βίον ἀναδεξάμενος, αὐθαιρέτως ἐπὶ τὸ τύμπανον προσῆγεν, ²⁰ προπτύσας δὲ καθ’ ὃν ἔδει τρόπον προσέρχεσθαι τοὺς ὑπομένοντας ἀμύνασθαι ὣν οὐ θέμις γεύσασθαι διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸ ζῆν φιλοστοργίαν. ²¹ οἱ δὲ πρὸς τῷ παρανόμῳ σπλαγχνισμῷ τεταγμένοι διὰ τὴν ἐκ τῶν παλαιῶν χρόνων πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα γυνῶσιν ἀπολαβόντες αὐτὸν κατ’ ἰδίαν παρεκάλουν ἐνέγκαντα κρέα, οἷς καθῆκον αὐτῷ χρᾶσθαι, δι’ αὐτοῦ παρασκευασθέντα, ὑποκριθῆναι δὲ ὡς ἐσθίοντα τὰ ὑπὸ

waits patiently for them to attain the full measure of their sins before he punishes them; but, with us, he has decided to deal differently, ¹⁵ rather than have to punish us later, when our sins come to full measure. ¹⁶ Thus, he never entirely withdraws his mercy from us; he may discipline us by some disaster, but he does not desert his own people. ¹⁷ Let what we have said serve as a reminder; we must return to our story after a few words.

¹⁸ Eleazar, one of the principal scribes, a man already advanced in years and of most noble appearance, had his mouth forced open, to make him eat pork. ¹⁹ But he, resolving to die with honour rather than to live disgraced, walked of his own accord to the torture of the wheel, ²⁰ spitting it out, as befits those with the courage to reject what is not lawful to taste, rather than live. ²¹ The people in charge of the ritual meal, forbidden by the Law, because of the length of time for which they had known him, took him aside and privately urged him to have meat brought of a kind he could properly use, prepared by himself, and only pretend to eat the portions of sacrificial meat as prescribed by the king; ²² this

¹⁵ For the ‘full measure of sins’, see Dn 8:23, 9:24, and 1Th 2:16. The expression is an ancient one (see Gn 15:16).

¹⁶ The WEBBE has ‘chasten’ in place of ‘discipline’.

¹⁷ In place of ‘after a few words’, the NJB has ‘without more ado’.

¹⁸ The story of Eleazar’s martyrdom (vv. 18–31) is told more elaborately in 4th Maccabees.

¹⁹ The NJB opens with ‘however’ in place of ‘but he’, here following the WEBBE.

²⁰ In place of the pronoun, ‘it’, the NJB has ‘the stuff’.

²¹ The NJB has ‘supervising’ in place of ‘in charge of’, here following the WEBBE.

²² The WEBBE has ‘ancient friendship’ for ‘long friendship’.

τοῦ βασιλέως προστεταγμένα τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς θυσίας κρεῶν, ²² ἵνα τοῦτο πράξας ἀπολυθῇ τοῦ θανάτου καὶ διὰ τὴν ἀρχαίαν πρὸς αὐτοὺς φιλίαν τύχῃ φιλανθρωπίας. ²³ ὁ δὲ λογισμὸν ἀστεῖον ἀναλαβὼν καὶ ἄξιον τῆς ἡλικίας καὶ τῆς τοῦ γήρως ὑπεροχῆς καὶ τῆς ἐπικτήτου καὶ ἐπιφανοῦς πολιᾶς καὶ τῆς ἐκ παιδὸς καλλίστης ἀναστροφῆς, μᾶλλον δὲ τῆς ἀγίας καὶ θεοκτίστου νομοθεσίας ἀκολούθως ἀπεφάνετο ταχέως λέγων προπέμπειν εἰς τὸν ᾗδην. ²⁴ Οὐ γὰρ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἡλικίας ἄξιόν ἐστιν ὑποκριθῆναι, ἵνα πολλοὶ τῶν νέων ὑπολαβόντες Ελεαζαρὸν τὸν ἐνενηκονταετῆ μεταβεβηκέναι εἰς ἀλλοφυλισμὸν ²⁵ καὶ αὐτοὶ διὰ τὴν ἐμὴν ὑπόκρισιν καὶ διὰ τὸ μικρὸν καὶ ἀκαριαῖον ζῆν πλανηθῶσιν δι' ἐμέ, καὶ μύσος καὶ κηλὶδα τοῦ γήρως κατακτήσωμαι. ²⁶ εἰ γὰρ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος ἐξελοῦμαι τὴν ἐξ ἀνθρώπων τιμωρίαν, ἀλλὰ τὰς τοῦ παντοκράτορος χεῖρας οὔτε ζῶν οὔτε ἀποθανὼν ἐκφεύξομαι. ²⁷ διόπερ ἀνδρείως μὲν νῦν διαλλάξας τὸν βίον τοῦ μὲν γήρως ἄξιος φανήσομαι, ²⁸ τοῖς δὲ νέοις ὑπόδειγμα γενναῖον καταλελοιπῶς εἰς τὸ προθύμως καὶ γενναίως ὑπὲρ τῶν σεμνῶν καὶ ἀγίων νόμων ἀπευθανατίζειν. τοσαῦτα δὲ εἰπὼν ἐπὶ τὸ τύμπανον εὐθέως ἦλθεν. ²⁹ τῶν δὲ

action would enable him to escape death, by availing himself of an act of kindness prompted by their long friendship. ²³ However, having taking a noble decision worthy of his years and the dignity of his great age and the well-earned distinction of his grey hairs, worthy too of his impeccable conduct from boyhood, and above all of the holy legislation established by God himself, he answered accordingly, telling them to send him at once to Hades. ²⁴ "Pretence," he said, "does not befit our time of life; many young people would suppose that Eleazar, at the age of ninety, had conformed to the foreigners' way of life ²⁵ and, because I had played this part for the sake of a paltry brief spell of life, might themselves be led astray on my account; I should only bring defilement and disgrace on my old age. ²⁶ Even though, for the moment, I avoid execution by man, I can never, living or dead, elude the grasp of the Almighty. ²⁷ Therefore, if I am man enough to quit this life here and now, I shall prove myself worthy of my old age, ²⁸ and I shall have left the young a noble example of how to make a good death, eagerly and generously, for the venerable and holy laws." So saying,

²³ The Greek text of this verse appears to be corrupt (around 'grey hairs'), according to a footnote in the WEBBE.

²⁴ Eleazar's speech (vv. 24–28) resembles the last speech of Socrates in the *Apology*.

²⁵ For 'a paltry brief spell of life', the WEBBE has 'this brief and momentary life'.

²⁶ A more literal translation of 'grasp' is 'hands'.

²⁷ The WEBBE has 'brave enough' in place of 'man enough'.

²⁸ The expression 'for the venerable and holy laws' belongs to Greek jurisprudence but, for the author, 'the laws' are essentially the Law (7:30, 10:26, 12:40, 15:9), identical to the Covenant (see 1M 2:20) and pledge of the divine favour (see 2M 7:36, 8:15).

ἀγόντων πρὸς αὐτὸν τὴν μικρῷ πρότερον εὐμένειαν εἰς
δυσμένειαν μεταβαλόντων διὰ τὸ τοὺς προειρημένους λόγους,
ὥς αὐτοὶ διελάμβανον, ἀπόνοιαν εἶναι, ³⁰ μέλλων δὲ ταῖς
πληγαῖς τελευτᾶν ἀναστενάξας εἶπεν Τῷ κυρίῳ τῷ τὴν
ἀγίαν γνῶσιν ἔχοντι φανερόν ἐστιν ὅτι δυνάμενος ἀπολυθῆναι
τοῦ θανάτου σκληρὰς ὑποφέρω κατὰ τὸ σῶμα ἀλγηδónας
μαστιγούμενος, κατὰ ψυχὴν δὲ ἡδέως διὰ τὸν αὐτοῦ φόβον
ταῦτα πάσχω.

³¹ καὶ οὗτος οὖν τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον μετέλλαξεν οὐ μόνον τοῖς
νέοις, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς πλείστοις τοῦ ἔθνους τὸν ἑαυτοῦ θάνατον
ὑπόδειγμα γενναιότητος καὶ μνημόσυνον ἀρετῆς καταλιπών.

he walked straight to the wheel, ²⁹ while those who were
escorting him, recently so well disposed towards him, turned
against him after this declaration, which they regarded as
sheer madness. ³⁰ He, for his part, just before he died under
the blows, sighed and said, "The Lord, whose knowledge is
holy, sees clearly that, though I might have escaped death,
from awe of him I gladly these agonies of body under the
lash, and that in my soul I am glad to suffer."

³¹ This was how he died, leaving his death as an example of
nobility and a record of virtue not only for the young but also
for the greater part of the nation.

²⁹ The meaning of the Greek here translated as 'sheer madness' is uncertain.

³⁰ The WEBBE has 'groaned' for 'sighed'.

³¹ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "So this man also died like this, leaving his death for an example of nobleness and a memorial of virtue, not only to the young but also to the great body of his nation."

Μακκαβαίων Β' 7

¹ Συνέβη δὲ καὶ ἑπτὰ ἀδελφοὺς μετὰ τῆς μητρὸς συλλημφθέντας ἀναγκάζεσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως ἀπὸ τῶν ἀδεμίτων υἱῶν κρεῶν ἐφάπτεσθαι μᾶστιξιν καὶ νευραῖς αἰκίζομένους. ² εἷς δὲ αὐτῶν γενόμενος προήγορος οὕτως ἔφη Τί μέλλεις ἐρωτᾶν καὶ μανθάνειν ἡμῶν; ἔτοιμοι γὰρ ἀποθνήσκειν ἐσμέν ἢ παραβαίνειν τοὺς πατρίους νόμους. ³ ἔκδυμος δὲ γενόμενος ὁ βασιλεὺς προσέταξεν τήγανα καὶ λέβητας ἐκπυροῦν. ⁴ τῶν δὲ παραχρῆμα ἐκπυρωθέντων τὸν γενόμενον αὐτῶν προήγορον προσέταξεν γλωσσοτομεῖν καὶ περισκυθίσαντας ἀκρωτηριάζειν τῶν λοιπῶν ἀδελφῶν καὶ τῆς μητρὸς συνορώντων. ⁵ ἄχρηστον δὲ αὐτὸν τοῖς ὅλοις γενόμενον ἐκέλευσεν τῇ πυρᾷ προσάγειν ἔμπνουν καὶ τηγανίζειν. τῆς δὲ ἀτμίδος ἐφ' ἱκανὸν διαδιδούσης τοῦ τηγάνου ἀλλήλους παρεκάλουν σὺν τῇ μητρὶ γενναίως τελευτᾶν λέγοντες οὕτως ⁶ Ὁ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἐφορᾷ καὶ ταῖς ἀληθείαις ἐφ' ἡμῖν παρακαλεῖται, καθάπερ διὰ τῆς κατὰ πρόσωπον ἀντιμαρτυροῦσης ὥδῃς διεσάφησεν Μωϋσῆς λέγων Καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς δούλοις αὐτοῦ παρακληθήσεται.

2 MACCABEES 7

¹ It also happened that seven brothers were arrested with their mother. The king tried to force them to taste some pork, which the Law forbids, by torturing them with whips and scourges. ² One of them, acting as spokesman for the others, said, "What are you trying to find out from us? We are prepared to die rather than break the laws of our fathers." ³ The king grew angry and ordered that pans and cauldrons should be heated. ⁴ As soon as these were red hot, he commanded that their spokesman should have his tongue cut out, his head scalped and his extremities cut off, while the other brothers and his mother looked on. ⁵ When he had been rendered completely helpless, the king gave orders for him to be brought, still breathing, to the fire and fried alive in a pan. As the smoke from the pan drifted about, his mother and the rest encouraged one another to die nobly, with such words as these, ⁶ "The Lord God is watching and certainly feels sorry for us, as Moses declared in his song, which clearly states that, "he will take pity on his servants.""

2 MACCABEES 7

- ¹ Having given the example of a venerable teacher of the Law, the author now gives that of a mother and her sons. The persecution, in which exceptionally savage methods were adopted, did indeed extend to women and children (see 1M 1:60ff). The story, therefore, has an historical basis, behind the literary elements, such as the speeches ascribed to the characters.
- ² The NJB & WEBBE have 'ancestors' in place of 'fathers'; the word (πατρίους) can also potentially/metaphorically mean 'country'.
- ³ After 'heated', the NJB adds 'over a fire' – but the words are not in the Greek text.
- ⁴ The WEBBE opens with, "When these were immediately heated."
- ⁵ The WEBBE has 'utterly maimed' in place of 'rendered completely helpless'.
- ⁶ On Moses' 'song', see Dt 31:21 & 32:36.

⁷ Μεταλλάξαντος δὲ τοῦ πρώτου τὸν τρόπον τοῦτον τὸν δεύτερον ἤγον ἐπὶ τὸν ἐμπαιγμὸν καὶ τὸ τῆς κεφαλῆς δέρμα σὺν ταῖς θριξίν περισύραντες ἐπηρώτων Εἰ φάγεσαι πρὸ τοῦ τιμωρηθῆναι τὸ σῶμα κατὰ μέλος; ⁸ ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς τῇ πατρίῳ φωνῇ προσεῖπεν Οὐχί. διόπερ καὶ οὗτος τὴν ἐξῆς ἔλαβεν βάσανον ὡς ὁ πρῶτος. ⁹ ἐν ἐσχάτῃ δὲ πνοῇ γενόμενος εἶπεν Σὺ μὲν, ἀλάστωρ, ἐκ τοῦ παρόντος ἡμᾶς ζῆν ἀπολύεις, ὁ δὲ τοῦ κόσμου βασιλεὺς ἀποθανόντας ἡμᾶς ὑπὲρ τῶν αὐτοῦ νόμων εἰς αἰώνιον ἀναβίωσιν ζωῆς ἡμᾶς ἀναστήσει.

¹⁰ Μετὰ δὲ τοῦτον ὁ τρίτος ἐνεπαίζετο καὶ τὴν γλῶσσαν αἰτήθεις ταχέως προέβαλεν καὶ τὰς χεῖρας εὐδαρσῶς προέτεινεν ¹¹ καὶ γενναίως εἶπεν Ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ταῦτα κέκτημαι καὶ διὰ τοὺς αὐτοῦ νόμους ὑπερορῶ ταῦτα καὶ παρ' αὐτοῦ ταῦτα πάλιν ἐλπίζω κομίσασθαι. ¹² ὥστε αὐτὸν τὸν βασιλέα καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ ἐκπλήσσεσθαι τὴν τοῦ νεανίσκου ψυχὴν, ὡς ἐν οὐδενὶ τὰς ἀλγηδόνας ἐτίθετο.

¹³ Καὶ τούτου δὲ μεταλλάξαντος τὸν τέταρτον ὡσαύτως ἐβασάνιζον αἰκίζόμενοι. ¹⁴ καὶ γενόμενος πρὸς τὸ τελευτᾶν οὕτως ἔφη Αἰρετὸν μεταλλάσσοντας ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων τὰς ὑπὸ

⁷ When the first had died like this, they brought the second forward to be tortured. After stripping the skin from his head, hair and all, they asked him, "Will you eat, before your body is tortured limb by limb?" ⁸ Replying in his ancestral tongue, he said, "No!" So, he too underwent tortures in his turn, as the first brother had done. ⁹ With his last breath, he exclaimed, "Cruel brute, you may discharge us from this present life, but the King of the universe will raise us up to an everlasting renewal of life, since we die for his laws."

¹⁰ After him, they tortured the third who, on being asked for his tongue, promptly thrust it out and boldly held out his hands, ¹¹ courageously saying, "Heaven gave me these limbs; for the sake of his laws, I have no concern for them; from him I hope to receive them again." ¹² The king and his attendants were astonished at the young man's courage and his utter indifference to suffering.

¹³ When he too was dead, they tortured and tormented the fourth the same way. ¹⁴ When he neared his end, he cried, "Ours is the better choice, to meet death at men's hands, yet

⁷ In place of 'died like this', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'left the world in this way'.

⁸ The expression 'ancestral tongue' recurs in vv. 21 & 27 and the author apparently understands it as meaning Hebrew (see 12:37, 15:29). More probably, however, the family spoke Aramaic. The NJB lacks 'as his first brother had done'.

⁹ In place of 'to an everlasting renewal of life', here following the LXX and NRSV, the NJB has 'to live again forever'.

¹⁰ The WEBBE opens with, "After him, the third was made a victim of their mocking."

¹¹ Several Latin MSS omit this verse.

¹² A more literal translation of 'courage' is 'soul' (as WEBBE).

¹³ The NJB has 'this one' in place of 'he too'.

¹⁴ Before 'for you', the NJB adds 'whereas'.

τοῦ θεοῦ προσδοκᾶν ἐλπίδας πάλιν ἀναστήσεσθαι ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ· σοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἀνάστασις εἰς ζωὴν οὐκ ἔσται.

¹⁵ Ἐχομένως δὲ τὸν πέμπτον προσάγοντες ἠκίζοντο. ¹⁶ ὁ δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἰδὼν εἶπεν Ἐξουσίαν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἔχων φθαρτὸς ὢν ὃ θέλεις ποιεῖς· μὴ δόκει δὲ τὸ γένος ἡμῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ καταλελειφθαι· ¹⁷ σὺ δὲ καρτέρει καὶ θεώρει τὸ μεγαλεῖον αὐτοῦ κράτος, ὡς σὲ καὶ τὸ σπέρμα σου βασανιεῖ.

¹⁸ Μετὰ δὲ τοῦτον ἦγον τὸν ἕκτον, καὶ μέλλων ἀποθνήσκειν ἔφη Μὴ πλανῶ μάτην, ἡμεῖς γὰρ δι’ ἑαυτοὺς ταῦτα πάσχομεν ἁμαρτόντες εἰς τὸν ἑαυτῶν θεόν, ἄξια θαυμασμοῦ γέγονεν· ¹⁹ σὺ δὲ μὴ νομίσης ἀδῶος ἔσεσθαι θεομαχεῖν ἐπιχειρήσας.

²⁰ Ὑπεραγόντως δὲ ἡ μήτηρ θαυμαστὴ καὶ μνήμης ἀγαθῆς ἄξια, ἣτις ἀπολλυμένους υἱοὺς ἐπὶ τὰ συνορῶσα μιᾶς ὑπὸ καιρὸν ἡμέρας εὐψύχως ἔφερεν διὰ τὰς ἐπὶ κύριον ἐλπίδας.

²¹ Ἐκαστον δὲ αὐτῶν παρεκάλει τῇ πατρίῳ φωνῇ γενναίῳ πεπληρωμένη φρονήματι καὶ τὸν θῆλυν λογισμὸν ἄρσενι θυμῷ διεγείρασα λέγουσα πρὸς αὐτούς ²² Οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅπως εἰς

relying on God’s promise that we shall be raised up by him; for you, there can be no resurrection to new life.”

¹⁵ Next, they brought forward the fifth and tortured him; ¹⁶ but he looked at him and said, “You have power over men, mortal as you are, and do as you please; but do not think that our race has been deserted by God. ¹⁷ Wait, and you will see his mighty power torment you and your descendants.”

¹⁸ After him, they led out the sixth and his dying words were, “Do not delude yourself: we suffer like this for our own fault, having sinned against our own God; appalling things have befallen us – ¹⁹ but do not think you will go unpunished for attempting to make war on God.”

²⁰ Above all, the mother was admirable and worthy of honourable memory; for, she watched the death of seven sons in one single day and bravely endured it because of her hopes in the Lord. ²¹ She encouraged each of them in their ancestral tongue; filled with noble conviction, she reinforced her womanly argument with manly courage, saying to them, ²² “I

¹⁵ The NJB has ‘began torturing’ in place of ‘tortured’.

¹⁶ The pronoun, ‘him’, here refers to the king.

¹⁷ Antiochus IV died in misery and his son was murdered (9:5–28).

¹⁸ The NJB has ‘we are suffering’ in place of ‘we suffer’.

¹⁹ After ‘you’, the NJB adds ‘yourself’.

²⁰ The cult of the ‘seven Maccabaeen brothers’ spread into Europe, where several churches were dedicated in their honour, and it is the main subject of 4M. The work known as the ‘Passion of the Holy Maccabees’ became widely diffused and served as model for martyr’s lives.

²¹ On the phrase, ‘ancestral tongue’, see #8.

²² The word translated ‘breath’ (as NJB) can also mean ‘spirit’ (as WEBBE).

τὴν ἐμὴν ἐφάνητε κοιλίαν, οὐδὲ ἐγὼ τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὴν ζωὴν ὑμῶν ἐχαρισάμην, καὶ τὴν ἐκάστου στοιχειώσιν οὐκ ἐγὼ διεργύθμισα.²³ τοιγαροῦν ὁ τοῦ κόσμου κτίστης ὁ πλάσας ἀνθρώπου γένεσιν καὶ πάντων ἐξευρὼν γένεσιν καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὴν ζωὴν ὑμῶν πάλιν ἀποδίδωσιν μετ' ἐλέους, ὥς νῦν ὑπεροῶτε ἐαυτοὺς διὰ τοὺς αὐτοῦ νόμους.

²⁴ Ὁ δὲ Ἀντίοχος οἰόμενος καταφρονεῖσθαι καὶ τὴν ὀνειδίζουσαν ὑφορώμενος φωνὴν ἔτι τοῦ νεωτέρου περιόντος οὐ μόνον διὰ λόγων ἐποιεῖτο τὴν παράκλησιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' ὄρκων ἐπίστου ἅμα πλουτιεῖν καὶ μακαριστὸν ποιήσιν μεταδόμενον ἀπὸ τῶν πατρίων καὶ φίλον ἔξιν καὶ χρειᾶς ἐμπιστεύσιν.²⁵ τοῦ δὲ νεανίου μηδαμῶς προσέχοντος προσκαλεσάμενος ὁ βασιλεὺς τὴν μητέρα παρήνει γενέσθαι τοῦ μεираκίου σύμβουλον ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ.²⁶ πολλὰ δὲ αὐτοῦ παραινέσαντος ἐπεδέξατο πείσειν τὸν υἱόν.²⁷ προσκύψασα δὲ αὐτῷ χλευάσασα τὸν ὦμόν τυράννον οὕτως ἔφησεν τῇ πατρίῳ φωνῇ Υἱέ, ἐλέησόν με τὴν ἐν γαστρὶ περιενέγκασάν σε μῆνας ἐννέα καὶ θηλάσασάν σε ἔτη τρία καὶ ἐκθρέψασάν σε καὶ ἀγαγοῦσαν εἰς τὴν ἡλικίαν ταύτην καὶ τροφοφορήσασαν.²⁸ ἀξιῶ σε, τέκνον, ἀναβλέψαντα εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς πάντα ἰδόντα γινῶναι

do not know how you appeared in my womb; it was not I who endowed you with breath and life, I had not the shaping of your every part.²³ Hence, the Creator of the world, who made everyone and ordained the origin of all things, will in his mercy give you back breath and life, since for the sake of his laws you have no concern for yourselves."

²⁴ Antiochus thought he was being mocked, suspecting insult in the tone of her voice; and, as the youngest was still alive, he appealed to him not with mere words but promised on oath to make him both rich and happy if he would abandon the ways of his ancestors; he would make him his Friend and entrust him with public office.²⁵ The young man took no notice, so the king appealed to the mother, urging her to advise the youth to save his life.²⁶ After a great deal of urging on his part, she undertook to persuade her son.²⁷ Bending over him, she fooled the cruel tyrant with these words, uttered in their ancestral tongue, "My son, have pity on me; I carried you nine months in my womb and suckled you three years, fed you and reared you to the age you are now, and provided for you.²⁸ I implore you, my child, look at the earth and sky, and all in them, and consider how God made them

²³ The word translated 'breath' (as NJB) can also mean 'spirit' (as WEBBE).

²⁴ Cf. 8:9. The WEBBE here reads 'enrich him and raise him to high honour'.

²⁵ The WEBBE has 'called' in place of 'appealed'.

²⁶ The NJB ends with, "... she agreed to try persuasion on her son."

²⁷ An alternative ending reads, "... and have borne the burden of your education."

²⁸ The Peshitta reads 'from things which are not', and the NRSV has, "... that God did not make them out of things that existed."

ὅτι οὐκ ἐξ ὄντων ἐποίησεν αὐτὰ ὁ θεός, καὶ τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένος οὕτω γίνεται. ²⁹ μὴ φοβηθῇς τὸν δῆμιον τοῦτον, ἀλλὰ τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἄξιος γενόμενος ἐπίδεξαι τὸν θάνατον, ἵνα ἐν τῷ ἐλέει σὺν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς σου κομίσωμαί σε.

³⁰ Ἔτι δὲ ταύτης καταληγούσης ὁ νεανίας εἶπεν Τίνα μένετε; οὐχ ὑπακούω τοῦ προστάγματος τοῦ βασιλέως, τοῦ δὲ προστάγματος ἀκούω τοῦ νόμου τοῦ δοθέντος τοῖς πατράσιν ἡμῶν διὰ Μωυσέως. ³¹ σὺ δὲ πάσης κακίας εὐρετῆς γενόμενος εἰς τοὺς Εβραίους οὐ μὴ διαφύγῃς τὰς χειρὰς τοῦ θεοῦ. ³² ἡμεῖς γὰρ διὰ τὰς ἑαυτῶν ἀμαρτίας πάσχομεν. ³³ εἰ δὲ χάριν ἐπιπλήξῃς καὶ παιδείας ὁ ζῶν κύριος ἡμῶν βραχέως ἐπώργισται, καὶ πάλιν καταλλαγῇσεται τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ δούλοις. ³⁴ σὺ δέ, ὦ ἀνόσιε καὶ πάντων ἀνθρώπων μιαρῶτατε, μὴ μάτην μετεωρίζου φρουαττόμενος ἀδῆλοις ἐλπίσιν ἐπὶ τοὺς οὐρανίους παῖδας ἐπαιρούμενος χειρὰ. ³⁵ οὕπω γὰρ τὴν τοῦ παντοκράτορος ἐπόπτου θεοῦ κρίσιν ἐκπέφυγας. ³⁶ οἱ μὲν γὰρ νῦν ἡμέτεροι ἀδελφοὶ βραχὺν ὑπενέγκαντες πόνον ἀενάου ζωῆς ὑπὸ διαθήκην θεοῦ πεπτώκασιν· σὺ δὲ τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ

out of what did not exist, and that human beings come into being the same way. ²⁹ Do not fear this executioner but prove yourself worthy of your brothers and accept death, so I may receive you back with them in the day of mercy."

³⁰ While she was still speaking, the young man said, "What are you all waiting for? I will not comply with the king's command; I obey the command of the Law given to our fathers through Moses. ³¹ As for you, who have contrived every kind of evil against the Hebrews, you will certainly not escape the hands of God. ³² We suffer for our sins; ³³ and if, to punish and discipline us, our living Lord is briefly angry with us, he will be reconciled with his servants. ³⁴ But you, unholy wretch and wickedest of villains, what cause have you for pride, nourishing vain hopes and raising your hand against the children of heaven? ³⁵ You have not yet escaped the judgement of God the Almighty, the all-seeing. ³⁶ Our brothers, having endured brief pain, for the sake of ever-flowing life have died for the Covenant of God, while you,

²⁹ The WEBBE has 'butcher' in place of 'executioner'.

³⁰ The NJB opens the verse with the conjectural, "She had hardly finished ..." here, we follow the NRSV.

³¹ The Greek here for 'you' is singular. 'Hebrews' is an intentionally archaic term, here and in 11:13 and 15:37 (see Jdt 10:12, 12:11, 14:18): the LXX rarely uses the word (*Εβραίους*) except in the Pentateuch.

³² The NJB has 'are suffering' in place of 'suffer'.

³³ The NJB ends 'with us in due course'; here, we (loosely) follow the WEBBE.

³⁴ In place of 'children of heaven', here following the LXX, the NJB has 'his servants'.

³⁵ The WEBBE has 'who sees all things' in place of 'the all-seeing'.

³⁶ 'For the sake of ever-flowing life' follows the Latin MSS; 'died for' is conjectural (the LXX is unintelligible); the NRSV (disregarding one Greek letter) reads, "... have drunk of ever-flowing life, under God's Covenant."

κρίσει δίκαια τὰ πρόστιμα τῆς ὑπερηφανίας ἀποίση. ³⁷ ἐγὼ δέ, καθάπερ οἱ ἀδελφοί, καὶ σῶμα καὶ ψυχὴν προδίδωμι περὶ τῶν πατρίων νόμων ἐπικαλούμενος τὸν θεὸν ἰλεως ταχὺ τῷ ἔθνει γενέσθαι καὶ σὲ μετὰ ἐτασμῶν καὶ μαστίγων ἐξομολογήσασθαι διότι μόνος αὐτὸς θεός ἐστιν, ³⁸ ἐν ἐμοὶ δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου στηῆσαι τὴν τοῦ παντοκράτορος ὀργὴν τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ σύμπαν ἡμῶν γένος δικαίως ἐπηγμένην.

³⁹ Ἐκδυμος δὲ γενόμενος ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦτω παρὰ τοὺς ἄλλους χειρίστως ἀπήντησεν πικρῶς φέρων ἐπὶ τῷ μυκτηρισμῷ. ⁴⁰ καὶ οὗτος οὖν καθαρὸς μετήλλαξεν παντελῶς ἐπὶ τῷ κυρίῳ πεποιθώς. ⁴¹ Ἐσχάτη δὲ τῶν υἱῶν ἡ μήτηρ ἐτελεύτησεν.

⁴² Τὰ μὲν οὖν περὶ τοὺς σπλαγχνισμοὺς καὶ τὰς ὑπερβαλλούσας αἰκίας ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον δεδηλώσθω.

by God's judgement, will have to pay the just penalty for your arrogance. ³⁷ I too, like my brothers, surrender my body and life for the laws of my fathers, begging God quickly to take pity on our nation, and by trials and afflictions to bring you to confess that he alone is God, ³⁸ so that with my brothers and myself there may be an end to the wrath of the Almighty, rightly let loose on our whole nation."

³⁹ The king fell into a rage and treated this one worse than the others; for, he was smarting from his scorn; ⁴⁰ and so, the last brother met his end undefiled and with perfect trust in the Lord. ⁴¹ Last of all, after her sons, the mother died.

⁴² Let this be sufficient account of the sacrificial meals and monstrous tortures.

³⁷ For the notion of a God who is absolutely universal and without possible rival, see 1Ch 17:20, Si 36:4 and the earlier Is 45:14.

³⁸ The 'end to the wrath of the Almighty' would not be through atoning for Israel's sins through their deaths (as in 4M 1:11, 17:20–22), but by increasing the suffering of Israel to such a degree that God would be moved to intervene for them (see Dt 32:36, Jg 2:18).

³⁹ The NJB has 'more cruelly' in place of 'worse', here following the WEBBE.

⁴⁰ The WEBBE has 'pure' in place of 'undefiled'.

⁴¹ For this verse, here following the WEBBE, the NJB reads, "The mother was the last to die, after he sons."

⁴² The NJB has 'ritual' in place of 'sacrificial'.

Μακκαβαίων Β' 8

¹ Ἰουδᾶς δὲ ὁ καὶ Μακκαβαῖος καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ παρεισπορευόμενοι λεληθότως εἰς τὰς κώμας προσεκαλοῦντο τοὺς συγγενεῖς καὶ τοὺς μεμενηκότας ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ προσλαμβάνόμενοι συνήγαγον εἰς ἑξακισχιλίους. ² καὶ ἐπεκαλοῦντο τὸν κύριον ἐπιθεῖν τὸν ὑπὸ πάντων καταπατούμενον λαόν, οἰκτιῖραι δὲ καὶ τὸν ναὸν τὸν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀσεβῶν ἀνθρώπων βεβηλωθέντα, ³ ἐλεῆσαι δὲ καὶ τὴν καταφθειρομένην πόλιν καὶ μέλλουσιν ἰσόπεδον γίνεσθαι καὶ τῶν καταβοώντων πρὸς αὐτὸν αἱμάτων εἰσακοῦσαι, ⁴ μνησθῆναι δὲ καὶ τῆς τῶν ἀναμαρτήτων νηπίων παρανόμου ἀπωλείας καὶ περὶ τῶν γενομένων εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ βλασφημιῶν καὶ μισοπονηρῆσαι. ⁵ γενόμενος δὲ ὁ Μακκαβαῖος ἐν συστέματι ἀνυπόστατος ἤδη τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἐγένετο τῆς ὀργῆς τοῦ κυρίου εἰς ἔλεον θεραπείας. ⁶ πόλεις δὲ καὶ κώμας ἀπροσδοκῆτως ἐρχόμενος ἐνεπίμπρα καὶ τοὺς ἐπικαίρους τόπους ἀπολαμβάνων οὐκ ὀλίγους τῶν πολεμίων τροπούμενος ⁷ μάλιστα τὰς νύκτας πρὸς τὰς τοιαύτας ἐπιβολὰς συνεργοὺς ἐλάμβανεν. καὶ λαλιὰ τῆς εὐανδρίας αὐτοῦ διηχεῖτο πανταχῇ.

2 MACCABEES 8

¹ Meanwhile Judas, otherwise known as Maccabaeus, and his companions made their way secretly among the villages, rallying their fellow countrymen; they recruited those who remained loyal to Judaism and assembled about six thousand. ² They called on the Lord to have regard for the people oppressed on all sides, to have compassion on the Temple profaned by the godless, ³ to have mercy on the city now being destroyed and levelled to the ground, to hear the blood of the victims that cried aloud to him; ⁴ to remember, too, the criminal slaughter of innocent babies and to avenge the blasphemies perpetrated against his name. ⁵ As soon as Maccabaeus had trained his men for service, he at once proved invincible to the foreigners, the Lord's anger having turned into compassion. ⁶ Making surprise attacks on towns and villages, he fired them; he captured favourable positions and put many enemies to flight, ⁷ generally availing himself of the cover of night for such enterprises. The fame of his valour spread everywhere.

2 MACCABEES 8

- ¹ The author amalgamates deeds attributed to Mattathias in 1M 2 with the activities of Judas before the intervention of Antiochus (1M 3:1-16).
² The NJB has 'take pity' in place of 'have compassion', here following the WEBBE.
³ The WEBBE has 'take pity' in place of 'have mercy', here following the NJB.
⁴ In place of 'criminal slaughter', the WEBBE has 'lawless destruction'.
⁵ The NJB has 'organised force' in place of 'trained his men for service', here following the WEBBE.
⁶ In place of 'put many enemies to flight', here following the LXX & NRSV, the NJB, following the Vg, has 'inflicted very heavy losses on the enemy'.
⁷ For the last sentence, the WEBBE reads, "His courage was loudly talked of everywhere." The Greek text of vv. 6-7 is uncertain.

⁸ Συνορῶν δὲ ὁ Φίλιππος κατὰ μικρὸν εἰς προκοπὴν ἐρχόμενον τὸν ἄνδρα, πυκνότερον δὲ ἐν ταῖς εὐημερίαις προβαίνοντα, πρὸς Πτολεμαῖον τὸν Κοίλης Συρίας καὶ Φοινίκης στρατηγὸν ἔγραψεν ἐπιβοηθεῖν τοῖς τοῦ βασιλέως πράγμασιν. ⁹ ὁ δὲ ταχέως προχειρισάμενος Νικάνωρα τὸν τοῦ Πατρόκλου τῶν πρώτων φίλων ἀπέστειλεν ὑποτάξας παμφύλων ἔθνη οὐκ ἐλάττους τῶν δισμυρίων τὸ σύμπαν τῆς Ιουδαίας ἐξᾶραι γένος· συνέστησεν δὲ αὐτῷ καὶ Γοργίαν ἄνδρα στρατηγὸν καὶ ἐν πολεμικαῖς χρεῖαις πεῖραν ἔχοντα. ¹⁰ διεστήσατο δὲ ὁ Νικάνωρ τὸν φόρον τῷ βασιλεῖ τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις ὄντα ταλάντων δισχιλίων ἐκ τῆς τῶν Ιουδαίων αἰχμαλωσίας ἐκπληρώσειν. ¹¹ εὐθέως δὲ εἰς τὰς παραθαλασσίους πόλεις ἀπέστειλεν προκαλούμενος ἐπ' ἀγορασμὸν Ιουδαίων σωματῶν ὑπισχνούμενος ἐνενήκοντα σώματα ταλάντου παραχωρήσειν οὐ προσδεχόμενος τὴν παρὰ τοῦ παντοκράτορος μέλλουσαν παρακολουθήσειν ἐπ' αὐτῷ δίκην.

¹² τῷ δὲ Ιουδα προσέπεσεν περὶ τῆς τοῦ Νικάνωρος ἐφόδου, καὶ μεταδόντος τοῖς σὺν αὐτῷ τὴν παρουσίαν τοῦ στρατοπέδου ¹³ οἱ δειλανδροῦντες καὶ ἀπιστοῦντες τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ δίκην διεδίδρασκον ἑαυτοὺς καὶ ἐξετόπιζον. ¹⁴ οἱ δὲ τὰ περιλελειμμένα πάντα ἐπώλουν, ὁμοῦ δὲ τὸν κύριον ἠξίουσαν

⁸ When Philip saw Judas was making steady progress and winning increasingly frequent successes, he wrote to Ptolemy, the general officer commanding Coele-Syria and Phoenicia, asking for reinforcements in the royal interest.

⁹ Ptolemy chose Nicanor son of Patroclus, one of the king's First Friends, and sent him promptly at the head of an international force of at least twenty thousand men to exterminate the entire Jewish race. As his associate, he appointed Gorgias, a professional general of wide military experience. ¹⁰ Nicanor for his part proposed, by the sale of Jewish prisoners of war, to raise the two thousand talents of tribute money owed by the king to the Romans. ¹¹ He lost no time in sending the seaboard towns an invitation to come and buy Jewish manpower, promising delivery of ninety head for one talent; but he did not reckon on the judgement from the Almighty that was soon to overtake him.

¹² When the news reached Judas of Nicanor's advance, he warned his men of the enemy's approach, ¹³ whereupon the cowardly ones and those who lacked confidence in the justice of God took to their heels and ran away. ¹⁴ Others sold all they had left, at the same time praying the Lord to deliver

⁸ 'Philip' is the king's representative in Jerusalem (see 5:22–23), subordinate to 'Ptolemy', the Military Governor of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia.

⁹ In 1M 3:38–4:25, Gorgias, not Nicanor, is the principal figure.

¹⁰ Since the battle of Magnesia (#1M 1:10), the Seleucids paid tribute to Rome; perhaps the 'two thousand talents' was the last instalment.

¹¹ Slave traders accompanied the expedition (compare 8:34 and 1M 3:41).

¹² For this verse, the WEBBE opens, "News came to Judas concerning Nicanor's invasion. When he communicated to those who were with him ..."

¹³ The translation, 'took to their heels', is uncertain; the WEBBE ends with, "ran away and left the country."

¹⁴ The NJB opens with 'The rest' in place of 'Others'.

ούσασθαι τοὺς ὑπὸ τοῦ δυσσεβοῦς Νικάνορος πρὶν συντυχεῖν πεπραμένους· ¹⁵ καὶ εἰ μὴ δι' αὐτοὺς, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὰς πρὸς τοὺς πατέρας αὐτῶν διαθήκας καὶ ἔνεκα τῆς ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἐπικλήσεως τοῦ σεμνοῦ καὶ μεγαλοπρεποῦς ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ.

¹⁶ συναγαγὼν δὲ ὁ Μακκαβαῖος τοὺς περὶ αὐτὸν ὄντας ἀριθμὸν ἑξακισχιλίους παρεκάλει μὴ καταπλαγῆναι τοῖς πολεμίοις μηδὲ εὐλαβεῖσθαι τὴν τῶν ἀδίκως παραγινομένων ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἐθνῶν πολυπλήθειαν, ἀγωνίσασθαι δὲ γενναίως ¹⁷ πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν λαβόντας τὴν ἀνόμως εἰς τὸν ἅγιον τόπον συντετελεσμένην ὑπ' αὐτῶν ὕβριν καὶ τὸν τῆς ἐμπεπαιγμένης πόλεως αἰκισμόν, ἔτι δὲ τὴν τῆς προγονικῆς πολιτείας κατάλυσιν. ¹⁸ οἱ μὲν γὰρ ὅπλοις πεποίθασιν ἅμα καὶ τόλμαις, ἔφησεν, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἐπὶ τῷ παντοκράτορι θεῷ, δυναμένῳ καὶ τοὺς ἐρχομένους ἐφ' ἡμᾶς καὶ τὸν ὅλον κόσμον ἐνὶ νεύματι καταβαλεῖν, πεποίθαμεν. ¹⁹ προσαναλεξάμενος δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ τὰς ἐπὶ τῶν προγόνων γενομένας ἀντιλήψεις καὶ τὴν ἐπὶ Σενναχηριμ, ἑκατὸν ὀγδοήκοντα πέντε χιλιάδες ὡς ἀπώλοντο, ²⁰ καὶ τὴν ἐν τῇ Βαβυλωνίᾳ τὴν πρὸς τοὺς Γαλάτας παράταξιν γενομένην, ὡς οἱ πάντες ἐπὶ τὴν χρεῖαν ἦλθον ὀκτακισχίλιοι σὺν Μακεδόσιν τετρακισχιλίοις, τῶν Μακεδόνων ἀπορουμένων οἱ ὀκτακισχίλιοι τὰς δώδεκα

them from the godless Nicanor, who had sold them before he even met them – ¹⁵ if not for their own sakes, then for the covenants made with their fathers and because they themselves bore his sacred and majestic name.

¹⁶ Maccabaeus mustered his men, numbering six thousand and exhorted them not to fear the enemy or be afraid of the vast horde of gentiles wickedly advancing against them, but to fight bravely, ¹⁷ keeping in mind the outrage committed by them against the holy place and the scornful torture and mockery of the city, not to mention the destruction of their traditional way of life. ¹⁸ “For,” he said, “They trust their weapons and their exploits but our confidence is in Almighty God, who is able with a single nod to overthrow both those marching on us and the whole world with them.” ¹⁹ He reminded them of the occasions on which their fathers had received help: that time when, under Sennacherib, a hundred and eighty-five thousand men had perished; ²⁰ that time in Babylonia when, in the battle with the Galatians, the Jewish combatants numbered only eight thousand, with four thousand Macedonians, yet when the Macedonians were hard pressed, the eight thousand had destroyed a hundred

¹⁵ The literal ending is, “... because of the invocation of his name on them,” a Hebraism (see 1M 7:37, Dt 28:10, 2S 12:28, 1K 8:43, Is 4:1).

¹⁶ The NJB adds ‘about’ before ‘six thousand’.

¹⁷ The literal translation of ‘in mind’ is ‘before their eyes’.

¹⁸ The NJB has ‘may put their trust in’ in place of ‘trust’.

¹⁹ The NJB & WEBBE have ‘ancestors’ in place of ‘fathers’.

²⁰ After ‘a hundred and twenty thousand’, the NRSV repeats ‘Galatians’ (WEBBE has ‘Gauls’). Some MSS (and WEBBE) have 6,000 for the 2nd 8,000.

μυριάδας ἀπώλεσαν διὰ τὴν γινομένην αὐτοῖς ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ βοήθειαν καὶ ὠφέλειαν πολλὴν ἔλαβον.

²¹ ἔφ' οἷς εὐδαρσεῖς αὐτοὺς παραστήσας καὶ ἐτοιμοὺς ὑπὲρ τῶν νόμων καὶ τῆς πατρίδος ἀποδνήσκειν τετραμερές τι τὸ στράτευμα ἐποίησεν. ²² τάξας καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφούς αὐτοῦ προηγουμένους ἑκατέρας τάξεως, Σιμωνα καὶ Ἰωσηπον καὶ Ἰωναθην, ὑποτάξας ἑκάστῳ χιλίους πρὸς τοῖς πεντακοσίοις, ²³ ἔτι δὲ καὶ Ελεάζαρον, παραναγνοὺς τὴν ἱερὰν βίβλον καὶ δοὺς σύνθημα θεοῦ βοηθείας τῆς πρώτης σπείρας αὐτὸς προηγούμενος συνέβαλε τῷ Νικάνορι. ²⁴ γενομένου δὲ αὐτοῖς τοῦ παντοκράτορος συμμάχου κατέσφαξαν τῶν πολεμίων ὑπὲρ τοὺς ἑνακισχιλίους, τραυματίας δὲ καὶ τοῖς μέλεσιν ἀναπείρους τὸ πλεῖον μέρος τῆς τοῦ Νικάνορος στρατιᾶς ἐποίησαν, πάντας δὲ φυγεῖν ἠνάγκασαν. ²⁵ τὰ δὲ χρήματα τῶν παραγεγονότων ἐπὶ τὸν ἀγορασμὸν αὐτῶν ἔλαβον· συνδιώξαντες δὲ αὐτοὺς ἐφ' ἱκανὸν ἀνέλυσαν ὑπὸ τῆς ὥρας συγκλειόμενοι. ²⁶ ἦν γὰρ ἡ πρὸ τοῦ σαββάτου, δι' ἣν αἰτίαν οὐκ ἐμακροτόνησαν κατατρέχοντες αὐτούς. ²⁷ ὅπλολογήσαντες δὲ αὐτοὺς καὶ τὰ σκῦλα ἐκδύσαντες τῶν πολεμίων

and twenty thousand, thanks to the help they had received from Heaven, and had taken great booty as a result.

²¹ Having so roused their courage by these words that they were ready to die for the laws and the country, he then divided his army into four parts, ²² putting his brothers, Simon, Joseph, and Jonathon, in command of one division each, and assigning them fifteen hundred men apiece. ²³ Next, he ordered Eleazar to read the Holy Book aloud and gave them their watchword, "Help from God." Then, putting himself at the head of the first division, he attacked Nicanor.

²⁴ With the Almighty for their ally, they slaughtered over nine thousand of the enemy, wounded and crippled the greater part of Nicanor's army and put them all to flight.

²⁵ The money of their prospective purchasers fell into their hands. After pursuing them for a good while, they turned back, since time was pressing: ²⁶ it was the eve of the Sabbath and, for that reason, they did not prolong their pursuit.

²⁷ They collected then enemy's weapons and stripped them of their spoils and, because of the Sabbath, even more

²¹ The NJB lacks the word, 'parts', at the end of the verse.

²² 'Joseph' is called 'John' in 1M 2:2.

²³ The NJB, following the Vg (*Esdra*) and some Aramaic MSS, has 'Esdra' in place of 'Eleazar', here following the LXX (*Ελεάζαρον*) and NRSV; he is the same person as the 'Azariah' of 1M 5:18,56. Formulae similar to 'Help from God' were used in the Hellenistic and Roman armies and are also mentioned in the Qumran 'War Rule'.

²⁴ The literal translation for 'wounded and crippled' is 'disabled in their limbs'.

²⁵ An alternative reading for 'a good while' (as NJB) is 'some distance' (as WEBBE).

²⁶ Gorgias and his army were in the hills (1M 4:16-18).

²⁷ The WEBBE ends with, "he had begun to show mercy to them."

περὶ τὸ σάββατον ἐγίνοντο περισσῶς εὐλογοῦντες καὶ ἐξομολογούμενοι τῷ κυρίῳ τῷ διασώσαντι εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν ταύτην, ἀρχὴν ἐλέους τάξαντος αὐτοῖς. ²⁸ μετὰ δὲ τὸ σάββατον τοῖς ἡκισμένοις καὶ ταῖς χήραις καὶ ὀρφανοῖς μερίσαντες ἀπὸ τῶν σκύλων τὰ λοιπὰ αὐτοὶ καὶ τὰ παιδιά διμερίσαντο.

²⁹ Ταῦτα δὲ διαπραξάμενοι καὶ κοινὴν ἱκετείαν ποιησάμενοι τὸν ἐλεήμονα κύριον ἠξίουσιν εἰς τέλος καταλλαγῆναι τοῖς αὐτοῦ δούλοις.

³⁰ Καὶ τοῖς περὶ Τιμόθεον καὶ Βακχίδην συνερίσαντες ὑπὲρ τοὺς δισμυρίους αὐτῶν ἀνεῖλον καὶ ὀχυρωμάτων ὑψηλῶν εὗ μάλα ἐγκρατεῖς ἐγένοντο καὶ λάφυρα πλείονα ἐμερίσαντο ἰσομοίρους αὐτοῖς καὶ τοῖς ἡκισμένοις καὶ ὀρφανοῖς καὶ χήραις, ἔτι δὲ καὶ πρεσβυτέροις ποιήσαντες. ³¹ ὀπλολογήσαντες δὲ αὐτοὺς ἐπιμελῶς πάντα συνέθηκαν εἰς τοὺς ἐπικαίρους τόπους, τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ τῶν σκύλων ἤνεγκαν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα. ³² τὸν δὲ φυλάρχην τῶν περὶ Τιμόθεον ἀνεῖλον, ἀνοσιώτατον ἄνδρα καὶ πολλὰ τοὺς Ἰουδαίους ἐπιλελυπηκότα. ³³ ἐπινίκια δὲ ἄγοντες ἐν τῇ πατρίδι τοὺς ἐμπρήσαντας τοὺς ἱεροὺς πυλῶνας καὶ Καλλισθένην ὑφῆψαν εἰς ἐν οἰκίδιον πεφευγότα, καὶ τὸν ἄξιον τῆς δυσσεβείας ἐκομίσατο μισθόν.

heartily blessed and praised the Lord, who had saved them and who had chosen that day for the first manifestation of his compassion. ²⁸ When the Sabbath was over, they distributed some of the booty among the victims of the persecution and the widows and orphans; the rest they divided among themselves and their children.

²⁹ When they had accomplished these things and had made a common supplication, they implored the merciful Lord to be wholly reconciled with his servants.

³⁰ They also fought the forces of Timothy and Bacchides and killed over twenty thousand of them, gaining possession of several high fortresses. They split their huge booty into two equal shares: one for themselves, the other for the victims of the persecution and the orphans and widows, not forgetting the aged. ³¹ They gathered the enemy's weapons and stored them in suitable places. The rest of the spoils they took to Jerusalem. ³² They killed the tribal chieftain on Timothy's staff, a most unholy man who had done the Jews great harm.

³³ During their victory celebrations in Jerusalem, they burned the men who had fired the Holy Gates; with Callisthenes, they had fled to a small house; so, they received a just reward for their sacrilege.

²⁸ The literal translation of 'victims of the persecution' is 'shamefully handled'.

²⁹ For this verse, here from the WEBBE, the NJB has, "They then joined in public supplication, imploring the Lord to be fully reconciled with his servants."

³⁰ The author has placed this fragment (vv. 30-33) here as a further illustration of the punishment meted out to persecutors.

³¹ The exact meaning of the opening clause is uncertain.

³² The 'tribal chieftain' (φυλάρχην) was presumably the leader of the Arabs defeated at the beginning of the campaign against Timothy (12:10ff).

³³ The 'Holy Gates' are those of the Temple, rather than those of the outer court. The Greek text here may be corrupt.

³⁴ ὁ δὲ τρισαλιτήριος Νικάνωρ ὁ τοὺς χιλίους ἐμπόρους ἐπὶ τὴν πρᾶσιν τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀγαγὼν ³⁵ ταπεινωθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν κατ' αὐτὸν νομιζομένων ἐλαχίστων εἶναι τῇ τοῦ κυρίου βοηθείᾳ τὴν δοξικὴν ἀποδέμενος ἐσθῆτα διὰ τῆς μεσογείου δραπετοῦ τρόπον ἔρημον ἑαυτὸν ποιήσας ἦκεν εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν ὑπὲρ ἅπαν εὐημερηκῶς ἐπὶ τῇ τοῦ στρατοῦ διαφθορᾷ. ³⁶ καὶ ὁ τοῖς Ῥωμαίοις ἀναδεξάμενος φόρον ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις αἰχμαλωσίας κατορθώσασθαι κατήγγελλεν ὑπέρμαχον ἔχειν τοὺς Ἰουδαίους καὶ διὰ τὸν τρόπον τοῦτον ἀτρότους εἶναι τοὺς Ἰουδαίους διὰ τὸ ἀκολουθεῖν τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ προτεταγμένοις νόμοις.

³⁴ The thrice-accursed Nicanor, who had brought the thousand merchants to buy the Jews, ³⁵ being, with the Lord's help, humbled by men he had reckoned as of least account, stripped off his robes of state and made his way across country unaccompanied, like a runaway slave, reaching Antioch by a stroke of luck, since his army was destroyed. ³⁶ Thus, the man who had promised the Romans to make good their tribute money by selling the prisoners from Jerusalem, bore witness that the Jews had a Defender and that they were, in consequence, invulnerable, since they followed the laws that he had ordained.

³⁴ The general narrative here resumes.

³⁵ The NJB opens with *'finding himself'* in place of *'being'*.

³⁶ We capitalize *'Defender'* here as it is used in terms of a proper name for God.

Μακκαβαίων Β' 9

¹ Περὶ δὲ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον ἐτύγγανεν Ἀντίοχος ἀναλελυκὸς ἀκόσμως ἐκ τῶν περὶ τὴν Περσίδα τόπων. ² εἰσεληλύθει γὰρ εἰς τὴν λεγομένην Περσέπολιν καὶ ἐπεχείρησεν ἱεροσυλεῖν καὶ τὴν πόλιν συνέχειν· διὸ δὴ τῶν πληθῶν ὁρμησάντων ἐπὶ τὴν τῶν ὅπλων βοήθειαν ἐτράπησαν, καὶ συνέβη τροπωθέντα τὸν Ἀντίοχον ὑπὸ τῶν ἐγχωρίων ἀσχήμονα τὴν ἀναζυγὴν ποιήσασθαι. ³ ὄντι δὲ αὐτῷ κατ' Ἐκβάτανα προσέπεσεν τὰ κατὰ Νικάνορα καὶ τοὺς περὶ Τιμόθεον γεγονότα. ⁴ ἐπαρθεὶς δὲ τῷ θυμῷ ὤρετο καὶ τὴν τῶν πεφυγαδευκότων αὐτὸν κακίαν εἰς τοὺς Ἰουδαίους ἐναπερείσασθαι, διὸ συνέταξεν τὸν ἀρματηλάτην ἀδιαλείπτως ἐλαύνοντα κατανύειν τὴν πορείαν τῆς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ δὴ κρίσεως συνούσης αὐτῷ· οὕτως γὰρ ὑπερηφάνως εἶπεν Πολυάνδριον Ἰουδαίων Ἱεροσόλυμα ποιήσω παραγενόμενος ἐκεῖ. ⁵ ὁ δὲ παντεπόπτης κύριος ὁ θεὸς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἐπάταξεν αὐτὸν ἀνιάτῳ καὶ ἀοράτῳ πληγῇ· ἄρτι δὲ αὐτοῦ καταλήξαντος τὸν λόγον ἔλαβεν αὐτὸν ἀνήκεστος τῶν σπλάγχνων ἀλγηδὼν καὶ πικραὶ τῶν ἔνδον βάσανοι ⁶ πάνυ δικαίως τὸν πολλὰς καὶ ξενιζούσαις συμφοραῖς ἐτέρων

2 MACCABEES 9

¹ At about that time, Antiochus retreated in disarray from Persia. ² He had entered the city called Persepolis, planning to rob the temple and occupy the city; but the population at once sprang to arms to defend themselves, with the result that Antiochus was routed by the inhabitants and forced to make a humiliating retreat. ³ On his arrival at Ecbatana, he learned what had happened to Nicanor and to Timothy's forces. ⁴ Flying into a passion, he resolved to make the Jews pay for the evil deeds of those who had routed him and, with this in mind, he ordered his charioteer to drive without stopping and get the journey over. But the sentence of Heaven was already hanging over him. In his pride, he had said, "When I reach Jerusalem, I shall make it a mass grave for the Jews." ⁵ However, the all-seeing Lord, the God of Israel, struck him with an incurable and unseen complaint. The words were hardly out of his mouth when he was seized with an incurable pain in his bowels and tortuous internal pain; ⁶ and this was only right, since he had barbarically

2 MACCABEES 9

- ¹ Antiochus went to Persia to strengthen his authority there and to get funds. Another reading for 'in disarray' is 'with dishonour'.
² The temple in question was actually in Elymais, to the north of Persepolis (1M 6:1ff); but Jason or the summarist may have preferred to site this event in a city well known to everyone.
³ 'Ecbatana' is present day Hamadan, 720 Km north of Persepolis. In fact, Antiochus Epiphanes died at Tabae, half-way between these two places.
⁴ The NJB has 'disgrace inflicted by' in place of 'evil deeds of', here following the WEBBE.
⁵ The WEBBE has 'fatal' in place of 'incurable'; a footnote therein gives 'remediless' as a literal translation.
⁶ In place of 'barbarically tortured', the NJB has 'inflicted barbaric tortures on'.

σπλάγχνα βασανίσαντα. ⁷ ὁ δ' οὐδαμῶς τῆς ἀγερωχίας ἔληγεν, ἔτι δὲ καὶ τῆς ὑπερηφανίας ἐπεπλήρωτο πῦρ πνέων τοῖς θυμοῖς ἐπὶ τοὺς Ἰουδαίους καὶ κελεύων ἐποξύνειν τὴν πορείαν. συνέβη δὲ καὶ πεσεῖν αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἄρματος φερομένου ῥοίζω καὶ δυσχερεῖ πτώματι περιπεσόντα πάντα τὰ μέλη τοῦ σώματος ἀποστρεβλοῦσθαι. ⁸ ὁ δ' ἄρτι δοκῶν τοῖς τῆς θαλάσσης κύμασιν ἐπιτάσσειν διὰ τὴν ὑπὲρ ἄνθρωπον ἀλαζονείαν καὶ πλάστιγγι τὰ τῶν ὀρέων οἴομενος ὕψη στήσειν κατὰ γῆν γενόμενος ἐν φορείῳ παρεκομίζετο φανερὰν τοῦ θεοῦ πᾶσιν τὴν δύναμιν ἐνδεικνύμενος, ⁹ ὥστε καὶ ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ δυσσεβοῦς σκώληκας ἀναξέειν, καὶ ζῶντος ἐν ὀδύναις καὶ ἀλγηδόσιν τὰς σάρκας αὐτοῦ διαπίπτειν, ὑπὸ δὲ τῆς ὀσμῆς αὐτοῦ πᾶν τὸ στρατόπεδον βαρύνεσθαι τὴν σαπρίαν. ¹⁰ καὶ τὸν μικρῷ πρότερον τῶν οὐρανίων ἄστρων ἅπτεσθαι δοκοῦντα παρακομίζειν οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο διὰ τὸ τῆς ὀσμῆς ἀφόρητον βάρος.

¹¹ ἐνταῦθα οὖν ἤρξατο τὸ πολὺ τῆς ὑπερηφανίας λήγειν τετραυσμένος καὶ εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἔρχεσθαι θείᾳ μάστιγι κατὰ στιγμὴν ἐπιτεινόμενος ταῖς ἀλγηδόσιν. ¹² καὶ μηδὲ τῆς ὀσμῆς αὐτοῦ δυνάμενος ἀνέχεσθαι ταῦτ' ἔφη Δίκαιον ὑποτάσσεσθαι τῷ θεῷ καὶ μὴ θνητὸν ὄντα ἰσόθεα φρονεῖν. ¹³ ἤρχετο δὲ ὁ

tortured the bowels of others. ⁷ But he did not diminish his arrogance; still bursting with pride, breathing fire in his wrath against the Jews, he ordered a faster pace, when the chariot lurched and he fell out; and, in this serious fall, he was dragged along, every joint of his body wrenched out of place. ⁸ He who only a little while before had thought in his superhuman arrogance he could command the waves of the sea, he who imagined he could weigh mountain peaks in a balance, found himself flat on the ground; and then, being carried on a stretcher, a visible sign to all of the power of God, ⁹ in that the very body of this godless man teemed with worms and his flesh rotted away while he lingered on in agonising pain, and the stench of his decay sickened the whole army. ¹⁰ A short while before, he had thought to grasp the stars of heaven; now, no one could bring himself to act as his bearer, for his stench was intolerable.

¹¹ Then, in his shattered state, he began to shed his excessive pride and come to his senses under the divine lash, spasms of pain overtaking him. ¹² His stench being unbearable even to himself, he said, "It is right to submit to God; no mortal should aspire to equality with the Godhead." ¹³ The wretch

⁷ The NJB opens with, "Even so, he in no way diminished his arrogance."

⁸ The NJB has 'litter' in place of 'stretcher'.

⁹ The NJB, following the *Vetus Latina*, has 'eyes' in place of 'body', here following the LXX.

¹⁰ The NJB has 'the stench' in place of 'his stench'.

¹¹ After the opening 'then', the NJB adds 'consequently'.

¹² Some MSS have 'entertain proud thoughts' in place of 'aspire to equality with the Godhead'; the *Recension of Lucian* combines both phrases.

¹³ The WEBBE has 'vile man' in place of 'wretch', here following the NJB.

μιαρὸς πρὸς τὸν οὐκέτι αὐτὸν ἐλεήσοντα δεσπότην οὕτως λέγων ¹⁴ τὴν μὲν ἁγίαν πόλιν, ἣν σπεύδων παρεγίνετο ἰσόπεδον ποιῆσαι καὶ πολυάνδριον οἰκοδομῆσαι, ἐλευθέραν ἀναδειῖξαι, ¹⁵ τοὺς δὲ Ἰουδαίους, οὓς διεγνώκει μηδὲ ταφῆς ἀξιῶσαι, οἰωνοβρώτους δὲ σὺν τοῖς νηπίοις ἐκρίψειν θηρίοις, πάντας αὐτοὺς ἴσους Ἀθηναίοις ποιήσιν· ¹⁶ ὃν δὲ πρότερον ἐσκύλευσεν ἅγιον νεὼ καλλίστοις ἀναθήμασιν κοσμήσιν καὶ τὰ ἱερὰ σκεύη πολυπλάσια πάντα ἀποδώσειν, τὰς δὲ ἐπιβαλλούσας πρὸς τὰς θυσίας συντάξεις ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων προσόδων χορηγήσιν· ¹⁷ πρὸς δὲ τούτοις καὶ Ἰουδαῖον ἔσεσθαι καὶ πάντα τόπον οἰκητὸν ἐπελεύσεσθαι καταγγέλλοντα τὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ κράτος.

¹⁸ οὐδαμῶς δὲ ληγόντων τῶν πόνων, ἐπεληλύθει γὰρ ἐπ' αὐτὸν δικαία ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ κρίσις, τὰ κατ' αὐτὸν ἀπελπίσας ἔγραψεν πρὸς τοὺς Ἰουδαίους τὴν ὑπογεγραμμένην ἐπιστολὴν ἱκετηρίας τάξιν ἔχουσαν, περιέχουσαν δὲ οὕτως

¹⁹ Τοῖς χρηστοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τοῖς πολίταις πολλὰ χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν καὶ εὖ πράττειν βασιλεὺς καὶ στρατηγὸς Ἀντίοχος. ²⁰ εἰ ἔρρωσθε καὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ τὰ ἴδια κατὰ

prayed to the Master, who would not take pity on him now, saying ¹⁴ that the holy city, to which he was rushing, to raze it to the ground and turn it into a mass grave, should be declared free; ¹⁵ as for the Jews, whom he had considered as not even worth burying, to be thrown out with their children for birds to devour, he would make them all equal to the Athenians; ¹⁶ the Holy Temple that he had once plundered, he would adorn with the best offerings; he would restore all the sacred vessels many times over; he would defray from his personal revenue the fees incurred for the sacrifices. ¹⁷ To crown all, he would become a Jew and visit every inhabited place, proclaiming the power of God.

¹⁸ Finding no respite from all his suffering, God's just sentence having overtaken him, he abandoned all hope for himself and wrote the Jews the letter transcribed below, which takes the form of an appeal in these terms:

¹⁹ "To the excellent Jewish citizens, Antiochus, king and general, wishes them much joy, health, and prosperity.

²⁰ May you and your children fare well, and may your

¹⁴ A more literal translation of 'turn it into' is 'build'.

¹⁵ The 'Athenians' were proud of their heritage, though their city no longer had actual power.

¹⁶ The NJB has 'expenses' in place of 'fees'.

¹⁷ In place of 'become a Jew', the NJB has 'himself turn Jew'.

¹⁸ The WEBBE has 'to this effect' in place of 'in these terms'.

¹⁹ The letter was originally addressed to the 'excellent citizens' of Antioch, with 'Jewish' having most probably been inserted as a gloss by Jason of Cyrene.

²⁰ The NJB omits 'Having my hope in heaven'.

γνώμην ἐστὶν ὑμῖν· εἰς οὐρανὸν τὴν ἐλπίδα ἔχων ²¹ ὑμῶν
 τὴν τιμὴν καὶ τὴν εὐνοίαν ἐμνημόνευον φιλοστόργως.
 ἐπανάγων ἐκ τῶν κατὰ τὴν Περσίδα τόπων καὶ
 περιπεσὼν ἀσθενείᾳ δυσχέρειαν ἐχούσῃ ἀναγκαῖον
 ἡγήσάμην φροντίσαι τῆς κοινῆς πάντων ἀσφαλείας.
²² οὐκ ἀπογινώσκων τὰ κατ' ἐμαυτόν, ἀλλὰ ἔχων
 πολλὴν ἐλπίδα ἐκφεύξεσθαι τὴν ἀσθένειαν, ²³ θεωρῶν
 δὲ ὅτι καὶ ὁ πατήρ, καθ' οὓς καιροὺς εἰς τοὺς ἄνω
 τόπους ἐστρατοπέδευσεν, ἀνέδειξεν τὸν διαδεξάμενον,
²⁴ ὅπως, εἴαν τι παρὰδοξον ἀποβαίνειν ἢ καὶ προσαγγεῖσθαι
 τι δυσχερές, εἰδότες οἱ κατὰ τὴν χώραν ᾧ κατα-
 λέλειπται τὰ πράγματα μὴ ἐπιταράσσωνται. ²⁵ πρὸς δὲ
 τούτοις κατανοῶν τοὺς παρακειμένους δυνάστας καὶ
 γειτνιῶντας τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῖς καιροῖς ἐπέχοντας καὶ
 προσδοκῶντας τὸ ἀποβησόμενον, ἀναδέδειχα τὸν υἱὸν
 Ἀντίοχον βασιλέα, ὃν πολλάκις ἀνατρέχων εἰς τὰς
 ἐπάνω σατραπείας τοῖς πλείστοις ὑμῶν παρεκατετι-
 θέμην καὶ συνίστων· γέγραφα δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸν τὰ
 ὑπογεγραμμένα. ²⁶ παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς καὶ ἀξιῶ
 μεμνημένους τῶν εὐεργεσιῶν κοινῇ καὶ κατ' ἰδίαν
 ἕκαστον συντηρεῖν τὴν οὖσαν εὐνοίαν εἰς ἐμὲ καὶ τὸν

affairs be as you wish. Having my hope in heaven, ²¹ I
 affectionately remember your honour and goodwill.

“On my return from the land of Persia, I fell seriously ill
 and thought it necessary to consider the common safety
 of all. ²² Not despairing of my condition, for I have great
 hope of shaking off the malady, ²³ but considering how
 my father, whenever he was making an expedition into
 the upper country, would designate his successor ²⁴ so
 that, in case of any unforeseen event or disquieting
 rumour, the people in the land might know to whom he
 had left the state and thus be untroubled; ²⁵ further,
 being well aware that the princes on our frontiers and
 the neighbours of our realm are watching for oppor-
 tunities and waiting to see what will happen, I have
 designated as king my son Antiochus, whom I have
 more than once entrusted and commended to most of
 you when I was setting out for the upland satrapies; I
 have written to him what is written below. ²⁶ So, I urge
 and beg you, being mindful of the benefits both public
 and personal received from me, that you each persist on
 those sentiments of goodwill that you harbour towards

²¹ In place of ‘consider’, the NJB has ‘make provision for’.

²² The WEBBE has ‘to escape from the sickness’ in place of ‘shaking off the malady’.

²³ ‘Making an expedition’ (literally, ‘bore arms’) is a conjectural translation following the Vg; the LXX has ‘camped’.

²⁴ The NJB has ‘of the provinces’ in place of ‘in the land’.

²⁵ The author does not reproduce the second letter, of which he evidently had no copy.

²⁶ The NJB lacks ‘and my son’, here following the LXX (καὶ τὸν υἱόν).

υἱόν· ²⁷ πέπεισμαι γὰρ αὐτὸν ἐπεικῶς καὶ φιλανθρώπως
παρακολουθοῦντα τῇ ἐμῇ προαιρέσει συμπεριενεχ-
θήσεσθαι ὑμῖν.

²⁸ Ὁ μὲν οὖν ἀνδροφόνος καὶ βλάσφημος τὰ χεῖριστα παθὼν,
ὥς ἑτέρους διέδθηκεν, ἐπὶ ξένης ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσιν οἰκτίστῳ μόρῳ
κατέστρεψεν τὸν βίον. ²⁹ παρεκομίζετο δὲ τὸ σῶμα Φίλιππος
ὁ σύντροφος αὐτοῦ, ὃς καὶ διευλαβηθεὶς τὸν υἱὸν Ἀντιόχου
πρὸς Πτολεμαῖον τὸν Φιλομήτορα εἰς Αἴγυπτον διεκομίσθη.

me and my son. ²⁷ I am confident that he will pursue my
policy with benevolence and humanity, and will prove
accommodating to your interests.”

²⁸ So, the murderer and blasphemer, having endured the
most terrible sufferings, as he had dealt with others, met his
pitiable fate and ended his life in the hills of a strange land.
²⁹ His comrade Philip brought back his body and then,
fearing Antiochus’ son, fled to Ptolemy Philometor in Egypt.

²⁷ The WEBBE has ‘purpose’ in place of ‘policy’.

²⁸ The violent language of the summarist is in marked contrast to that of the letter, which is a good example of Hellenistic style in matters of protocol.

²⁹ Philip’s withdrawal to Ptolemy Philometor is a detail hard to reconcile with 1M 6:55,63. He probably stayed in Egypt until the end of 163 BCE (see 13:23). Josephus (*Ant.*, XII ix 7) says that Philip took over the Seleucid government and was later killed.

Μακκαβαίων Β' 10

¹ Μακκαβαῖος δὲ καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ τοῦ κυρίου προάγοντος αὐτοὺς τὸ μὲν ἱερόν ἐκομίσαντο καὶ τὴν πόλιν, ² τοὺς δὲ κατὰ τὴν ἀγορὰν βωμοὺς ὑπὸ τῶν ἀλλοφύλων δεδημιουργημένους, ἔτι δὲ τεμένη καθεῖλαν ³ καὶ τὸν νεὼ καθάρισαντες ἕτερον θυσιαστήριον ἐποίησαν καὶ πυρώσαντες λίθους καὶ πῦρ ἐκ τούτων λαβόντες ἀνῆνεγκαν θυσίας μετὰ διετῇ χρόνον καὶ θυμίαμα καὶ λύχνους καὶ τῶν ἄρτων τὴν πρόθεσιν ἐποίησαντο. ⁴ ταῦτα δὲ ποιήσαντες ἠξίωσαν τὸν κύριον πεσόντες ἐπὶ κοιλίαν μηκέτι περιπεσεῖν τοιούτοις κακοῖς, ἀλλ' ἐάν ποτε καὶ ἀμάρτωσιν, ὑπ' αὐτοῦ μετὰ ἐπιεικείας παιδεύεσθαι καὶ μὴ βλασφήμοις καὶ βαρβάροις ἔθνεσιν παραδίδοσθαι. ⁵ ἐν ᾗ δὲ ἡμέρᾳ ὁ νεὼς ὑπὸ ἀλλοφύλων ἐβεβηλώθη, συνέβη κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν ἡμέραν τὸν καθαρισμόν γενέσθαι τοῦ ναοῦ, τῇ πέμπτῃ καὶ εἰκάδι τοῦ αὐτοῦ μηνός, ὅς ἐστιν Χασελευ. ⁶ καὶ μετ' εὐφροσύνης ἤγον ἡμέρας ὀκτὼ σκηνομάτων τρόπον μνημονεύοντες ὡς πρὸ μικροῦ χρόνου τὴν τῶν σκηνῶν ἐορτὴν ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσιν καὶ ἐν τοῖς σπηλαίοις θηρίων τρόπον ἦσαν νεμόμενοι. ⁷ διὸ θύρσους καὶ κλάδους

2 MACCABEES 10

¹ Maccabaeus and his companions, under the Lord's guidance, restored the Temple and the city. ² They pulled down the altars erected by the foreigners in the market place, as well as the shrines. ³ They purified the sanctuary and built another altar; then, striking fire from flints and using this fire, they offered the first sacrifice for two years, burning incense, lighting the lamps, and setting out the loaves. ⁴ When they had done this, prostrating themselves, they implored the Lord never again to let them fall into such adversity; but, if they should ever sin, to correct them with moderation and not to deliver them to blasphemous and barbarous nations. ⁵ This day of the purification of the Temple fell on the very day on which the foreigners had profaned the Temple, the twenty-fifth of the same month, Chisleu. ⁶ They kept eight festival days with rejoicing, in the manner of the Feast of Shelters, remembering how, not long before at the time of the Feast of Shelters, they had been living in the mountains and caverns like wild beasts. ⁷ Then, carrying ivy-wreathed

2 MACCABEES 10

¹ Antiochus had desecrated the Temple (6:2-4, 1M 1:54).

² The 'altars' had been used for pagan worship.

³ The reference to 'striking fire from flints' ignores the legends of 1:19-2:1. According to 1M 1:54 and 4:52, this was the first sacrifice for *three* years.

⁴ After 'prostrating themselves', the NJB adds 'on the ground'.

⁵ The date was 15th December 164 BCE (see #1:10), a few weeks after the death of Antiochus Epiphanes.

⁶ The WEBBE has 'gladness' in place of 'rejoicing'.

⁷ The 'ivy-wreathed wands' were here in honour of God (compare 6:7).

ώραίους, ἔτι δὲ καὶ φοίνικας ἔχοντες ὕμνους ἀνέφερον τῷ εὐοδώσαντι καθαρισθῆναι τὸν ἑαυτοῦ τόπον.⁸ ἐδογματίσαν δὲ μετὰ κοινοῦ προστάγματος καὶ ψηφίσματος παντὶ τῷ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἔθναι κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν ἄγειν τὰςδε τὰς ἡμέρας.⁹ καὶ τὰ μὲν τῆς Ἀντιόχου τοῦ προσαγορευθέντος Ἐπιφανοῦς τελευτῆς οὕτως εἶχεν.

¹⁰ Νυνὶ δὲ τὰ κατὰ τὸν Εὐπάτορα Ἀντίοχον, υἱὸν δὲ τοῦ ἀσεβοῦς γενόμενον, δηλώσομεν αὐτὰ συντέμνοντες τὰ συνέχοντα τῶν πολέμων κακά.¹¹ οὗτος γὰρ παραλαβὼν τὴν βασιλείαν ἀνέδειξεν ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων Λυσίαν τινά, Κοίλης δὲ Συρίας καὶ Φοινίκης στρατηγὸν πρῶταρχον.¹² Πτολεμαῖος γὰρ ὁ καλούμενος Μάκρων τὸ δίκαιον συντηρεῖν προηγούμενος πρὸς τοὺς Ἰουδαίους διὰ τὴν γεγонуῖαν εἰς αὐτοὺς ἀδικίαν ἐπειρᾶτο τὰ πρὸς αὐτοὺς εἰρηνικῶς διεξάγειν.¹³ ὅθεν κατηγορούμενος ὑπὸ τῶν φίλων πρὸς τὸν Εὐπάτορα καὶ προδότης παρ' ἑκάστα ἀκούων διὰ τὸ τὴν Κύπρον ἐμπιστευθέντα ὑπὸ τοῦ Φιλομήτορος ἐκλιπεῖν καὶ πρὸς Ἀντίοχον τὸν Ἐπιφανῆ ἀναχωρῆσαι μήτε εὐγενῆ τὴν ἐξουσίαν εὐγενίσας φαρμακεύσας ἑαυτὸν ἐξέλιπεν τὸν βίον.

wands, leafy boughs, and palms, they offered hymns to him who had brought the cleansing of his own holy place to a happy outcome.⁸ They also decreed by public edict, ratified by vote, that the entire Jewish nation should celebrate these same days every year.⁹ Such were the circumstances of the end of Antiochus, styled Epiphanes.

¹⁰ Our task now is to unfold the history of Antiochus Eupator, son of that godless man, and briefly to relate the evil effects of the wars.¹¹ On coming to the throne, this prince appointed as governor a certain Lysias, the general officer commanding Coele-Syria and Phoenicia,¹² whereas Ptolemy, known as Macron, and the first person to govern the Jews justly, endeavoured to govern them peacefully to make up for the wrongs inflicted on them in the past.¹³ Denounced, in consequence, to Eupator by the Friends of the King, he heard himself called traitor at every turn: for having abandoned Cyprus, which had been entrusted to him by Philometor, for having gone over to Antiochus Epiphanes, and for having shed no lustre on his illustrious office; he took poison and killed himself.

⁸ This verse marks the end of the 1st section of the book, of which one of the principal aims is to make this feast obligatory for all Jews (see the two preliminary letters of Chs 1–2). The 2nd section ends similarly, with an invitation to celebrate the Day of Nicanor (15:36).

⁹ In place of 'of the end', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'attending the death'.

¹⁰ 'Wars' follows the Vg and Peshitta; the LXX has 'towns' or 'enemy'. The title, 'Eupator' (Εὐπάτορα) means 'Son of a Good Father'.

¹¹ The NJB has 'put at the head of affairs' in place of 'appointed as governor'.

¹² In place of 'endeavoured', the NJB has 'had done his best'.

¹³ The presence of Ptolemy Macron in Cyprus is attested by inscriptions and by the historian Polybius. The Greek text near the end of the verse is corrupt.

¹⁴ Γοργίας δὲ γενόμενος στρατηγὸς τῶν τόπων ἐξενοτρόφει καὶ παρ' ἑκάστα πρὸς τοὺς Ἰουδαίους ἐπολεμοτρόφει. ¹⁵ ὁμοῦ δὲ τούτῳ καὶ οἱ Ἰδουμαῖοι ἐγκρατεῖς ἐπικαίρων ὀχυρωμάτων ὄντες ἐγύμναζον τοὺς Ἰουδαίους καὶ τοὺς φυγαδεύσαντας ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων προσλαβόμενοι πολεμοτροφεῖν ἐπεχείρουν. ¹⁶ οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Μακκαβαῖον ποιησάμενοι λιτανείαν καὶ ἀξιώσαντες τὸν θεὸν σύμμαχον αὐτοῖς γενέσθαι ἐπὶ τὰ τῶν Ἰδουμαίων ὀχυρώματα ὥρμησαν, ¹⁷ οἷς καὶ προσβαλόντες εὐρώστως ἐγκρατεῖς ἐγένοντο τῶν τόπων πάντας τε τοὺς ἐπὶ τῷ τείχει μαχομένους ἡμύναντο κατέσφαζόν τε τοὺς ἐμπίπτοντας, ἀνείλον δὲ οὐχ ἥττον τῶν δισμυρίων. ¹⁸ συμφυγόντων δὲ οὐκ ἔλαττον τῶν ἑνακισχιλίων εἰς δύο πύργους ὀχυροὺς εὖ μάλα καὶ πάντα τὰ πρὸς πολιορκίαν ἔχοντας ¹⁹ ὁ Μακκαβαῖος εἰς ἐπείγοντας τόπους ἀπολιπὼν Σιμωνα καὶ Ἰωσηπον, ἔτι δὲ καὶ Ζακχαῖον καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ ἱκανοὺς πρὸς τὴν τούτων πολιορκίαν αὐτὸς ἐχωρίσθη. ²⁰ οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Σιμωνα φιλαργυρήσαντες ὑπὸ τινων τῶν ἐν τοῖς πύργοις ἐπείσθησαν ἀργυρίῳ, ἐπτάκις δὲ μυρίας δραχμὰς λαβόντες εἶασάν τινας διαρρηῆναι. ²¹ προσαγγελέντος δὲ τῷ Μακκαβαίῳ περὶ τοῦ γεγονότος συναγαγὼν τοὺς ἡγουμένους

¹⁴ Gorgias became general of the area; he maintained a force of mercenaries and kept up war with the Jews. ¹⁵ At the same time, the Idumaeans, who controlled important fortresses, were harassing the Jews, welcoming outlaws from Jerusalem and endeavoured to keep up war. ¹⁶ Maccabaeus and his men, after making public supplication to God, entreating him to support them, rushed against the Idumaeian fortresses. ¹⁷ Assaulting them vigorously, they took control of the vantage points, beating off all who fought on the ramparts; they killed all who fell into their hands: for no fewer than twenty thousand. ¹⁸ Nine thousand at least had fled to two exceptionally strong towers with everything they needed to withstand a siege, ¹⁹ whereupon Maccabaeus left Simon and Joseph, with Zacchaeus and his forces, in sufficient numbers to besiege them, and himself went off to places where he was most needed. ²⁰ But Simon's men were greedy for money and allowed themselves to be bribed by some of the men in the towers; accepting seventy thousand drachmas, they let a number of them escape. ²¹ When word of what had happened came to Maccabaeus, he gathered the

¹⁴ The NJB has 'a continual state of war with the Jews'.

¹⁵ John Hyrcanus later forced the Idumaeans (the Edomites) to adopt Judaism.

¹⁶ The NJB has 'began operations' in place of 'rushed', here following the WEBBE.

¹⁷ The NJB opens with, "Vigorously pressing home their attack."

¹⁸ In place of 'had fled to', the NJB has 'took refuge in'.

¹⁹ The NJB has 'other places requiring his attention' in place of 'places where he was most needed'.

²⁰ The NJB opens with 'However' in place of 'But'.

²¹ In place of 'gathered', the NJB has 'summoned'.

τοῦ λαοῦ κατηγόρησεν ὡς ἀργυρίου πέπρακαν τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς τοὺς πολεμίους κατ' αὐτῶν ἀπολύσαντες. ²² τούτους μὲν οὖν προδότας γενομένους ἀπέκτεινεν, καὶ παραχρῆμα τοὺς δύο πύργους κατελάβετο. ²³ τοῖς δὲ ὅπλοις τὰ πάντα ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν εὐοδούμενος ἀπώλεσεν ἐν τοῖς δυσὶν ὀχυρώμασιν πλείους τῶν δισ μυρίων.

²⁴ Τιμόθεος δὲ ὁ πρότερον ἡττηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων συναγαγὼν ξένας δυνάμεις παμπληθεῖς καὶ τοὺς τῆς Ἀσίας γενομένους ἵππους συναθροίσας οὐκ ὀλίγους παρῆν ὡς δοριάλωτον λημψόμενος τὴν Ἰουδαίαν. ²⁵ οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Μακκαβαῖον συνεγγίζοντος αὐτοῦ πρὸς ἱκετείαν τοῦ θεοῦ γῆν τὰς κεφαλὰς καταπάσαντες καὶ τὰς ὀσφύας σάκκοις ζώσαντες ²⁶ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀπέναντι τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου κρηπίδα προσπεσόντες ἤξιουν ἰλεως αὐτοῖς γενόμενον ἐχθρεῦσαι τοῖς ἐχθροῖς αὐτῶν καὶ ἀντικειῖσθαι τοῖς ἀντικειμένοις, καθὼς ὁ νόμος διασαφεῖ.

²⁷ γενόμενοι δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς δεήσεως ἀναλαβόντες τὰ ὅπλα προῆγον ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως ἐπὶ πλεῖον· συνεγγίσαντες δὲ τοῖς πολεμίοις ἐφ' ἑαυτῶν ἤσαν. ²⁸ ἄρτι δὲ τῆς ἀνατολῆς διαχεομένης προσέβαλον ἐκάτεροι, οἱ μὲν ἔγγυον ἔχοντες

people's commanders and accused the offenders of having sold their brothers for money by releasing their enemies to fight them. ²² Having executed them as traitors, he at once proceeded to capture both towers. ²³ Having success at arms in everything he undertook, he slaughtered more than twenty thousand men in these two fortresses.

²⁴ Timothy, who had been beaten by the Jews once before, now assembled an enormous force of mercenaries, mustering cavalry from Asia – not a few – and soon appeared in Judaea, expecting to conquer it by force of arms. ²⁵ At his approach, Maccabaeus and his men made supplications to God, sprinkling earth on their heads and putting sackcloth round their waists. ²⁶ Falling upon the steps before the altar, they begged him to support them and to show himself the enemy of their enemies, the adversary of their adversaries, as the Law clearly states.

²⁷ After these prayers, they armed themselves and advanced a fair distance from the city; when they were close to the enemy, they halted. ²⁸ As dawn was breaking, the two sides joined battle, the one having as their pledge of success and

²² The WEBBE has 'immediately' in place of 'at once'.

²³ The figure of 20,000 is exaggerated (see v. 18).

²⁴ This episode seems to be chronologically misplaced, since Timothy, who dies here, is alive and well in the summer of the same year (163 BCE), during the Gilead campaign (12:10–31). The capture of Gezer causes problems too (see v. 32).

²⁵ The WEBBE has 'Timotheus' in place of 'Timothy'.

²⁶ See Ex 23:22 on this part of the Law.

²⁷ 'They halted' is conjectural; the Greek text has 'they were by themselves'.

²⁸ The NJB opens, "As the first light of dawn began to spread." Here, we (loosely) follow the WEBBE.

εὐημερίας καὶ νίκης μετὰ ἀρετῆς τὴν ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον καταφυγὴν, οἱ δὲ κατὰ γέμονα τῶν ἀγώνων ταπτόμενοι τὸν θυμόν. ²⁹ γενομένης δὲ καρτερᾶς μάχης ἐφάνησαν τοῖς ὑπεναντίοις ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐφ' ἵππων χρυσοχαλίνων ἄνδρες πέντε διαπρεπεῖς, καὶ ἀφηγούμενοι τῶν Ιουδαίων, ³⁰ οἱ καὶ τὸν Μακκαβαῖον μέσον λαβόντες καὶ σκεπάζοντες ταῖς ἑαυτῶν πανοπλίαις ἄτρωτον διεφύλαττον, εἰς δὲ τοὺς ὑπεναντίους τοξεύματα καὶ κεραυνοὺς ἐξερρίπτουν, διὸ συγχυθέντες ἀορασίᾳ διεκόπτοντο ταραχῆς πεπληρωμένοι. ³¹ κατεσφάγησαν δὲ δισμύριοι πρὸς τοῖς πεντακοσίοις, ἵππεῖς δὲ ἑξακόσιοι. ³² αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Τιμόθεος συνέφυγεν εἰς Γαζαρα λεγόμενον ὀχύρωμα, εὖ μάλα φρούριον, στρατηγοῦντος ἐκεῖ Χαιρεου. ³³ οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Μακκαβαῖον ἄσμενοι περιεκάδισαν τὸ φρούριον ἡμέρας τέσσαρας. ³⁴ οἱ δὲ ἔνδον τῇ ἐρυμνότητι τοῦ τόπου πεποιθότες ὑπεράγαν ἐβλασφήμουν καὶ λόγους ἀθεμίτους προίεντο. ³⁵ ὑποφαινούσης δὲ τῆς πέμπτης ἡμέρας εἴκοσι νεανῖαι τῶν περὶ τὸν Μακκαβαῖον πυρῳθέντες τοῖς θυμοῖς διὰ τὰς βλασφημίας προσβαλόντες τῷ τείχει ἀρρενωδῶς καὶ θηριώδει θυμῷ τὸν ἐμπίπτοντα ἔκοπτον·

victory not only their own valour but also their recourse to the Lord, the other making their own ardour the mainstay in the fight. ²⁹ At the height of battle, the enemy saw five splendid men appear from heaven on horses with golden bridles, leading on the Jews; ³⁰ surrounding Maccabaeus and screening him with their own armour, they kept him unscathed, while they rained arrows and thunderbolts on the enemy until, blinded and confused, they were slaughtered and thrown into complete disorder. ³¹ Twenty thousand five hundred infantry and six hundred cavalry were slaughtered. ³² Timothy himself fled to a strongly guarded citadel called Gezer, where Chaereas was in command. ³³ For four days, Maccabaeus and his men eagerly besieged the fortress, ³⁴ while the defenders, confident in the security of the place, hurled fearful blasphemies and godless insults at them. ³⁵ At daybreak on the fifth day, twenty young men of Maccabaeus' forces, fired with indignation at the blasphemies, manfully assaulted the wall, with wild courage cutting down everyone they encountered. ³⁶ Others, in a similar scaling operation,

²⁹ The NJB opens, "When the battle was at its height."

³⁰ The NJB ends the verse with 'they scattered in complete disorder'.

³¹ Compare the number of fatalities mentioned in 8:30, 10:17, and 23.

³² Concentrating exclusively on the exploits of Judas, 2M credits him with the famous capture of Gezer, the fame of which lingered in popular tradition. 1M 13:43–48 (see 1M 14:34) rightly attributes its capture to Judas' brother Simon.

³³ The NRSV and NJB here follow the Vg; the LXX has 'forty' in place of 'four' (but see v. 35).

³⁴ The WEBBE, following some MSS, adds 'with two of them' before 'leading'.

³⁵ The literal translation of 'fired with indignation' is 'with the passion of wild animals'.

³⁶ The NJB has 'pyres' in place of 'fires'.

³⁶ ἕτεροι δὲ ὁμοίως προσαναβάντες ἐν τῷ περισπασμῷ πρὸς τοὺς ἔνδον ἐνεπίμπρων τοὺς πύργους καὶ πυρὰς ἀνάπτοντες ζῶντας τοὺς βλασφήμους κατέκαιον· οἱ δὲ τὰς πύλας διέκοπτον, εἰσδεξάμενοι δὲ τὴν λοιπὴν τάξιν προκατελάβοντο τὴν πόλιν. ³⁷ καὶ τὸν Τιμόθεον ἀποκεκρυμμένον ἐν τινὶ λάκκῳ κατέσφαξαν καὶ τὸν τούτου ἀδελφὸν Χαιρέαν καὶ τὸν Ἀπολλοφάνην. ³⁸ ταῦτα δὲ διαπραξάμενοι μεθ' ὕμνων καὶ ἑξομολογήσεων εὐλόγουν τῷ κυρίῳ τῷ μεγάλῳς εὐεργετοῦντι τὸν Ἰσραὴλ καὶ τὸ νῆκος αὐτοῖς διδόντι.

took the defenders in the rear and set fire to the towers, lighting fires on which they burned the blasphemers alive. The first, meanwhile, breaking open the gates, let the rest of the army in and, at their head, captured the town. ³⁷ Timothy had hidden in a storage-well, but they killed him, with his brother Chaereas and Apollophanes. ³⁸ When they had accomplished these things, with hymns and thanksgiving they blessed the Lord, who had shown such great kindness to Israel and given them the victory.

³⁷ Note that 'Timothy' reappears in 12:2, 18–25 (compare 1M 5:11–40).

³⁸ The NJB opens, "When all this was over;" here, we follow the WEBBE.

Μακκαβαίων Β' ΙΙ

¹ Μετ' ὀλίγον δὲ παντελῶς χρονίσκον Λυσίας ἐπίτροπος τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ συγγενῆς καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων λίαν βαρέως φέρων ἐπὶ τοῖς γεγονόσι ² συναθροίσας περὶ τὰς ὀκτὼ μυριάδας καὶ τὴν ἵππον ἅπασαν παρεγίνετο ἐπὶ τοὺς Ἰουδαίους λογιζόμενος τὴν μὲν πόλιν Ἑλλήσιν οἰκητήριον ποιήσῃν, ³ τὸ δὲ ἱερόν ἀργυρολόγητον, καθὼς τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ἔθνων τεμένη, πρατὴν δὲ κατὰ ἔτος τὴν ἀρχιερωσύνην ποιήσῃν, ⁴ οὐδαμῶς ἐπιλογιζόμενος τὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ κράτος, πεφρενωμένος δὲ ταῖς μυριάσιν τῶν πεζῶν καὶ ταῖς χιλιάσιν τῶν ἵππέων καὶ τοῖς ἐλέφασιν τοῖς ὀγδοήκοντα.

⁵ εἰσελθὼν δὲ εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν καὶ συνεγγίσας Βαιθσουρα ὄντι μὲν ἐρυμνῷ χωρίῳ, Ἱεροσολύμων δὲ ἀπέχοντι ὡσεὶ σταδίους πέντε τοῦτο ἔθλιβεν. ⁶ ὥς δὲ μετέλαβον οἱ περὶ τὸν Μακκαβαῖον πολιορκοῦντα αὐτὸν τὰ ὀχυρώματα, μετὰ ὀδυρμῶν καὶ δακρύων ἰκέτευσον σὺν τοῖς ὄχλοις τὸν κύριον ἀγαθὸν ἄγγελον ἀποστεῖλαι πρὸς σωτηρίαν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ.

2 MACCABEES 11

¹ Almost immediately afterwards, Lysias, the king's tutor and cousin, chief minister of the realm, much disturbed at the turn of events, ² mustered about eighty thousand infantry and his entire cavalry, and advanced against the Jews, intending to make the city a place for Greeks to live in, ³ to levy a tax on the Temple as on other national shrines, and to put the office of High Priest up for sale every year; ⁴ he took no account at all of the power of God, being sublimely confident in his tens of thousands of infantrymen, his thousands of cavalry, and his eighty elephants.

⁵ Invading Judaea, he approached Beth-Zur, a fortified position about five stadia from Jerusalem, and began to subject it to strong pressure. ⁶ When Maccabaeus and his men learned that Lysias was besieging the fortress, they and the populace with them made supplication to the Lord with lamentation and tears to send a good angel to save Israel.

2 MACCABEES 11

¹ The events related in 11:1-21 and 11:27-12:9 belong to the year 164 BCE, while Antiochus Epiphanes was still alive, and in the work of Jason of Cyrene must have followed 8:36 (hence, and correctly, the 'almost immediately afterwards' of this verse). The summarist has transferred the action to the reign of Antiochus V (see vv. 22ff).

² The NJB has 'foot soldiers' in place of 'infantry', here following the WEBBE.

³ In many Greek cults, the High Priesthood was up for sale every year; Antiochus IV had twice disposed of the Jewish High Priesthood (4:7, 24).

⁴ The WEBBE has 'puffed up' in place of 'sublimely confident'.

⁵ The NJB reads 'twenty miles' in place of 'five stadia', here following the LXX (σταδίους πέντε) and the WEBBE; 'Beth-Zur' is about 32 Km south of Jerusalem on the road to Hebron but 5 stadia would be less than 1 Km.

⁶ The NJB has 'begged' in place of 'made supplication to', here following the WEBBE.

⁷ αὐτὸς δὲ πρῶτος ὁ Μακκαβαῖος ἀναλαβὼν τὰ ὅπλα προετρέψατο τοὺς ἄλλους ἅμα αὐτῷ διακινδυνεύοντας ἐπιβοηθεῖν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς αὐτῶν· ὁμοῦ δὲ καὶ προθύμως ἐξώρμησαν. ⁸ αὐτόθι δὲ πρὸς τοῖς Ἱεροσολύμοις ὄντων ἐφάνη προηγούμενος αὐτῶν ἑφιππος ἐν λευκῇ ἐσθῆτι πανοπλίαν χρυσὴν κραδαίνων. ⁹ ὁμοῦ δὲ πάντες εὐλόγησαν τὸν ἐλεήμονα θεὸν καὶ ἐπερρώσθησαν ταῖς ψυχαῖς οὐ μόνον ἀνθρώπους, θήρας δὲ τοὺς ἀγριωτάτους καὶ σιθηρὰ τείχη τιτρώσκειν ὄντες ἔτοιμοι. ¹⁰ προῆγον ἐν διασκευῇ τὸν ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ σύμμαχον ἔχοντες ἐλεήσαντος αὐτοῦ τοῦ κυρίου. ¹¹ λεοντηδὸν δὲ ἐντινάξαντες εἰς τοὺς πολεμίους κατέστρωσαν αὐτῶν χιλίους πρὸς τοῖς μυρίοις, ἵππεῖς δὲ ἑξακοσίους πρὸς τοῖς χιλίοις· τοὺς δὲ πάντας ἠνάγκασαν φεύγειν. ¹² οἱ πλείονες δὲ αὐτῶν τραυματαῖα γυμνοὶ διεσώθησαν· καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Λυσίας αἰσχρῶς φεύγων διεσώθη.

¹³ οὐκ ἄνους δὲ ὑπάρχων πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ἀντιβάλλων τὸ γεγονός περὶ αὐτὸν ἐλάττωμα καὶ συννόησας ἀνικήτους εἶναι τοὺς Εβραίους τοῦ δυναμένου θεοῦ συμμαχοῦντος αὐτοῖς ¹⁴ προσαποστείλας ἔπεισεν συλλύεσθαι ἐπὶ πᾶσι τοῖς δικαίοις,

⁷ Maccabaeus himself was the first to take up his weapons, and he urged the rest to put their lives in jeopardy with him, in support of their brothers; so, they sallied out resolutely, as one man. ⁸ They were still near Jerusalem when a rider attired in white appeared at their head, brandishing golden weapons. ⁹ With one accord, they all blessed the God of mercy, and found themselves filled with such courage that they were ready to lay low not only men but the fiercest beasts and walls of iron. ¹⁰ They advanced in battle order with the aid of their celestial ally, the Lord having had mercy on them. ¹¹ Hurling themselves like lions against the enemy, they laid low eleven thousand of the infantry, and sixteen hundred horsemen, and routed all the rest. ¹² Of those, the majority got away, stripped and wounded, and Lysias himself escaped only by ignominious flight.

¹³ Now he was not lacking in intelligence and, as he reflected on the reverse he had suffered, he realised that the Hebrews were invincible because the mighty God fought for them. So, he sent a delegation ¹⁴ to persuade them to accept reasonable

⁷ The NJB has 'risk their lives' in place of 'put their lives in jeopardy', here following the WEBBE.

⁸ A more literal translation of 'weapons' is 'a panoply'.

⁹ A more literal translation of 'lay low' (the WEBBE has 'assail') is 'wound'.

¹⁰ In place of 'with the aid of their celestial ally', here following the NJB, the WEBBE has 'having him who is in heaven to fight on their side'.

¹¹ The NJB opens with, "Charging like lions on the enemy;" here, we follow the WEBBE.

¹² The WEBBE has 'also' in place of 'only'.

¹³ According to 1M 4:35, no peace was made, but Lysias returned to Antioch for reinforcements.

¹⁴ The NJB, following the *Vetus Latina*, has 'to compel the king to become their friend'; here, we follow the LXX. The original word probably seemed too forceful to a copyist, who must have written 'persuade' against it in the margin, which was later incorporated into the text of the LXX.

καὶ διότι καὶ τὸν βασιλέα πείσει φίλον αὐτοῖς ἀναγκάζων γενέσθαι. ¹⁵ ἐπένευσεν δὲ ὁ Μακκαβαῖος ἐπὶ πᾶσιν, οἷς ὁ Λυσίας παρεκάλει, τοῦ συμφέροντος φροντίζων· ὅσα γὰρ ὁ Μακκαβαῖος ἐπέδωκεν τῷ Λυσίᾳ διὰ γραπτῶν περὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων, συνεχώρησεν ὁ βασιλεὺς.

¹⁶ Ἦσαν γὰρ αἱ γεγραμμέναι τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ἐπιστολαὶ παρὰ μὲν Λυσίου περιέχουσαι τὸν τρόπον τοῦτον

Λυσίας τῷ πλήθει τῶν Ἰουδαίων χαίρειν.

¹⁷ Ἰωαννης καὶ Ἀβεσσαλωμ οἱ πεμφθέντες παρ' ὑμῶν ἐπιδόντες τὸν ὑπογεγραμμένον χρηματισμὸν ἡξίουσιν περὶ τῶν δι' αὐτοῦ σημεινομένων. ¹⁸ ὅσα μὲν οὖν ἔδει καὶ τῷ βασιλεῖ προσενεχθῆναι, διεσάφησα· ἃ δὲ ἦν ἐνδεχόμενα, συνεχώρησεν. ¹⁹ ἐὰν μὲν οὖν συντηρήσητε τὴν εἰς τὰ πράγματα εὐνοίαν, καὶ εἰς τὸ λοιπὸν πειράσομαι παραίτιος ἀγαθῶν γενέσθαι. ²⁰ ὑπὲρ δὲ τούτων καὶ τῶν κατὰ μέρος ἐντέταλμαι τούτοις τε καὶ τοῖς παρ' ἐμοῦ διαλεχθῆναι ὑμῖν. ²¹ ἔρρωσθε.

ἔτους ἑκατοστοῦ τεσσαρακοστοῦ ὀγδόου, Διὸς Κορινθίου τετράδι καὶ εἰκάδι.

terms all round and promised to persuade the king to become their friend. ¹⁵ Maccabaeus, thinking only of the common good, agreed to all that Lysias proposed, and whatever Maccabaeus submitted to Lysias in writing concerning the Jews was granted by the king.

¹⁶ Here is the text of the letter Lysias wrote to the Jews, which was in the following form:

“Lysias to the Jewish people, greetings.

¹⁷ “John and Absalom, your envoys, have delivered to me the communication transcribed below, requesting me to approve its provisions. ¹⁸ Anything requiring the king’s attention I have put before him; whatever was possible, I have granted. ¹⁹ Provided you maintain your goodwill towards the interests of the State, I shall do my best in the future to promote your welfare. ²⁰ As regards the details, I have given orders for your envoys and my own officials to discuss these with you. ²¹ Farewell.

“The twenty-fourth day of Dioscorinthius, in the year one hundred and forty-eight.”

¹⁵ This verse explains why Judas had no further trouble during 164 BCE.

¹⁶ Lysias wrote to ‘the Jews’; he did not recognise Judas’ authority.

¹⁷ ‘John’ here is probably the eldest son of Mattathias (1M 2:2); ‘Absalom’ was obviously someone of importance, since two of his sons are later given military commands (see 1M 11:70, 13:11).

¹⁸ The ‘king’ here must be Antiochus IV. Had it been the young Antiochus V, as the author supposes, the actions of Lysias, would not make sense.

¹⁹ The WEBBE has ‘government’ in place of ‘state’.

²⁰ More literally, one could read ‘men’ for both ‘envoys’ and ‘officials’.

²¹ ‘Dioscorinthius’ (literally, ‘of Corinthian Jupiter’) was the name of a Cretan month, equivalent to the ‘Xanthicus’ of v. 30 (i.e. spring, 164 BCE).

²² Ἡ δὲ τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπιστολὴ περιεῖχεν οὕτως
Βασιλεὺς Ἀντίοχος τῷ ἀδελφῷ Λυσία χαίρειν.

²³ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν εἰς θεοὺς μεταστάντος βουλόμενοι
τοὺς ἐκ τῆς βασιλείας ἀταράχους ὄντας γενέσθαι πρὸς
τὴν τῶν ἰδίων ἐπιμέλειαν ²⁴ ἀκηκοότες τοὺς Ἰουδαίους
μὴ συνευδοκοῦντας τῇ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐπὶ τὰ Ἑλληνικὰ
μεταθέσει, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀγωγὴν αἰρετίζοντας
ἀξιοῦντας συγχωρηθῆναι αὐτοῖς τὰ νόμιμα,
²⁵ αἰρούμενοι οὖν καὶ τοῦτο τὸ ἔθνος ἐκτὸς ταραχῆς εἶναι
κρίνομεν τό τε ἱερὸν ἀποκατασταθῆναι αὐτοῖς καὶ
πολιτεύεσθαι κατὰ τὰ ἐπὶ τῶν προγόνων αὐτῶν ἔθνη.

²⁶ εἴ οὖν ποιήσεις διαπεμψάμενος πρὸς αὐτοὺς καὶ δοὺς
δεξιὰς, ὅπως εἰδότες τὴν ἡμετέραν προαίρεσιν εὖθυμοί
τε ᾧσιν καὶ ἡδέως διαγίνωνται πρὸς τῇ τῶν ἰδίων
ἀντιλήμψει.

²⁷ Πρὸς δὲ τὸ ἔθνος ἡ τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπιστολὴ τοιαύδε ἦν
Βασιλεὺς Ἀντίοχος τῇ γερουσίᾳ τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ τοῖς
ἄλλοις Ἰουδαίοις χαίρειν.

²⁸ εἰ ἔρρωσθε, εἴη ἂν ὡς βουλόμεθα· καὶ αὐτοὶ δὲ
ὕγιαίνομεν.

²² The king's letter was written in the following terms:
"King Antiochus to his brother Lysias, greetings.

²³ "Now our father has passed to the gods, our will is
that the subjects of the realm be left undisturbed to
attend to their own affairs. ²⁴ We understand the Jews
do not approve our father's policy of adopting Greek
customs but prefer their own way of life and ask to be
allowed to observe their own laws. ²⁵ So, since we intend
this people to be free from vexation like any other, we
rule that the Temple be restored to them and that they
live according to the customs of their fathers.

²⁶ "It will therefore be your concern to send them a
mission of friendship so that, on learning our policy,
they may have confidence and happily go about their
business."

²⁷ The king's letter to the Jewish nation was in these terms:
"King Antiochus to the senate of the Jews and the rest
of the Jews, greetings.

²⁸ "If you are well, that is as we desire; we ourselves are
in good health.

²² This king really is Antiochus V (see v. 23). The letter concerns the concessions granted after the 2nd campaign of Lysias (13:23, 1M 6:9).

²³ Deification and worship of the sovereign were practised in Syria under the Seleucids as in Egypt under the Lagids.

²⁴ The WEBBE has 'purpose' in place of 'policy'.

²⁵ 1M 4:36-61 says nothing of this, but Lysias may have instructed the Citadel garrison not to interfere with the Temple.

²⁶ The WEBBE opens with, "You will therefore do well to send them messengers."

²⁷ The NJB capitalizes 'senate'.

²⁸ The NJB has 'would wish' in place of 'desire', here following the WEBBE.

²⁹ ἐνεφάνισεν ἡμῖν Μενέλαος βούλεσθαι κατελθόντας ὑμᾶς γίνεσθαι πρὸς τοῖς ἰδίοις. ³⁰ τοῖς οὖν καταπορευομένοις μέχρι τριακάδος Ξανθικοῦ ὑπάρξει δεξιὰ μετὰ τῆς ἀδείας ³¹ χρῆσθαι τοὺς Ἰουδαίους τοῖς ἑαυτῶν δαπανήμασιν καὶ νόμοις, καθὰ καὶ τὸ πρότερον, καὶ οὐδεὶς αὐτῶν κατ' οὐδένα τρόπον παρενοχληθήσεται περὶ τῶν ἡγνοημένων. ³² πέπομφα δὲ καὶ τὸν Μενέλαον παρακαλέσοντα ὑμᾶς. ³³ ἔρρωσθε.

ἔτους ἑκατοστοῦ τεσσαρακοστοῦ ὀγδόου, Ξανθικοῦ πεντεκαιδεκάτῃ.

³⁴ Ἐπεμψαν δὲ καὶ οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἐπιστολὴν ἔχουσαν οὕτως

Κόιντος Μέμμιος, Τίτος Μάνιος, πρεσβῦται Ῥωμαίων, τῷ δήμῳ τῶν Ἰουδαίων χαίρειν.

³⁵ ὑπὲρ ὧν Λυσίας ὁ συγγενὴς τοῦ βασιλέως συνεχώρησεν ὑμῖν, καὶ ἡμεῖς συνευδοκοῦμεν. ³⁶ ἃ δὲ ἔκρινεν προσανενεχθῆναι τῷ βασιλεῖ, πέμψατέ τινα

²⁹ “Menelaus informs us that you wish to return home and attend to your own affairs. ³⁰ Accordingly, all those who return before the thirtieth day of Xanthicus may rest assured that they have nothing to fear. ³¹ The Jews may make use of their own kind of food and their own laws as formerly, and none of them is to be molested in any way for any unwitting offences. ³² I have also sent Menelaus to set your minds at rest. ³³ Farewell.

“The fifteenth day of Xanthicus in the year one hundred and forty-eight.”

³⁴ The Romans also sent the Jews a letter, which read as follows:

“Quintus Memmius, Titus Manilius, Manius Sergius, legates of the Romans, to the Jewish people, greetings.

³⁵ “In regard to what Lysias, the king’s cousin, has granted you we also give consent. ³⁶ As for the matters he decided to refer to the king, consider them carefully

²⁹ Menelaus had gone to Antioch and advised the king to let the Jews return to Jerusalem. He was now sent back (v. 32), hoping to regain the High Priesthood.

³⁰ The month of ‘Xanthicus’ was March–April.

³¹ The word ‘unwitting’ implies that the king still maintained his claims and merely granted pardon (1M 13:39).

³² The importance conferred on the High Priest expelled by the rebels shows that the king did not intend to recognise their leader, Judas. However, the religious objectives of the revolt, that is to say the repeal of the decree abolishing the Jewish religion, had been achieved.

³³ The date was in the spring of 164 BCE.

³⁴ ‘Manilius’ & ‘Sergius’ are restored with 2 LXX MSS; other LXX texts (& NRSV) have ‘Titus Manius’ but this name, made up of 2 ‘praenomina’ is impossible. Titus Manilius & Manius Sergius are known to history; Quintus Memmius is not, but a Titus Memmius was legate in 170 BCE.

³⁵ The NJB has ‘approve’ in place of ‘give consent’.

³⁶ The WEBBE has ‘judged’ in place of ‘decided’.

παραχρῆμα ἐπισκεψάμενοι περὶ τούτων, ἵνα ἐκθῶμεν
ὡς καθήκει ὑμῖν· ἡμεῖς γὰρ προσάγομεν πρὸς Ἀντι-
όχειαν. ³⁷ διὸ σπεύσατε καὶ πέμψατέ τινας, ὅπως καὶ
ἡμεῖς ἐπιγνῶμεν ὁποίας ἐστὲ γνώμης. ³⁸ ὑγιαίνετε.
ἔτους ἑκατοστοῦ τεσσαρακοστοῦ ὀγδόου, Ξανθικοῦ
πεντεκαιδεκάτη.

and send someone promptly, if we are to interpret them
to your advantage, because we are leaving for Antioch.

³⁷ Lose no time, therefore, in sending us those who can
tell us what your intentions are. ³⁸ Farewell.

The fifteenth day of Xanthicus, in the year one hundred
and forty-eight."

³⁷ The WEBBE ends with, "*what is in your mind.*"

³⁸ The date was in the spring of 164 BCE.

Μακκαβαίων Β' 12

¹ Γενομένων δὲ τῶν συνθηκῶν τούτων ὁ μὲν Λυσίας ἀπῆει πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα, οἱ δὲ Ἰουδαῖοι περὶ τὴν γεωργίαν ἐγίνοντο.

² τῶν δὲ κατὰ τόπον στρατηγῶν Τιμόθεος καὶ Ἀπολλώνιος ὁ τοῦ Γενναίου, ἔτι δὲ Ἱερώνυμος καὶ Δημοφών, πρὸς δὲ τούτοις Νικάνωρ ὁ Κυπριάρχης οὐκ εἶων αὐτοὺς εὐσταθεῖν καὶ τὰ τῆς ἡσυχίας ἄγειν.

³ Ἰοπιῖται δὲ τηλικούτο συνετέλεσαν τὸ δυσσέβημα· παρακαλέσαντες τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς οἰκοῦντας Ἰουδαίους ἐμβῆναι εἰς τὰ παρακατασταθέντα ὑπ' αὐτῶν σκάφη σὺν γυναιξίν καὶ τέκνοις ὡς μηδεμιᾶς ἐνεστώσης πρὸς αὐτοὺς δυσμενείας, ⁴ κατὰ δὲ τὸ κοινὸν τῆς πόλεως ψήφισμα· καὶ τούτων ἐπιδεξαμένων ὡς ἂν εἰρηνεύειν θελόντων καὶ μηδὲν ὑποπτον ἐχόντων ἐπαναχθέντας αὐτοὺς ἐβύδισαν ὄντας οὐκ ἔλαττον τῶν διακοσίων.

⁵ μεταλαβὼν δὲ Ἰουδᾶς τὴν γεγонуῖαν εἰς τοὺς ὁμοεθνεῖς ὁμότητα παραγγείλας τοῖς περὶ αὐτὸν ἀνδράσιν ⁶ καὶ ἐπικαλεσάμενος τὸν δίκαιον κριτὴν θεὸν παρεγένετο ἐπὶ τοὺς

2 MACCABEES 12

¹ Once these agreements had been concluded, Lysias returned to the king and the Jews went back to their farming.

² Among the local generals, Timothy and Apollonius son of Gennaüs, as also Hieronymus and Demophon, and Nicanor the governor of Cyprus as well, would not allow the Jews to live in peace.

³ The men of Joppa committed a great impiety: they invited the Jews living among them to go aboard some boats they had lying ready, taking their wives and children, as though they had no ill will for them; ⁴ there had been a public vote by the citizens and the Jews accepted, as well they might, being peaceable people with no reason to suspect anything. However, once out in the open sea, they were all sent to the bottom, a company of at least two hundred.

⁵ Afterwards, when Judas heard of the cruel fate of his fellow countrymen, he issued his orders to his men ⁶ and, after invoking God the righteous judge, he attacked his brothers'

2 MACCABEES 12

¹ The summarist supposes the king to be at Antioch, thinking of him as Antiochus V. The two raids on the coastal towns, however, must have taken place after the first campaign of Lysias, when Antiochus IV was in Persia (see 9:1) and fit easily into the year 164 BCE.

² This is not the 'Apollonius' of 4:21; on 'Timothy', see 8:30–33, 10:24–37. 'Nicanor' is called 'governor of Cyprus': this was under Egypt's rule until 58 BCE but Syria may have claimed it after the defection of Ptolemy Macron (10:13).

³ The NRSV ends with 'the Jews' in place of 'them'.

⁴ The WEBBE has 'drowned' in place of 'sent to the bottom'.

⁵ The NJB does not have the opening 'afterwards'.

⁶ The WEBBE has simply 'fled' in place of 'taken refuge'.

μιαιφόνους τῶν ἀδελφῶν καὶ τὸν μὲν λιμένα νύκτωρ ἐνέπρησεν καὶ τὰ σκάφη κατέφλεξεν, τοὺς δὲ ἐκεῖ συμφυγόντας ἐξεκέντησεν. ⁷ τοῦ δὲ χωρίου συγκλεισθέντος ἀνέλυσεν ὡς πάλιν ἥξων καὶ τὸ σύμπαν τῶν Ιοππιτῶν ἐκριζῶσαι πολίτευμα. ⁸ μεταλαβὼν δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἐν Ιαμνεΐᾳ τὸν αὐτὸν ἐπιτελεῖν βουλομένους τρόπον τοῖς παροικοῦσιν Ιουδαίοις, ⁹ καὶ τοῖς Ιαμνίταις νυκτὸς ἐπιβαλὼν ὑφῆψεν τὸν λιμένα σὺν τῷ στόλῳ ὥστε φαίνεσθαι τὰς αὐγὰς τοῦ φέγγους εἰς τὰ Ιεροσόλυμα σταδίων ὄντων διακοσίων τεσσαράκοντα.

¹⁰ Ἐκεῖθεν δὲ ἀποσπᾶσαντες σταδίους ἐννέα, ποιουμένων τὴν πορείαν ἐπὶ τὸν Τιμόθεον, προσέβαλον Ἄραβες αὐτῷ οὐκ ἐλάττους τῶν πεντακισχιλίων, ἵππεῖς δὲ πεντακόσιοι. ¹¹ γενομένης δὲ καρτερᾶς μάχης καὶ τῶν περὶ τὸν Ιουδαν διὰ τὴν παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ βοήθειαν εὐημερησάντων ἐλαττονωθέντες οἱ νομάδες ἠξίουσαν δοῦναι τὸν Ιουδαν δεξιὰς αὐτοῖς ὑπισχνούμενοι καὶ βοσκήματα δώσειν καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ὠφελήσῃν αὐτούς. ¹² Ιουδας δὲ ὑπολαβὼν ὡς ἀληθῶς ἐν πολλοῖς αὐτοὺς χρησίμους ἐπεχώρησεν εἰρήνην ἄξιον πρὸς αὐτούς· καὶ λαβόντες δεξιὰς εἰς τὰς σκηναὶς ἐχωρίσθησαν.

murderers. Under the cover of dark, he set fire to the port, burned the boats, and put to the sword everyone who had taken refuge there. ⁷ But, when the town gates were closed, he withdrew, intending to come back and wipe out the whole community of the men of Joppa. ⁸ However, hearing that the people of Jamnia were planning to treat the Jews who lived among them in the same way, ⁹ he made a night attack on the Jamnites and fired the port with its fleet; the glow of the flames was seen as far off as Jerusalem, two hundred and forty stadia away.

¹⁰ When they had left the town nine stadia behind them in their advance on Timothy, an Arab force of at least five thousand infantry and five hundred cavalry attacked him.

¹¹ A fierce battle followed and, with God's help, Judas' men won the day; the defeated nomads begged Judas to offer them the right hand of friendship and promised to surrender their herds and make themselves generally useful to him.

¹² Realising that they might indeed prove valuable in many ways, Judas consented to make peace with them and, after an exchange of pledges, they withdrew to their tents.

⁷ The NJB has 'as' in place of 'but when'.

⁸ 'Jamnia' was about 19 Km south of Joppa.

⁹ In place of 'two hundred and forty stadia', the NJB has 'thirty miles'.

¹⁰ The 'nine stadia' (the NJB has 'barely a mile')) cannot be reckoned to start at Jamnia but at some point situated in Gilead (see v. 13). The summarist has made an awkward start in the material taken from Jason. For details of this expedition, in the summer of 164 BCE, see 1M 5:9ff.

¹¹ The NJB has 'engagement' in place of 'battle', here following the WEBBE.

¹² The NJB ends with, "the Arabs withdrew to their tents." Here, we follow the Greek text and the WEBBE.

¹³ Ἐπέβαλεν δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τινα πόλιν γεφύραις ὀχυρὰν καὶ τείχεσιν περιπεφραγμένην καὶ παμμειγέσιν ἔθνεσιν κατοικουμένην, ὄνομα δὲ Κασπιν. ¹⁴ οἱ δὲ ἔνδον πεποιθότες τῇ τῶν τειχέων ἐρμυνότητι τῇ τε τῶν βρωμάτων παραθήσει ἀναγωγότερον ἐχρῶντο τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ἰουδαν λοιδοροῦντες καὶ προσέτι βλασφημοῦντες καὶ λαλοῦντες ἅ μὴ δέμεις. ¹⁵ οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Ἰουδαν ἐπικαλεσάμενοι τὸν μέγαν τοῦ κόσμου δυνάστην τὸν ἄτερ κριῶν καὶ μηχανῶν ὀργανικῶν κατακρημνίσαντα τὴν Ἱερικω κατὰ τοὺς Ἰησοῦ χρόνους ἐνέσεισαν θηριωδῶς τῷ τείχει. ¹⁶ καταλαβόμενοί τε τὴν πόλιν τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ θελήσει ἀμυθήτους ἐποίησαντο σφαγὰς ὥστε τὴν παρακειμένην λίμνην τὸ πλάτος ἔχουσιν σταδίους δύο κατάρρυστον αἵματι πεπληρωμένην φαίνεσθαι.

¹⁷ Ἐκεῖθεν δὲ ἀποσπάσαντες σταδίους ἑπτακοσίους πεντήκοντα διήνυσαν εἰς τὸν Χάρακα πρὸς τοὺς λεγομένους Τουβιανούς Ἰουδαίους. ¹⁸ καὶ Τιμόθεον μὲν ἐπὶ τῶν τόπων οὐ κατέλαβον ἄπρακτον τότε ἀπὸ τῶν τόπων ἐκλελυκότα, καταλελοιπότα δὲ φρουρὰν ἐν τινὶ τόπῳ καὶ μάλα ὀχυρὰν. ¹⁹ Δοσίθεος δὲ καὶ Σωσίπατρος τῶν περὶ τὸν Μακκαβαῖον ἡγεμόνων ἐξοδεύσαντες ἀπώλεσαν τοὺς ὑπὸ Τιμοθέου

¹³ He also attacked a certain fortified town, closed by ramparts and inhabited by a mixed multitude of various races; its name was Capsin. ¹⁴ Confident in the strength of their walls and their stock of provisions, the besieged adopted an insolent attitude to Judas and his men, reinforcing their insults with blasphemies and profanity. ¹⁵ However, Judas and his company invoked the great Sovereign of the world who, without battering ram or siege engine, had overthrown Jericho in the days of Joshua; they then made a fierce assault on the wall. ¹⁶ By God's will, having captured the town, they made such indescribable slaughter that the nearby lake, two stadia across, seemed filled to overflowing with blood.

¹⁷ Seven hundred and fifty stadia from there, they reached the Charax, in the land of Jews known as Tubians. ¹⁸ They did not find Timothy in that district; he had already left the district, having achieved nothing apart from leaving a very strong garrison at one point. ¹⁹ Dositheus and Sosipater, two of the Maccabaeen generals, marched out and destroyed the force Timothy had left behind in the fortress: more than ten

¹³ In place of 'ramparts', the NRSV has 'earthworks'; the meaning of the Greek is uncertain. 'Capsin' is perhaps the 'Chaspho' of 1M 5:36.

¹⁴ The WEBBE has 'insolent words' in place of 'profanity'.

¹⁵ The NJB has 'men' in place of 'company', here following the WEBBE.

¹⁶ The NJB has 'a quarter of a mile' in place of 'two stadia'.

¹⁷ The NJB has 'ninety-five miles' for 'seven hundred and fifty stadia'. The 'Charax' is probably the fortress of Ammanitis (present-day Araq El-Emir), the residence of the governor.

¹⁸ In place of 'district', the NJB has 'neighbourhood'.

¹⁹ The NJB adds 'amounting to' before 'more than ten thousand'.

καταλειφθέντας ἐν τῷ ὀχυρώματι πλείους τῶν μυρίων ἀνδρῶν. ²⁰ ὁ δὲ Μακκαβαῖος διατάξας τὴν περὶ αὐτὸν στρατιὰν σπειρηδὸν κατέστησεν αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ τῶν σπειρῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Τιμόθεον ὥρμησεν ἔχοντα περὶ αὐτὸν μυριάδας δώδεκα πεζῶν, ἵππεῖς δὲ δισχιλίους πρὸς τοῖς πεντακοσίοις. ²¹ τὴν δὲ ἔφοδον μεταλαβὼν Ἰουδοῦ προεξαπέστειλεν ὁ Τιμόθεος τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ τὴν ἄλλην ἀποσκευὴν εἰς τὸ λεγόμενον Καρνιὸν· ἦν γὰρ δυσπολιόρκητον καὶ δυσπρόσιτον τὸ χωρίον διὰ τὴν πάντων τῶν τόπων στενότητα. ²² ἐπιφανείσης δὲ τῆς Ἰουδοῦ σπείρας πρώτης καὶ γενομένου δέους ἐπὶ τοὺς πολεμίους φόβου τε ἐκ τῆς τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐφορῶντος ἐπιφανείας γενομένης ἐπ' αὐτοὺς εἰς φυγὴν ὥρμησαν ἄλλος ἄλλαχῇ φερόμενος ὥστε πολλάκις ὑπὸ τῶν ἰδίων βλάπτεσθαι καὶ ταῖς τῶν ξιφῶν ἀκμαῖς ἀναπείρεσθαι. ²³ ἐποιεῖτο δὲ τὸν διωγμὸν εὐτονώτερον ὁ Ἰουδας συγκεντῶν τοὺς ἀλιτηρίους διέφθειρέν τε εἰς μυριάδας τρεῖς ἀνδρῶν. ²⁴ αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Τιμόθεος ἐμπεσὼν τοῖς περὶ τὸν Δοσίθεον καὶ Σωσίπατρον ἡξίου μετὰ πολλῆς γοητείας ἐξαφεῖναι σῶον αὐτὸν διὰ τὸ πλειόνων μὲν γονεῖς, ὧν δὲ ἀδελφοὺς ἔχειν καὶ τούτους ἀλογηθῆναι συμβήσεται. ²⁵ πιστώσαντος δὲ αὐτοῦ

thousand men. ²⁰ Maccabaeus divided his army into cohorts, to which he assigned commanders, and then hurried in pursuit of Timothy, who had with him one hundred and twenty thousand infantry and two thousand five hundred cavalry. ²¹ Timothy's first move on learning of Judas' advance was to send away the women and children and the rest of the baggage train to the place called the Carnaim, since it was impregnable and difficult to access, owing to the narrowness of all approaches. ²² Judas' cohort came into sight first. The enemy, seized with fright and panic-stricken by the manifestation of the All-Seeing, began to flee, one running this way, one running that, often wounding one another in consequence and pierced by the points of their own swords. ²³ Judas pursued them with a will, cutting the sinners to pieces and killing as many as thirty thousand men. ²⁴ Timothy himself, having fallen into the hands of Dositheus and Sosipater and their men, very craftily pleaded with them to let him go with his life, because he had the relatives and the brothers of many of them in his power, and that these could otherwise expect short shrift. ²⁵ When, with many

²⁰ After 'Maccabaeus', the NJB adds 'himself'.

²¹ The 'Carnaim', a little north of Deraa in Syria (Gn 14:5, 1M 5:26), was the sight of the temple of Herod Astarte (see 1M 5:43). The 'narrow approaches' were probably the bed of the torrent mentioned in 1M 5:37 (the Nahr El-Ehreir, a tributary of the River Jarmuk); the country gets difficult only further to the south, but the summarist emphasises the military prowess of Judas' contingent.

²² The NJB ends with, "and running on the points of one another's swords."

²³ The NJB has 'something like' in place of 'as many as', here following the WEBBE.

²⁴ In place of 'because', the NJB has 'on the grounds that'.

²⁵ The NJB has 'at long last' in place of 'with many words'.

διὰ πλείονων τὸν ὄρισμόν ἀποκαταστήσαι τούτους ἀπημάντους ἀπέλυσαν αὐτὸν ἔνεκα τῆς τῶν ἀδελφῶν σωτηρίας.

²⁶ Ἐξελθὼν δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ Καρνιον καὶ τὸ Ατεργατειον κατέσφαξεν μυριάδας σωμάτων δύο καὶ πεντακισχιλίου.

²⁷ μετὰ δὲ τὴν τούτων τροπὴν καὶ ἀπώλειαν ἐπεστράτευσεν καὶ ἐπὶ Εφρων πόλιν ὀχυράν, ἐν ᾗ κατῴκει Λυσίας καὶ πάμφυλα πλήρη, νεανίαί δὲ ῥωμαῖοι πρὸ τῶν τειχέων καθεστῶτες εὐρώστως ἀπεμάχοντο, ἔνθα δὲ ὀργάνων καὶ βελῶν πολλαὶ παραθέσεις ὑπῆρχον. ²⁸ ἐπικαλεσάμενοι δὲ τὸν δυνάστην τὸν μετὰ κράτους συντρίβοντα τὰς τῶν πολεμίων ἀλκὰς ἔλαβον τὴν πόλιν ὑποχείριον, κατέστρωσαν δὲ τῶν ἐνδον εἰς μυριάδας δύο πεντακισχιλίου. ²⁹ ἀναξέζξαντες δὲ ἐκεῖθεν ὥρμησαν ἐπὶ Σκυθῶν πόλιν ἀπέχουσαν ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων σταδίου ἑξακοσίου. ³⁰ ἀπομαρτυρησάντων δὲ τῶν ἐκεῖ καθεστῶτων Ἰουδαίων, ἦν οἱ Σκυθοπολίται ἔσχον πρὸς αὐτοὺς εὐνοίαν καὶ ἐν τοῖς τῆς ἀτυχίας καιροῖς ἡμέρον ἀπάντησιν, ³¹ εὐχαριστήσαντες καὶ προσπαρακαλέσαντες καὶ εἰς τὰ λοιπὰ πρὸς τὸ γένος εὐμενεῖς εἶναι παρεγενήθησαν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα τῆς τῶν ἑβδομάδων ἑορτῆς οὔσης ὑπογίου.

words, he convinced them that he would honour his promise and return these people unharmed, they let him go for the sake of saving their brothers.

²⁶ Reaching the Carnaim and the temple of Atargatis, Judas slaughtered twenty-five thousand men.

²⁷ Having defeated and destroyed them, he led his army against Ephron, a fortified town where Lysias and troops of all nationalities lived. Stalwart young men put on the walls offered vigorous resistance, while inside there were great store of war-engines and arrows. ²⁸ But the Jews, having invoked the Sovereign who, by his power, shatters enemies' strength, gained control of the town and cut down nearly twenty-five thousand of those inside. ²⁹ Moving from there, they came to Scythopolis, six hundred stadia from Jerusalem.

³⁰ However, as the Jews who had settled there assured Judas that the people of Scythopolis had always treated them well and had been particularly kind to them when times were at their worst, ³¹ he and his men thanked them and urged them to extend the same friendship to his race in the future. They reached Jerusalem shortly before the Feast of Weeks.

²⁶ 'Atargatis' was the great goddess of the Syrians, identified with the local Astarte, and to whom fish were sacred.

²⁷ The name 'Lysias' follows the Recension of Lucian; it is not present in the LXX; this cannot be the military governor of Coele-Syria, who presumably resided at Tyre, but merely some local ruler. The name was common at the time.

²⁸ In place of 'strength', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'defences'; the literal translation is 'weight'.

²⁹ 'Scythopolis' was the Greek name for the town of Beth-Shean (1M 5:52). The NJB has 'seventy-five miles' for 'six hundred stadia'.

³⁰ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "But when the Jews who were settled there testified of the good will that the Scythopolitans had shown towards them, and of their kind treatment of them in the times of their misfortune."

³¹ The 'Feast of Weeks' was at the time of the wheat harvest, 7 weeks after Passover, and was celebrated in Jerusalem (Ex 34:22-24, Dt 16:9-12).

³² Μετὰ δὲ τὴν λεγομένην πεντηκοστὴν ὥρμησαν ἐπὶ Γοργίαν τὸν τῆς Ἰδουμαίας στρατηγόν. ³³ ἐξῆλθεν δὲ μετὰ πεζῶν τρισχιλίων, ἰππέων δὲ τετρακοσίων. ³⁴ παραταξαμένους δὲ συνέβη πεσεῖν ὀλίγους τῶν Ἰουδαίων.

³⁵ Δοσίθεος δὲ τις τῶν τοῦ Βακήνορος, ἔφιππος ἀνὴρ καὶ καρτερός, εἶχετο τοῦ Γοργίου καὶ λαβόμενος τῆς χλαμύδος ἤγεν αὐτὸν εὐρώστως καὶ βουλόμενος τὸν κατάρατον λαβεῖν ζωγρίαν, τῶν ἰππέων τινὸς Θρακῶν ἐπενεχθέντος αὐτῷ καὶ τὸν ὦμον κατελόντος διέφυγεν ὁ Γοργίας εἰς Μαρισα. ³⁶ τῶν δὲ περὶ τὸν Εσδρίαν ἐπὶ πλεῖον μαχομένων καὶ κατακόπων ὄντων ἐπικαλεσάμενος Ἰουδας τὸν κύριον σύμμαχον φανῆναι καὶ προοδηγὸν τοῦ πολέμου.

³⁷ καταρξάμενος τῇ πατρίῳ φωνῇ τὴν μεθ' ὕμνων κραυγὴν ἐνσείσας ἀπροσδοκῆτως τοῖς περὶ τὸν Γοργίαν, τροπὴν αὐτῶν ἐποίησατο.

³⁸ Ἰουδας δὲ ἀναλαβὼν τὸ στράτευμα ἦκεν εἰς Οδολλαμ πόλιν· τῆς δὲ ἐβδομάδος ἐπιβαλλούσης κατὰ τὸν ἐδισμόν ἀγνισθέντες αὐτόθι τὸ σάββατον διήγαγον. ³⁹ τῇ δὲ ἐχομένῃ

³² After Pentecost, as it is called, they marched on Gorgias, the governor of Idumaea. ³³ He came out leading three thousand infantry and four hundred cavalry; ³⁴ in the course of the ensuing battle, a few Jews lost their lives.

³⁵ A man called Dositheus, one of Bacenor's men, a valiant man, overpowered Gorgias and, gripping him by the cloak, was forcibly dragging him along, meaning to take the accursed man alive; but one of the Thracian cavalry bore down on Dositheus and slashed his shoulder, and Gorgias escaped to Marisa. ³⁶ Meanwhile, since Esdrias and his men had been fighting for a long time and were exhausted, Judas called on the Lord to show himself their ally and leader in battle.

³⁷ Then, chanting the battle cry and hymns at the top of his voice in his ancestral tongue, by a surprise attack he routed Gorgias' troops.

³⁸ Judas then rallied his army and moved on to the town of Adullam. As it was the seventh day of the week, they purified themselves according to custom and kept the

³² See #31 on Pentecost.

³³ The NJB has 'at the head of' in place of 'leading'.

³⁴ The WEBBE has 'fell' in place of 'lost their lives'.

³⁵ In place of 'one of Bacenor's men', here following the LXX (& NRSV), the NJB, following the Vg & Peshitta, has 'a horseman of the Tubian contingent'. 'Marisa' is in the foothills southwest of Jerusalem near Beit-Jibrin (see #1M 5:66).

³⁶ 'Esdrias' was evidently a divisional leader (v. 20); the author has abbreviated his source.

³⁷ The 'hymns' (even battle hymns) had a liturgical character and were presumably in Hebrew.

³⁸ Even purged of its glosses (see #45), this paragraph expresses the conviction that prayer and expiatory sacrifice are efficacious for the remission of sins for the dead; this is the first evidence in the OT of this belief. 'Adullam' translates the name Οδολλαμ.

ἤλθον οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἰουδαν καθ' ὃν χρόνον τὸ τῆς χρείας ἐγεγόνει, τὰ σώματα τῶν προπεπτωκότων ἀνακομίσασθαι καὶ μετὰ τῶν συγγενῶν ἀποκαταστῆσαι εἰς τοὺς πατρώους τάφους. ⁴⁰ εὖρον δὲ ἐκάστου τῶν τεθνηκότων ὑπὸ τοῦς χιτῶνας ἱερώματα τῶν ἀπὸ Ἰαμνείας εἰδώλων, ἀφ' ὧν ὁ νόμος ἀπείργει τοὺς Ἰουδαίους· τοῖς δὲ πᾶσι σαφὲς ἐγένετο διὰ τήνδε τὴν αἰτίαν τούσδε πεπτωκέναι. ⁴¹ πάντες οὖν εὐλογήσαντες τὰ τοῦ δικαιοκρίτου κυρίου τὰ κεκρυμμένα φανερὰ ποιοῦντος ⁴² εἰς ἰκετείαν ἐτράπησαν ἀξιῶσαντες τὸ γεγονὸς ἁμάρτημα τελείως ἐξαλειφθῆναι. ὁ δὲ γενναῖος Ἰουδᾶς παρεκάλεσε τὸ πλῆθος συντηρεῖν αὐτοὺς ἀναμαρτήτους εἶναι ὑπ' ὅψιν ἐωρακότας τὰ γεγονότα διὰ τὴν τῶν προπεπτωκότων ἁμαρτίαν. ⁴³ ποιησάμενός τε κατ' ἀνδρολογίαν εἰς ἀργυρίου δραχμὰς δισχιλίας ἀπέστειλεν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα προσαγαγεῖν περὶ ἁμαρτίας θυσίαν πάνυ καλῶς καὶ ἀστείως πράττων ὑπὲρ ἀναστάσεως διαλογιζόμενος. ⁴⁴ εἰ μὴ γὰρ τοὺς προπεπτωκότας ἀναστῆναι προσεδόκα, περισσὸν καὶ ληρῶδες ὑπὲρ νεκρῶν εὔχεσθαι. ⁴⁵ εἴτε ἐμβλέπων τοῖς

Sabbath. ³⁹ Next day, Judas' men came (since the necessity was by now urgent) to have the bodies of the fallen taken up and laid to rest among their relatives in their ancestral tombs. ⁴⁰ However, when they found on each of the dead men, under their tunics, objects dedicated to the idols of Jamnia, which the Law prohibits to Jews, it became clear to everyone that this was why these men had lost their lives. ⁴¹ All then, blessing the ways of the Lord, the upright judge who brings hidden things to light, ⁴² gave themselves to prayer, begging that the sin committed might be completely forgiven. Next, the valiant Judas urged the army to keep themselves from sin, having seen with their own eyes the effects of the sin of those who had fallen; ⁴³ then he took a collection from them individually, coming to two thousand drachmas, and sent it to Jerusalem to have offer sacrifice, an action altogether fine and noble, prompted by his belief in the resurrection. ⁴⁴ For, had he not expected the fallen to rise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead, ⁴⁵ whereas

³⁹ In place of 'Judas' men came', here following the LXX, the NJB, following the *Vetus Latina* and *Peshitta*, has 'they came to find Judas'.

⁴⁰ The 'idols of Jamnia' were amulets, or things offered to the gentile gods, which ought to have been burnt (see Dt 7:25ff). The author believes that many had been killed because they wore tokens of pagan gods, which the Law forbids (v. 40, Dt 7:25–26), but Josephus (*Antiquities of the Jews*, XII viii 6) says this reverse befell them because they disobeyed Judas' instructions not to join battle before his arrival.

⁴¹ The NJB has 'blessed' in place of 'blessing' and opens v. 42 with 'and gave'.

⁴² The NJB has 'soldiers' in place of 'army'.

⁴³ The NJB has 'nearly' before 'two thousand'.

⁴⁴ This verse present, perhaps, the earliest record of praying for the dead.

⁴⁵ The text, as it has been transmitted by the LXX and majority of versions, represents a harmonisation of the original text with two glosses overburdening it (one Sadducean, cf. Mt 22:23, and the other Pharisaic). The latter is preserved in the principal MS of the *Vetus Latina*: "because

μετ' εὐσεβείας κοιμωμένοις κάλλιστον ἀποκείμενον
χαριστήριον, ὁσία καὶ εὐσεβῆς ἢ ἐπίνοια· ὅθεν περὶ τῶν
τεθνηκότων τὸν ἐξιλασμόν ἐποιήσατο τῆς ἁμαρτίας
ἀπολυθῆναι.

if he had in view the splendid recompense reserved for those
who make a pious end, the thought was holy and devout.
Hence, he had this expiatory sacrifice offered for the dead, so
that they might be released from their sin.

he hoped that those who had fallen would rise again (it is superfluous and a waste of time to pray for the dead), thinking that a very fine reward is in store for those who have fallen asleep devoutly (a holy and edifying thought)."

Μακκαβαίων Β' 13

¹ Τῷ δὲ ἐνάτῳ καὶ τεσσαρακοστῷ καὶ ἑκατοστῷ ἔτει προσέπεσεν τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ἰουδαν Ἀντίοχον τὸν Εὐπάτορα παραγενέσθαι σὺν πλήθεσιν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἰουδαίαν ² καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ Λυσίαν τὸν ἐπίτροπον καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων, ἕκαστον ἔχοντα δύναμιν Ἑλληνικὴν πεζῶν μυριάδας ἑνδεκα καὶ ἵππέων πεντακισχιλίους τριακοσίους καὶ ἐλέφαντας εἴκοσι δύο, ἄρματα δὲ δρεπανηφόρα τριακόσια.

³ συνέμειξεν δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ Μενέλαος καὶ παρεκάλει μετὰ πολλῆς εἰρωνείας τὸν Ἀντίοχον, οὐκ ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ τῆς πατρίδος, οἰόμενος δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς κατασταθήσεσθαι. ⁴ ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλέων ἐξήγειρεν τὸν θυμὸν τοῦ Ἀντίοχου ἐπὶ τὸν ἀλιτήριον, καὶ Λυσίου ὑποδείξαντος τοῦτον αἴτιον εἶναι πάντων τῶν κακῶν, προσέταξεν, ὥς ἔθος ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ τόπῳ, προσαπολέσαι ἀγαγόντας εἰς Βέροιαν. ⁵ ἔστιν δὲ ἐν τῷ τόπῳ πύργος πεντήκοντα πήχεων πλήρης σποδοῦ, οὗτος δὲ ὄργανον εἶχεν περιφερὲς πάντοθεν ἀπόκρημνον εἰς τὴν σποδόν. ⁶ ἐνταῦθα τὸν ἱεροσυλίας ἐνοχον ἢ καὶ τινων ἄλλων κακῶν ὑπεροχὴν πεπονημένον ἅπαντες προσωδοῦσιν εἰς ὄλεθρον.

2 MACCABEES 13

¹ In the year one hundred and forty-nine, Judas and his men discovered that Antiochus Eupator was advancing in force against Judaea ² and, with him, Lysias his tutor and chief minister; he had, moreover, a Greek force of one hundred and ten thousand infantry, five thousand three hundred cavalry, twenty-two elephants and three hundred chariots armed with scythes.

³ Menelaus also joined them and very craftily urged on Antiochus, not for the welfare of his country but hoping to be restored to office. ⁴ But the King of Kings stirred up the anger of Antiochus against the guilty wretch and, when Lysias made it clear to the king that he was the cause of all the troubles, he gave orders for him to be taken to Beroea and there put to death by the local method of execution. ⁵ In that place there is a tower fifty cubits high, full of ash, with an internal lip all round overhanging the ashes. ⁶ There, they all push to destruction anyone who is convicted of sacrilegious theft or of some other heinous crime. ⁷ In such a manner was

2 MACCABEES 13

¹ This was autumn 163 BCE, the 149th year of the Seleucid era, but starting from the spring of 311 BCE.

² 'Chariots armed with scythes' (to cut down foot soldiers) had been used since the days of the Persian Empire.

³ In place of 'very craftily', the WEBBE has 'with great hypocrisy'.

⁴ The High Priest Menelaus, having returned to Jerusalem (see 11:32), had evidently not been able to maintain his position there, but his execution should rather be dated after the capture of Jerusalem by Antiochus, as Josephus relates.

⁵ More literal translations of 'internal lip' would be 'contrivance' or 'machine'.

⁶ Execution by ashes is attested among the Persians; here, it is given the force of retributive justice (v.8, see 4:26, 9:5-6).

⁷ For 'renegade', the WEBBE has 'breaker of the law'.

⁷ τοιούτῳ μόρῳ τὸν παράνομον συνέβη θανεῖν μηδὲ τῆς γῆς τυχόντα Μενέλαον· ⁸ πάνυ δικαίως· ἐπεὶ γὰρ συνετελέσατο πολλὰ περὶ τὸν βωμὸν ἀμαρτήματα, οὗ τὸ πῦρ ἅγιόν ἦν καὶ ἡ σποδός, ἐν σποδῷ τὸν θάνατον ἐκομίσαστο.

⁹ Τοῖς δὲ φρονήμασιν ὁ βασιλεὺς βεβαρβαρωμένος ἤρχετο τὰ χεῖριστα τῶν ἐπὶ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ γεγονότων ἐνδειζόμενος τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις. ¹⁰ μεταλαβὼν δὲ Ἰουδας ταῦτα παρήγγειλεν τῷ πλήθει δι' ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς ἐπικαλεῖσθαι τὸν κύριον, εἴ ποτε καὶ ἄλλοτε, καὶ νῦν ἐπιβοηθεῖν τοῖς τοῦ νόμου καὶ πατρίδος καὶ ἱεροῦ ἁγίου στερεῖσθαι μέλλουσιν ¹¹ καὶ τὸν ἄρτι βραχέως ἀνεψυχότα λαὸν μὴ εἶσαι τοῖς δυσφήμοις ἔθνεσιν ὑποχειρίους γενέσθαι. ¹² πάντων δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ ποιησάντων ὁμοῦ καὶ καταξισάντων τὸν ἐλεήμονα κύριον μετὰ κλαυθμοῦ καὶ νηστειῶν καὶ προπτώσεως ἐπὶ ἡμέρας τρεῖς ἀδιαλείπτως παρακαλέσας αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰουδας ἐκέλευσεν παραγίνεσθαι. ¹³ καὶ ἑαυτὸν δὲ σὺν τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις γενόμενος ἐβουλεύσατο πρὶν εἰσβαλεῖν τοῦ βασιλέως τὸ στράτευμα εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν καὶ γενέσθαι τῆς πόλεως ἐγκρατεῖς ἐξελθόντας κρῖναι τὰ πράγματα τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ βοηθείᾳ.

¹⁴ δοὺς δὲ τὴν ἐπιτροπὴν τῷ κτίστῃ τοῦ κόσμου παρακαλέσας τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ γενναίως ἀγωνίσασθαι μέχρι θανάτου περὶ

the renegade fated to die; Menelaus had not even the privilege of burial. ⁸ Deserved justice, this: since he had committed many sins against the altar, the fire and ashes of which were holy, it was in ashes that he met his death.

⁹ Now the king, infuriated in spirit, was advancing, to inflict on the Jews a far worse suffering than anything that had happened under his father. ¹⁰ When Judas heard of this, he ordered the people day and night to call on the Lord as never before, to come to the help of those who were in peril of being deprived of the Law, their country and the holy Temple, ¹¹ and not to allow the people, just as they were being revived, to fall into the hand of profane heathens. ¹² After they all, with one voice, did this and made their petitions to the merciful Lord, weeping, fasting, and prostrating themselves for three days continuously, Judas encouraged them and told them to keep close to him. ¹³ After consulting privately with the elders, he resolved not to wait for the king's army to invade Judaea and take possession of the city, but to go out and settle the matter with God's help.

¹⁴ Having thus committed the outcome to the Lord of the world and having exhorted his soldiers to fight bravely to the

⁸ The WEBBE includes the opening clause (as 'and that justly') as part of v. 7. The literal translation of 'against' is 'about'.

⁹ For 'infuriated', here following the WEBBE, some MSS read 'indignant'; the NJB has 'with barbarous designs in his mind'.

¹⁰ The NJB has 'fatherland' in place of 'country'.

¹¹ For 'profane heathens', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'ill-famed foreigners'.

¹² Jews employed such acts of penitence particularly when there was danger of sacrilege (3:15, 10:4, 1M 4:40).

¹³ The NJB has 'separate consultation' in place of 'consulting privately'. Some MSS read 'the Lord's help' in place of 'God's help'.

¹⁴ For 'Lord', here following the WEBBE, the NJB, following some MSS, has 'Creator'.

νόμων, ἱεροῦ, πόλεως, πατρίδος, πολιτείας· περὶ δὲ Μωδεὶν ἐποιήσατο τὴν στρατοπεδείαν. ¹⁵ ἀναδούς δὲ τοῖς περὶ αὐτὸν σύνθημα ἡθεοῦ νίκηνη μετὰ νεανίσκων ἀρίστων κεκριμένων ἐπιβαλὼν νύκτωρ ἐπὶ τὴν βασιλικὴν αὐλὴν τὴν παρεμβολὴν ἀνείλεν εἰς ἄνδρας δισχιλίους, καὶ τὸν πρωτεύοντα τῶν ἐλεφάντων σὺν τῷ κατ' οἰκίαν ὄντι συνεκέντησεν ¹⁶ καὶ τὸ τέλος τὴν παρεμβολὴν δέους καὶ ταραχῆς ἐπλήρωσαν καὶ ἐξέλυσαν εὐημεροῦντες· ¹⁷ ὑποφαινούσης δὲ ἤδη τῆς ἡμέρας τοῦτο ἐγεγόνει διὰ τὴν ἐπαρήγουσαν αὐτῷ τοῦ κυρίου σκέπην.

¹⁸ Ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς εἰληφὼς γεῦμα τῆς τῶν Ἰουδαίων εὐτολμίας κατεπείρασεν διὰ μεθόδων τοὺς τόπους. ¹⁹ καὶ ἐπὶ Βαιθσουρα φρούριον ὀχυρὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων προσῆγεν, ἐτροποῦτο, προσέκρουεν, ἡλαττονοῦτο·

²⁰ τοῖς δὲ ἔνδον Ἰουδας τὰ δέοντα εἰσέπεμψεν. ²¹ προσήγγειλεν δὲ τὰ μυστήρια τοῖς πολεμίοις Ροδοκος ἐκ τῆς Ἰουδαικῆς τάξεως· ἀνεζητήθη καὶ κατελήμφθη καὶ κατεκλείσθη. ²² ἐδευτερολόγησεν ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῖς ἐν Βαιθσουροις, δεξιὰν ἔδωκεν, ἔλαβεν, ἀπήει, προσέβαλεν τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ἰουδαν,

death for the laws, the Temple, the city, their country, and their way of life, he encamped his army near Modein.

¹⁵ Giving his men the password, "Victory from God," he attacked the king's pavilion by night with a picked band of the bravest young men. Inside the camp, he killed about two thousand and the men cut down the largest of the elephants with its mahout; ¹⁶ having eventually filled the camp with terror and confusion, they successfully withdrew, ¹⁷ just as dawn was breaking. This was achieved, thanks to the protection that the Lord granted him.

¹⁸ The king, having has a taste of Jewish daring, now tried to capture their positions by trickery. ¹⁹ He advanced against Beth-Zur, a strong fortress of the Jews, but was checked, overcome, and so repelled.

²⁰ Judas supplied the garrison with what they needed, ²¹ but Rhodocus, of the Jewish army, made secrets known to the enemy; the man was identified, arrested, and dealt with. ²² A second time, the king parleyed with those in Beth-Zur; he gave his hand, took theirs, retired, attacked Judas' forces but

¹⁵ The WEBBE has 'watchword' for 'password'. The Greek text is probably corrupt around 'cut down'.

¹⁶ According to 1M 6:47, the Jews fled. The WEBBE has 'army' in place of 'camp', indicating in a footnote that the Greek has the latter.

¹⁷ The WEBBE and NJB have 'Judas' in place of 'him', here following the Greek text.

¹⁸ For 'daring', the WEBBE has 'exceeding boldness'.

¹⁹ The Syrians were defeated in the first attempt (1M 6:31). In place of 'repelled', the WEBBE has 'defeated'.

²⁰ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "Judas sent the things that were necessary to those who were within."

²¹ The garrison surrendered because of lack of food (1M 6:49); possibly, this was one of the 'secrets'.

²² The NJB has 'the garrison of' in place of 'those in', here following the WEBBE.

ἥττων ἐγένετο, ²³ μετέλαβεν ἀπονενοῆσθαι τὸν Φίλιππον ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ τὸν ἀπολελειμμένον ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων, συνεχύθη, τοὺς Ἰουδαίους παρεκάλεσεν, ὑπετάγη καὶ ὥμοσεν ἐπὶ πᾶσι τοῖς δικαίοις, συνελύθη καὶ θυσίαν προσήγαγεν, ἐτίμησεν τὸν νεὼ καὶ τὸν τόπον ἐφιλανθρωώπησεν.

²⁴ καὶ τὸν Μακκαβαῖον ἀπεδέξατο, κατέλιπεν στρατηγὸν ἀπὸ Πτολεμαίδος ἕως τῶν Γερρηνῶν Ἡγεμονίδην. ²⁵ ἦλθεν εἰς Πτολεμαίδα· ἐδυσφόρουν περὶ τῶν συνθηκῶν οἱ Πτολεμαεῖς, ἐδείναζον γὰρ ὑπὲρ ὧν ἠθέλησαν ἀδετεῖν τὰς διαστάσεις. ²⁶ προσῆλθεν ἐπὶ τὸ βῆμα Λυσίας, ἀπελογήσατο ἐνδεχομένως, συνέπεισεν, κατεπράυνεν, εὐμενεῖς ἐποίησεν, ἀνέξευξεν εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν. οὕτω τὰ τοῦ βασιλέως τῆς ἐφόδου καὶ τῆς ἀναζυγῆς ἐχώρησεν.

lost the battle. ²³ He was then told that Philip, left in charge of affairs, had rebelled in Antioch. He was stunned by this, negotiated with the Jews, came to a deal and swore to abide by all reasonable conditions, offered a sacrifice, and honoured the Temple and the holy place.

²⁴ He received Maccabaeus kindly and, leaving Hegemonides to exercise command from Ptolemais to Gerar, ²⁵ went to Ptolemais. The inhabitants of the place disapproved of the treaty; they complained furiously and wanted to annul its provisions. ²⁶ Lysias came forward and made a convincing defence of the provisions that convinced and calmed them and won their goodwill. He then withdrew to Antioch. This is how the king's offensive and retreat turned out.

²³ 1M 6:55–62 is not so enthusiastic, though insisting that religious freedom was restored to the Jews (6:59), which is not stated here: the author of 2M does not seem to have grasped the relationship between the letter of Antiochus V (11:22ff) and this second campaign of Lysias.

²⁴ This, then, marks the beginning (though still unofficial) of Hasmonaean power, since Judas is recognised as the *de facto* authority, while the new governor's writ is only for the coastal regions. 'Gerar' is south of Gaza on the coastal plain.

²⁵ 'Complained furiously and wanted' follows the *Vetus Latina*; the text of the LXX is corrupt (the NRSV has 'they were so angry that they wanted').

²⁶ For 'came forward', the NJB has 'mounted the rostrum'.

Μακκαβαίων Β' 14

¹ Μετὰ δὲ τριετῇ χρόνον προσέπεσεν τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ἰουδαν Δημήτριον τὸν τοῦ Σελεύκου διὰ τοῦ κατὰ Τρίπολιν λιμένος εἰσπλεύσαντα μετὰ πλήθους ἰσχυροῦ καὶ στόλου ² κεκρατημέναι τῆς χώρας ἐπανελόμενον Ἀντίοχον καὶ τὸν τούτου ἐπίτροπον Λυσίαν. ³ Ἄλκιμος δὲ τις προγεγονῶς ἀρχιερεὺς, ἐκουσίως δὲ μεμολυσμένος ἐν τοῖς τῆς ἀμειξίας χρόνοις, συννόησας ὅτι καθ' ὅντιναοῦν τρόπον οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτῷ σωτηρία οὐδὲ πρὸς τὸ ἅγιον θυσιαστήριον ἔτι πρόσδοδος, ⁴ ἤκεν πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα Δημήτριον ὡς πρώτῳ καὶ πεντηκοστῷ καὶ ἑκατοστῷ ἔτει προσάγων αὐτῷ στέφανον χρυσοῦν καὶ φοίνικα, πρὸς δὲ τούτοις τῶν νομιζομένων θαλλῶν τοῦ ἱεροῦ, καὶ τὴν ἡμέραν ἐκείνην ἡσυχίαν ἔσχεν. ⁵ καιρὸν δὲ λαβὼν τῆς ἰδίας ἀνοίας συνεργὸν προσκληθεὶς εἰς συνέδριον ὑπὸ τοῦ Δημητρίου καὶ ἐπερωτηθεὶς, ἐν τίνι διαθέσει καὶ βουλῇ καθέστηκαν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, πρὸς ταῦτα ἔφη ⁶ Οἱ λεγόμενοι τῶν Ἰουδαίων Ἀσιδαῖοι, ὧν ἀφηγεῖται Ἰουδας ὁ Μακκαβαῖος, πολεμοτροφοῦσιν καὶ στασιάζουσιν οὐκ ἔωντες τὴν βασιλείαν εὐσταθείας τυχεῖν. ⁷ ὅθεν ἀφελόμενος

2 MACCABEES 14

¹ Three years after this, news was brought to Judas and his men that Demetrius son of Seleucus had landed at the port of Tripolis with a strong army and a fleet, ² and that he had occupied the country and had killed Antiochus and his tutor Lysias. ³ A certain Alcimus, a former High Priest, had wilfully incurred defilement at the time of the insurrection; realising that whichever way he turned there was no security for him, nor any further access to the holy altar, ⁴ he went to King Demetrius in about the year one hundred and fifty-one and presented him with a golden crown and a palm, together with the traditional olive branches from the Temple; there, for that day, he let the matter rest. ⁵ Finding an opportunity to further his mad plan: when Demetrius called him to council and questioned him about the dispositions and intentions of the Jews, he replied, ⁶ "Those Jews called Hasidaeans, who are led by Judas Maccabaeus, are warmongers and rebels who prevent the kingdom from finding stability. ⁷ That is why, being

2 MACCABEES 14

- ¹ Counting from the 149th year of the Seleucid era, this was in the spring of 161 BCE. Demetrius I Soter, son of Seleucus IV, reigned 162–150 BCE.
² The WEBBE has 'made away' in place of 'killed'.
³ The wilful incurring of defilement means that he accepted Hellenism.
⁴ 1M 7:5–7 may record an earlier visit. The 'crown' was an emblem of sovereignty, the 'palm' one of victory.
⁵ The NJB opens with, "Presently, he found an opportunity."
⁶ The 'Hasidaeans' (Ἀσιδαῖοι) are what are more generally (now) known as Hasidim – strict, orthodox Jews.
⁷ The WEBBE has 'ancestral glory' in place of 'hereditary dignity'. In place of 'come here now', some MSS read 'come a second time'.

τὴν προγονικὴν δόξαν [λέγω δὴ τὴν ἀρχιερωσύνην] δεῦρο νῦν ἐλήλυθα ⁸ πρῶτον μὲν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀνηκόντων τῷ βασιλεῖ γνησίως φρονῶν, δεύτερον δὲ καὶ τῶν ἰδίων πολιτῶν στοχαζόμενος· τῇ μὲν γὰρ τῶν προειρημένων ἀλογιστίᾳ τὸ σύμπαν ἡμῶν γένος οὐ μικρῶς ἀκληρεῖ. ⁹ ἕκαστα δὲ τούτων ἐπεγνωκῶς σύ, βασιλεῦ, καὶ τῆς χώρας καὶ τοῦ περισταμένου γένους ἡμῶν προνοήσῃ καὶ ἣν ἔχεις πρὸς ἅπαντας εὐαπάντητον φιλανθρωπίαν. ¹⁰ ἄχρι γὰρ Ἰουδας περιέσται, ἀδύνατον εἰρήνης τυχεῖν τὰ πράγματα.

¹¹ τοιούτων δὲ ῥηθέντων ὑπὸ τούτου θᾶπτον οἱ λοιποὶ φίλοι δυσμενῶς ἔχοντες τὰ πρὸς τὸν Ἰουδαν προσεπύρωσαν τὸν Δημήτριον. ¹² προχειρισάμενος δὲ εὐθέως Νικάνορα τὸν γενόμενον ἐλεφαντάρχην καὶ στρατηγὸν ἀναδείξας τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἐξαπέστειλεν ¹³ δοῦς ἐντολὰς αὐτὸν μὲν τὸν Ἰουδαν ἐπανελέσθαι, τοὺς δὲ σὺν αὐτῷ σκορπίσαι, καταστῆσαι δὲ Ἀλκιμον ἀρχιερέα τοῦ μεγίστου ἱεροῦ. ¹⁴ οἱ δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς Ἰουδαίας πεφυγαδευκότες τὸν Ἰουδαν ἔθνη συνέμισγον ἀγεληδὸν τῷ Νικάνορι τὰς τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀτυχίας καὶ συμφορὰς ἰδίας εὐημερίας δοκοῦντες ἔσεσθαι.

deprived of my hereditary dignity – I mean the High Priesthood – I have come here now; ⁸ first, out of concern for the king's interests and, second, in regard of my own citizens, because the reckless behaviour of those of whom I have spoken has brought no slight misery on our entire race.

⁹ When your majesty has considered these points, please make provision for the welfare of our land and our race, as befits the gracious benevolence you extend to all; ¹⁰ for, as long as Judas is alive, the State will never enjoy peace."

¹¹ No sooner had he spoken thus, than the rest of the King's Friends, who were hostile to Judas' activities, stoked Demetrius' anger even more. ¹² The latter immediately appointed Nicanor, then commander of the elephants, as the governor of Judaea and despatched him, ¹³ with written instructions to dispose of Judas, disperse his followers and install Alcimus as High Priest of the greatest of temples.

¹⁴ The foreigners in Judaea, who had fled before Judas, flocked to join Nicanor, thinking that the misfortunes and troubles of the Jews would be to their own advantage.

⁸ The NJB has 'fellow' before 'citizens'.

⁹ In place of 'considered', the NJB has 'taken note'.

¹⁰ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "For as long as Judas remains alive, it is impossible for the government to find peace."

¹¹ The story here omits the expedition of Bacchides (1M 7:8–25). Josephus (*Ant.*, XII x 4) says that Nicanor escaped from Rome with Demetrius.

¹² In other words, the king appointed Nicanor as governor so that Alcimus would have no political power.

¹³ The NJB lacks 'written' before 'instructions', here following the WEBBE. For 'greatest of temples', the WEBBE has 'great temple'.

¹⁴ The WEBBE opens this verse, here following the NJB, with, "Those in Judea who had driven Judas into exile ...". Though the Greek text is difficult to understand precisely, the NJB translation appears more accurate.

¹⁵ Ἀκούσαντες δὲ τὴν τοῦ Νικάνωρος ἔφοδον καὶ τὴν ἐπίθεσιν τῶν ἐθνῶν καταπασάμενοι γῆν ἐλιτάνευον τὸν ἄχρι αἰῶνος συστήσαντα τὸν αὐτοῦ λαόν, αἰεὶ δὲ μετ' ἐπιφανείας ἀντιλαμβάνόμενον τῆς ἑαυτοῦ μερίδος. ¹⁶ προστάξαντος δὲ τοῦ ἡγουμένου ἐκειῖθεν εὐθέως ἀναξεύξας συμμίσγει αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ κώμην Δεσσαου. ¹⁷ Σιμων δὲ ὁ ἀδελφὸς Ἰουδοῦ συμβεβληκῶς ἦν τῷ Νικάνωρι, βραδέως δὲ διὰ τὴν αἰφνίδιον τῶν ἀντιπάλων ἀφασίαν ἐπταικῶς. ¹⁸ ὅμως δὲ ἀκούων ὁ Νικάνωρ ἦν εἶχον οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἰουδαν ἀνδραγαθίαν καὶ ἐν τοῖς περὶ τῆς πατρίδος ἀγῶσιν εὐψυχίαν, ὑπευλαβεῖτο τὴν κρίσιν δι' αἰμάτων ποιήσασθαι. ¹⁹ διόπερ ἔπεμψεν Ποσιδώνιον καὶ Θεόδοτον καὶ Ματταθίαν δοῦναι καὶ λαβεῖν δεξιάς.

²⁰ πλείονος δὲ γενομένης περὶ τούτων ἐπισκέψεως καὶ τοῦ ἡγουμένου τοῖς πλήθεσιν ἀνακοινωσαμένου καὶ φανείσης ὁμοψήφου γνώμης ἐπένευσαν ταῖς συνθήκαις. ²¹ ἐτάξαντο δὲ ἡμέραν ἐν ἣ κατ' ἰδίαν ἤξουσιν εἰς τὸ αὐτό· καὶ προῆλθεν παρ' ἐκάστου δίφραξ, ἔθεσαν δίφρους. ²² διέταξεν Ἰουδας ἐνόπλους ἐτοιμούς ἐν τοῖς ἐπικαίροις τόποις, μήποτε ἐκ τῶν πολεμίων αἰφνιδίως κακουργία γένηται· τὴν ἀρμόζουσιν

¹⁵ When the Jews heard of Nicanor's advance and the attack of the foreigners, they sprinkled dust on their heads and prayed to him who established his people forever and who always supports his own heritage by direct manifestations.

¹⁶ On their leader's orders, they left the place where they were and engaged the enemy at Dessau. ¹⁷ Simon, brother of Judas, engaged Nicanor but, owing to the sudden arrival of the enemy, suffered a slight reverse. ¹⁸ But Nicanor had heard how brave Judas and his men were and how they fought for their country, and he dared not allow the sword to decide the issue. ¹⁹ So, he sent Posidonius, Theodotus, and Mattathias to give and receive pledges of friendship.

²⁰ After long consideration of his terms, the leader told them to his troops and, since they were all clearly of one mind, they agreed to the treaty. ²¹ A day was fixed on which the two leaders were to meet as individuals. A chariot came out from either side and seats were set up. ²² Judas had posted armed men in strategic positions, in case of a sudden treacherous move by the enemy. The leaders held their conference and

¹⁵ The WEBBE has 'heathen' in place of 'foreigners'.

¹⁶ The incident at Dessau (= Adasa, see 1M 7:40) is presumably the same as the one at Caphar-Salama, situated nearby (1M 7:31).

¹⁷ This verse is poorly transmitted. It could also be translated as "... but, late at night, he had been upset by an unexpected movement from the enemy," or "... but, at the critical moment, he had panicked at the sudden appearance of the enemy."

¹⁸ The NJB has 'bloodshed' in place of 'the sword', here following the WEBBE.

¹⁹ The NJB ends with, "to offer the Jews pledges of friendship and to accept theirs."

²⁰ In place of 'long', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'careful'.

²¹ The NJB has 'litter' in place of 'chariot', here following the WEBBE.

²² The WEBBE has 'convenient places' for 'strategic positions'.

ἐποίησαντο κοινολογίαν. ²³ διέτριβεν ὁ Νικάνωρ ἐν Ιερου-
λύμοις καὶ ἔπραττεν οὐδὲν ἄτοπον, τοὺς δὲ συναχθέντας
ἀγελαίους ὄχλους ἀπέλυσεν. ²⁴ καὶ εἶχεν τὸν Ιουδαν διὰ
παντὸς ἐν προσώπῳ, ψυχικῶς τῷ ἀνδρὶ προσεκέκλιτο.
²⁵ παρεκάλεσεν αὐτὸν γῆμαι καὶ παιδοποιήσασθαι.
ἐγάμησεν, εὐστάθησεν, ἐκοινώνησεν βίου.

²⁶ Ὁ δὲ Ἄλκιμος συνιδὼν τὴν πρὸς ἀλλήλους εὖνοιαν καὶ τὰς
γενομένας συνθήκας λαβὼν ἦκεν πρὸς τὸν Δημήτριον καὶ
ἔλεγεν τὸν Νικάνωρα ἀλλότρια φρονεῖν τῶν πραγμάτων· τὸν
γὰρ ἐπίβουλον τῆς βασιλείας Ιουδαν αὐτοῦ διάδοχον
ἀναδεῖξαι.

²⁷ ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ἔκδυμος γενόμενος καὶ ταῖς τοῦ παμπονήρου
διαβολαῖς ἐρεδισθεὶς ἔγραψεν Νικάνωρι φάσκων ὑπὲρ μὲν τῶν
συνθηκῶν βαρέως φέρειν, κελεύων δὲ τὸν Μακκαβαῖον
δέσμιον ἐξαποστέλλειν εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν ταχέως.

²⁸ προσπεσόντων δὲ τούτων τῷ Νικάνωρι συνεκέχυτο καὶ
δυσφόρως ἔφερεν, εἰ τὰ διεσταλμένα ἀθετήσῃ μηδὲν τάνδρὸς
ἡδίκηκός. ²⁹ ἐπεὶ δὲ τῷ βασιλεῖ ἀντιπράττειν οὐκ ἦν,
εὐκαιρὸν ἐτήρει στρατηγῆματι τοῦτ' ἐπιτελέσαι. ³⁰ ὁ δὲ

reached agreement. ²³ Nicanor took up residence in Jeru-
salem and did nothing out of place there; indeed, he sent
away the crowds that had flocked to join him. ²⁴ He kept
Judas constantly with him, becoming deeply attached to him
²⁵ and encouraged him to marry and have children. Judas
married, settled down and led a normal life.

²⁶ When Alcimus saw the goodwill between them, he went to
Demetrius with a copy of the treaty they had signed and told
him that Nicanor was disloyal to the interests of the state, and
was planning that Judas, an enemy of the realm, should be
his successor.

²⁷ The king flew into a rage; roused by the slanders of this
villain, he wrote to Nicanor, telling him of his strong
displeasure at these agreements and ordering him immedi-
ately to send Maccabaeus as prisoner to Antioch.

²⁸ When the letter reached Nicanor, he was very upset; for, he
disliked the idea of breaking an agreement with a man who
had done no wrong. ²⁹ But, since there was no way of
opposing the king, he waited for a time to carry out the order

²³ The WEBBE ends, "but dismissed the flocks of people that had gathered together."

²⁴ The WEBBE ends, "He had gained a hearty affection for the man."

²⁵ This subtle change in character of Judas and Nicanor is not to be found in 1M, where the author prefers a black and white contrast between the wicked gentile and the heroic Jew (1M 7:42).

²⁶ Alcimus failed to get civil power and feared that Judas would be made his successor as High Priest.

²⁷ The NJB ends with, "send Maccabaeus to Antioch in chains."

²⁸ In place of 'idea', the NJB has 'prospect'.

²⁹ A more literal translation would be, "... (to oppose the king) it was not easy, for a favourable chance (he spied) ..."

Μακκαβαῖος αὐστηρότερον διεξαγαγόντα συνιδὼν τὸν Νικάνορα τὰ πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν εἰδισμένην ἀπάντησιν ἀγροικότερον ἐσχηκότα νοήσας οὐκ ἀπὸ τοῦ βελτίστου τὴν αὐστηρίαν εἶναι συστρέψας οὐκ ὀλίγους τῶν περὶ αὐτὸν συνεκρύπτετο τὸν Νικάνορα. ³¹ συγγνοὺς δὲ ὁ ἕτερος ὅτι γενναίως ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἐστρατήγηται, παραγενόμενος ἐπὶ τὸ μέγιστον καὶ ἅγιον ἱερὸν τῶν ἱερέων τὰς καθηκούσας θυσίας προσαγόντων ἐκέλευσεν παραδιδόναι τὸν ἄνδρα. ³² τῶν δὲ μεθ' ὅρκων φασκόντων μὴ γινώσκειν ποῦ ποτ' ἔστιν ὁ ζητούμενος, ³³ προτείνας τὴν δεξιὰν ἐπὶ τὸν νεῶ ταῦτ' ὤμοσεν Ἐὰν μὴ δέσμιόν μοι τὸν Ἰουδαν παραδῶτε, τόνδε τὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ σηκὸν εἰς πεδίον ποιήσω καὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον κατασκάψω καὶ ἱερὸν ἐνταῦθα τῷ Διονύσῳ ἐπιφανὲς ἀναστήσω. ³⁴ τοσαῦτα δὲ εἰπὼν ἀπῆλθεν· οἱ δὲ ἱερεῖς προτείναντες τὰς χεῖρας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐπεκαλοῦντο τὸν διὰ παντὸς ὑπέρμαχον τοῦ ἔθνους ἡμῶν ταῦτα λέγοντες ³⁵ Σὺ κύριε τῶν ὅλων ἀπροσδεὴς ὑπάρχων ἠυδόκησας ναὸν τῆς σῆς σκηνώσεως ἐν ἡμῖν γενέσθαι. ³⁶ καὶ νῦν, ἅγιε παντὸς ἁγιασμοῦ κύριε, διατήρησον εἰς αἰῶνα ἀμίαντον τόνδε τὸν προσφάτως κεκαθαρισμένον οἶκον.

by strategy. ³⁰ Maccabaeus saw that Nicanor was treating him more sharply and that he spoke to him more abruptly, and he concluded that such sharpness could have no good motive. So, he gathered a considerable number of his men and hid from Nicanor. ³¹ The latter, realising that the man had nobly out-manoeuvred him, went to the greatest of holy temples when the priests were offering the usual sacrifices and ordered them to surrender him. ³² When they protested on oath that they did not know where the wanted man was, ³³ he stretched out his right hand towards the Temple and swore this oath, "If you do not hand Judas over to me as prisoner, I shall raze this dwelling of God to the ground, I shall demolish the altar and, on this very spot, I shall erect a splendid temple to Dionysus." ³⁴ With these words, he left. The priests stretched out their hands to heaven, calling on him who has at all times done battle for our nation, in these words: ³⁵ "O Lord in need of nothing, it has pleased you that the Temple where you dwell should be here with us. ³⁶ Now, therefore, holy Lord of all holiness, preserve forever from all profanation this House, so newly purified."

³⁰ The NJB has 'began to notice' in place of 'saw'.

³¹ In place of 'nobly', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'well and truly'.

³² The NJB ends with 'could be' in place of 'was'.

³³ Other readings for 'dwelling' (as NJB) are 'temple' (as WEBBE) and 'chapel'.

³⁴ In place of 'in these words', the NJB has 'this was their prayer'.

³⁵ After 'Lord', the WEBBE adds 'of the universe'.

³⁶ The WEBBE has 'recently cleansed' in place of 'newly purified'.

³⁷ Ραζις δέ τις τῶν ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων πρεσβυτέρων ἐμηνύθη τῷ Νικάνωρι ἀνὴρ φιλοπολίτης καὶ σφόδρα καλῶς ἀκούων καὶ κατὰ τὴν εὐνοίαν πατὴρ τῶν Ἰουδαίων προσαγορευόμενος. ³⁸ ἦν γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ἐμπροσθεν χρόνοις τῆς ἀμειξίας κρίσιν εἰσενηνεγμένος Ἰουδαισμοῦ, καὶ σῶμα καὶ ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ τοῦ Ἰουδαισμοῦ παραβεβλημένος μετὰ πάσης ἐκτενίας. ³⁹ βουλόμενος δὲ Νικάνωρ προόηλον ποιῆσαι ἣν εἶχεν πρὸς τοὺς Ἰουδαίους δυσμένειαν, ἀπέστειλεν στρατιώτας ὑπὲρ τοῦς πεντακοσίους συλλαβεῖν αὐτόν. ⁴⁰ ἔδοξεν γὰρ ἐκεῖνον συλλαβὼν τούτοις ἐνεργάσασθαι συμφοράν. ⁴¹ τῶν δὲ πληθῶν μελλόντων τὸν πύργον καταλαβέσθαι καὶ τὴν αὐλαίαν θύραν βιαζομένων καὶ κελευόντων πῦρ προσάγειν καὶ τὰς θύρας ὑφάπτειν, περικατάλημπος γενόμενος ὑπέβηκεν ἑαυτῷ τὸ ξίφος ⁴² εὐγενῶς θέλων ἀποθανεῖν ἥπερ τοῖς ἀλιτηρίοις ὑποχείριος γενέσθαι καὶ τῆς ἰδίας εὐγενείας ἀναξίως ὑβρισθῆναι. ⁴³ τῇ δὲ πληγῇ μὴ κατευδικτήσας διὰ τὴν τοῦ ἀγῶνος σπουδὴν καὶ τῶν ὄχλων ἔσω τῶν θυρωμάτων εἰσβαλλόντων ἀναδραμὼν γενναίως ἐπὶ τὸ

³⁷ Now, a man called Razis, one of the elders of Jerusalem, was denounced to Nicanor. He was a man who loved his countrymen and stood high in their esteem, and he was known as the father of the Jews because of his kindness. ³⁸ In the earlier days of the insurrection, he had been convicted of following the Jewish religion, and he had risked both life and limb for Judaism with the utmost zeal. ³⁹ Nicanor, wishing to make evident the enmity he had for the Jews, sent over five hundred soldiers to arrest him, ⁴⁰ reckoning that, if he were to eliminate this man, he would be dealing them a severe blow. ⁴¹ But, when the troops were on the point of capturing the tower and were forcing the doors of the court and calling for fire to set the doors on fire, he, finding himself surrounded on all sides, fell on his own sword, ⁴² nobly resolving to die rather than fall into the clutches of these villains and suffer outrages unworthy of his own nobleness. ⁴³ However, in the heat of the conflict, he missed his thrust and, while the troops swarmed in through the doorways, he ran nimbly

³⁷ Stylistically, the episode of vv. 37–46 (not found in 1M) recalls those of Eleazar and of the Seven Brothers and, with these, must have been borrowed without much alteration from Jason of Cyrene.

³⁸ For, “In the earlier days of the insurrection,” here following the NJB, the WEBBE has, “in the former times when there was no mingling with the Gentiles.” The Greek text here is difficult and neither translation seems entirely satisfactory.

³⁹ The NJB has ‘by way of demonstrating’ for ‘wishing to make evident’.

⁴⁰ The NRSV has ‘arrested’ in place of ‘eliminated’; the meaning of the Greek is uncertain.

⁴¹ More literal translations for ‘troops’ are ‘people’ or ‘multitudes’.

⁴² The NJB has ‘noble birth’ in place of ‘own nobleness’, here following the WEBBE.

⁴³ The WEBBE has ‘excitement of the struggle’ for ‘heat of the conflict’.

τείχος κατεκρήμνισεν ἑαυτὸν ἀνδρωδῶς εἰς τοὺς ὄχλους.
⁴⁴ τῶν δὲ ταχέως ἀναποδισάντων γενομένου διαστήματος
ἦλθεν κατὰ μέσον τὸν κενεῶνα. ⁴⁵ ἔτι δὲ ἔμπρους ὑπάρχων
καὶ πεπυρωμένος τοῖς θυμοῖς ἔξαναστὰς φερομένων κρουνηδὸν
τῶν αἱμάτων καὶ δυσχερῶν τῶν τραυμάτων ὄντων δρόμῳ
τοὺς ὄχλους διελθὼν καὶ στὰς ἐπὶ τινος πέτρας ἀπορῥῶγος
⁴⁶ παντελῶς ἔξαιμος ἤδη γινόμενος προβαλὼν τὰ ἔντερα καὶ
λαβὼν ἑκατέραις ταῖς χερσὶν ἐνέσεισε τοῖς ὄχλοις καὶ
ἐπικαλεσάμενος τὸν δεσπόζοντα τῆς ζωῆς καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος
ταῦτα αὐτῷ πάλιν ἀποδοῦναι τόνδε τὸν τρόπον μετήλλαξεν.

upstairs to the parapet and manfully threw himself down
among the troops. ⁴⁴ However, as they immediately drew
back, he fell into the middle of the empty space. ⁴⁵ Still
breathing, and blazing with anger, he struggled to his feet,
blood spurting in all directions and, despite his terrible
wounds, ran right through the crowd; then, taking his stand
on a steep rock, ⁴⁶ although he had now lost every drop of
blood, he tore out his entrails and, taking them in both hands,
flung them down on the crowd, calling on the Master of his
life and spirit to give them back to him one day. Thus he died.

⁴⁴ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, “But as they quickly gave back, a space was made, and he fell on the middle of his side.”

⁴⁵ The literal translation of ‘breathing’ is ‘having breath within him’.

⁴⁶ Suicide is rare in the Bible, occurring only in the gravest moral predicaments (see #2S 17:23); however, it is not expressly forbidden.

Μακκαβαίων Β' 15

¹ Ὁ δὲ Νικάνωρ μεταλαβὼν τοὺς περὶ τὸν Ἰουδαν ὄντας ἐν τοῖς κατὰ Σαμάρειαν τόποις ἐβουλεύσατο τῇ τῆς καταπαύσεως ἡμέρᾳ μετὰ πάσης ἀσφαλείας αὐτοῖς ἐπιβαλεῖν. ² τῶν δὲ κατὰ ἀνάγκην συνεπομένων αὐτῷ Ἰουδαίων λεγόντων Μηδαμῶς οὕτως ἀγρίως καὶ βαρβάρως ἀπολέσης, δόξαν δὲ ἀπομέρισον τῇ προτετιμημένῃ ὑπὸ τοῦ πάντα ἐφορῶντος μεθ' ἀγιότητος ἡμέρᾳ. ³ ὁ δὲ τρισαλιτήριος ἐπηρώτησεν εἰ ἔστιν ἐν οὐρανῷ δυνάστης ὁ προστεταχὼς ἅγειν τὴν τῶν σαββάτων ἡμέραν. ⁴ τῶν δ' ἀποφνηαμένων Ἔστιν ὁ κύριος ζῶν αὐτὸς ἐν οὐρανῷ δυνάστης ὁ κελεύσας ἀσκεῖν τὴν ἐβδομάδα. ⁵ ὁ δὲ ἕτερος Κἀγὼ φησιν δυνάστης ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ὁ προσταύσων αἶρειν ὅπλα καὶ τὰς βασιλικὰς χρείας ἐπιτελεῖν. ὅμως οὐ κατέσχεν ἐπιτελέσαι τὸ σχέτλιον αὐτοῦ βούλημα.

⁶ Καὶ ὁ μὲν Νικάνωρ μετὰ πάσης ἀλαζονείας ὑψαυχενῶν διεγνώκει κοινὸν τῶν περὶ τὸν Ἰουδαν συστήσασθαι τρόπαιον. ⁷ ὁ δὲ Μακκαβαῖος ἦν ἀδιαλείπτως πεποιθὼς μετὰ πάσης ἐλπίδος ἀντιλήψεως τεύξασθαι παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου ⁸ καὶ

2 MACCABEES 15

¹ But Nicanor heard that Judas and his men were in the neighbourhood of Samaria, so he decided to attack them, at no risk to himself, on the day of rest. ² Those Jews who had been compelled to follow him, said, "Do not massacre them in such a savage, barbarous way. Respect the day on which the All-Seeing has conferred a special holiness." ³ At this, the thrice-accursed scoundrel asked if there were in heaven a sovereign who had ordered the keeping of the Sabbath day. ⁴ When they answered, "The living Lord himself, the Heavenly Sovereign, has ordered the observance of the seventh day," ⁵ he retorted, "And I, as sovereign on earth, order you to take up arms and do the king's business." Nevertheless, he didn't prevail to execute his cruel plan.

⁶ While Nicanor, in his utter boastfulness and pride, was planning to erect a general trophy with spoils taken from Judas and his men, ⁷ Maccabaeus trusted unceasingly that the Lord would stand by him. ⁸ He urged his men not to be

2 MACCABEES 15

¹ Nicanor camped at Beth-Horon and Judas was at Adasa, between Beth-Horon and Jerusalem.

² The Jews in Nicanor's army wished to honour the Sabbath.

³ The WEBBE has 'wretch' in place of 'scoundrel'.

⁴ For the answer, the WEBBE reads, "There is the Lord, living himself as Sovereign in heaven, who told us observe the seventh day."

⁵ The NJB has, for the last sentence, "For all that, he did not manage to carry out his wicked plan."

⁶ The literal translation of 'in his utter boastfulness and pride' is 'carrying his neck high'.

⁷ For 'trusted unceasingly', here following the WEBBE, the NJB has 'remained firm in his conviction'.

⁸ The WEBBE has 'company' in place of 'men'.

παρεκάλει τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ μὴ δειλιάειν τὴν τῶν ἔθνῶν ἔφοδον ἔχοντας δὲ κατὰ νοῦν τὰ προγεγονότα αὐτοῖς ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ βοηθήματα καὶ τὰ νῦν προσδοκᾶν τὴν παρὰ τοῦ παντοκράτορος ἐσομένην αὐτοῖς νίκην. ⁹ καὶ παραμυθούμενος αὐτοὺς ἐκ τοῦ νόμου καὶ τῶν προφητῶν, προσυπομνήσας δὲ αὐτοὺς καὶ τοὺς ἀγῶνας, οὓς ἦσαν ἐκτετελεκότες, προθυμοτέρους αὐτοὺς κατέστησεν. ¹⁰ καὶ τοῖς θυμοῖς διεγείρας αὐτοὺς παρήγγειλεν ἅμα παρεπιδεικνύς τὴν τῶν ἔθνῶν ἀδυσίαν καὶ τὴν τῶν ὀρκῶν παράβασιν.

¹¹ ἕκαστον δὲ αὐτῶν καθοπλίσας οὐ τὴν ἀσπίδων καὶ λογχῶν ἀσφάλειαν, ὡς τὴν ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς λόγοις παρὰ κλήσιν καὶ προσεξηγησάμενος ὄνειρον ἀξιόπιστον ὑπαρ τι πάντα ἠύφρανε. ¹² ἦν δὲ ἡ τούτου θεωρία τοιαύδε· Ονιαν τὸν γενόμενον ἀρχιερέα, ἄνδρα καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθόν, αἰδήμενον μὲν τὴν ἀπάντησιν, πρᾶον δὲ τὸν τρόπον καὶ λαλιὰν προιέμενον πρεπόντως καὶ ἐκ παιδὸς ἐκμεμελετηκότα πάντα τὰ τῆς ἀρετῆς οἰκεῖα, τοῦτον τὰς χεῖρας προτείναντα κατεύχεσθαι τῷ παντὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων συστήματι. ¹³ εἶδ' οὕτως ἐπιφανῆναι ἄνδρα πολιᾶ καὶ δόξῃ διαφέροντα, θαυμαστὴν δὲ τινα καὶ μεγαλοπρεπεστάτην εἶναι τὴν περὶ αὐτὸν ὑπεροχὴν.

dismayed by the foreigners' attacks but, keeping in mind the help that had come to them from Heaven in the past, to be confident that, this time too, victory would be theirs with the help of the Almighty. ⁹ He put fresh heart into them by citing the Law and the Prophets and, by stirring up memories of the battles they had already won, he filled them with new enthusiasm. ¹⁰ Having thus aroused their courage, he ended his exhortation by demonstrating the treachery of the foreigners and how they had violated their oaths.

¹¹ Having armed each one of them not so much with the safety given by the shield and lance as with the confidence that springs from noble language, he encouraged them all by describing to them a convincing dream – a vision, as it were.

¹² What he had seen was this: Onias, the former High Priest, that paragon of men, modest of bearing and gentle of manners, suitably eloquent and trained from boyhood in the practice of every virtue – Onias was stretching out his hands and praying for the whole Jewish community. ¹³ Next, there appeared a man equally remarkable for his great age and dignity and invested with a marvellous and impressive air of

⁹ To the two basic groups, the 'Law' and the 'Prophets', the translator of Sirach will shortly be adding the 'other books' of the ancestors of which some, no doubt, were already regarded as 'holy books' by the time of the Maccabees (see 1M 12:9).

¹⁰ For 'treachery of the foreigners', the WEBBE has 'faithlessness of the heathen'.

¹¹ The phrase, 'a vision, as it were' follows the Recension of Lucian; the text of the LXX is uncertain.

¹² Onias continues to role of intercessor that he had already played during his lifetime (3:10ff, 4:5).

¹³ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "Then he saw a man appear, of venerable age and exceeding glory, and the dignity around him was wonderful and most majestic."

¹⁴ ἀποκριθέντα δὲ τὸν Ονιαν εἶπεῖν Ὁ φιλάδελφος οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ πολλὰ προσευχόμενος περὶ τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ τῆς ἁγίας πόλεως Ιερεμίας ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ προφήτης. ¹⁵ προτείναντα δὲ Ιερεμیان τὴν δεξιὰν παραδοῦναι τῷ Ιουδα ῥομφαίαν χρυσῇν, διδόντα δὲ προσφωνῆσαι τάδε ¹⁶ Λαβὲ τὴν ἁγίαν ῥομφαίαν δῶρον παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, δι' ἧς θραύσεις τοὺς ὑπεναντίους.

¹⁷ Παρακληθέντες δὲ τοῖς Ιουδοῦ λόγοις πάνυ καλοῖς καὶ δυναμένοις ἐπ' ἀρετὴν παρορμῆσαι καὶ ψυχὰς νέων ἐπανδρῶσαι διέγνωσαν μὴ στρατεύεσθαι, γενναίως δὲ ἐμφέρεισθαι καὶ μετὰ πάσης εὐανδρίας ἐμπλακέντες κρῖναι τὰ πράγματα διὰ τὸ καὶ τὴν πόλιν καὶ τὰ ἅγια καὶ τὸ ἱερὸν κινδυνεύειν. ¹⁸ ἦν γὰρ ὁ περὶ γυναικῶν καὶ τέκνων, ἔτι δὲ ἀδελφῶν καὶ συγγενῶν ἐν ἧττονι μέρει κείμενος αὐτοῖς, μέγιστος δὲ καὶ πρῶτος ὁ περὶ τοῦ καθηγιασμένου ναοῦ φόβος. ¹⁹ ἦν δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἐν τῇ πόλει κατειλημμένοις οὐ πάρεργος ἀγωνία ταρασσομένοις τῆς ἐν ὑπαίθρῳ προσβολῆς. ²⁰ καὶ πάντων ἥδη προσδοκόντων τὴν ἐσομένην κρίσιν καὶ ἥδη προσμειζάντων τῶν πολεμίων καὶ τῆς στρατιᾶς

majesty. ¹⁴ Onias answered, saying: "This is a man who loves his brothers and prays much for the people and the holy city – Jeremiah, the prophet of God." ¹⁵ Jeremiah then stretched out his right hand and presented Judas with a golden sword, saying as he gave it, ¹⁶ "Take this holy sword as a gift from God; with it, you will shatter the enemy."

¹⁷ Encouraged by the noble words of Judas, which had the power to incite virtue and give the young manly courage, they decided not to carry on a campaign but bravely to take the offensive and, in hand-to-hand fighting, to commit the result to the fortune of war, since the city, the sanctuary and the Temple were in danger. ¹⁸ Their concern for their wives and children, their brothers and relatives, had shrunk to minute importance; their greatest fear was for the consecrated Temple. ¹⁹ Those shut up in the city felt a similar anxiety, being alarmed about the encounter in the open country. ²⁰ Everyone now awaited the coming issue. The enemy had already concentrated their forces and stood

¹⁴ Jeremiah, having suffered so much for his people (Jr 11:19,21, 18:18ff, 20:1–2, 26) is most appropriately their intercessor. This function ascribed to Onias and Jeremiah is the first evidence of the belief in the prayers of the holy dead, on behalf of the living. It is related to belief in the resurrection (see Ps 16:10, 49:16, Jr 6–7).

¹⁵ The 'golden sword' was a sign that God approved the Jews' self-defence on the Sabbath.

¹⁶ The WEBBE has 'strike down the adversaries' in place of 'shatter the enemy'.

¹⁷ In place of 'not to carry on a campaign', here following the LXX, the NJB has 'not to entrench themselves in a camp', following the Recension of Lucian.

¹⁸ The WEBBE has here 'sanctuary' in place of 'Temple'.

¹⁹ The NJB adds 'forthcoming' before 'encounter'.

²⁰ For the battle formation, see 1M 6:35 and, for the cavalry on the flanks, 6:38. The parallel account in 1M does not mention the elephants (literally, 'animals') but does name the battlefield: Adasa (1M 7:40,45).

ἐκταγείσης καὶ τῶν θηρίων ἐπὶ μέρος εὐκαιρον ἀποκαταστα-
θέντων τῆς τε ἵππου κατὰ κέρας τεταγμένης ²¹ συνιδὼν ὁ
Μακκαβαῖος τὴν τῶν πληθῶν παρουσίαν καὶ τῶν ὀπλῶν τὴν
ποικίλην παρασκευὴν τὴν τε τῶν θηρίων ἀγριότητα
ἀνατείνας τὰς χεῖρας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐπεκαλέσατο τὸν
τερατοποιὸν κύριον γινώσκων ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν δι' ὀπλῶν, καθὼς
δὲ ἐὰν αὐτῷ κριθῇ, τοῖς ἀξίοις περιποιεῖται τὴν νίκην.
²² ἔλεγεν δὲ ἐπικαλούμενος τόνδε τὸν τρόπον Σὺ, δέσποτα,
ἀπέστειλας τὸν ἄγγελόν σου ἐπὶ Εζεκιου τοῦ βασιλέως τῆς
Ιουδαίας, καὶ ἀνείλεν ἐκ τῆς παρεμβολῆς Σενναχηριμ εἰς
ἐκατὸν ὀγδοήκοντα πέντε χιλιάδας· ²³ καὶ νῦν, δυνάστα τῶν
οὐρανῶν, ἀπόστειλον ἄγγελον ἀγαθὸν ἔμπροσθεν ἡμῶν εἰς
δέος καὶ τρόμον· ²⁴ μεγέθει βραχίονός σου καταπλαγείησαν
οἱ μετὰ βλασφημίας παραγινόμενοι ἐπὶ τὸν ἅγιόν σου λαόν.
καὶ οὗτος μὲν ἐν τούτοις ἔληξεν.

²⁵ Οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Νικάνορα μετὰ σαλπίγγων καὶ παιάνων
προσῆγον. ²⁶ οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Ιουδαν μετὰ ἐπικλήσεως καὶ
εὐχῶν συνέμειξαν τοῖς πολεμίοις. ²⁷ καὶ ταῖς μὲν χερσὶν
ἀγωνιζόμενοι, ταῖς δὲ καρδίαις πρὸς τὸν θεὸν εὐχόμενοι κατέ-
στρωσαν οὐδὲν ἥττον μυριάδων τριῶν καὶ πεντακισχιλίων τῇ

formed up in order of battle, with the elephants drawn up in
a strategic position and the cavalry disposed on the wings.

²¹ Maccabaeus took note of these forces confronting him, the
array of armour, and the savageness of the elephants; then,
raising his hands to heaven, he called on the Lord who works
miracles, knowing that it is not by force of arms but as he sees
fit to decide, that victory is granted to such as deserve it.

²² His prayer was worded thus: "You, Master, sent your
angel in the days of Hezekiah king of Judaea, and he
destroyed no less than one hundred and eighty-five
thousand of Sennacherib's army; ²³ now, again, Sovereign of
Heaven, send a good angel before us to bring terror and
dismay. ²⁴ Let them be struck down by the might of your arm,
since they have come with blasphemy on their lips to attack
your holy people." He finished with these words.

²⁵ Nicanor and his men advanced to the sound of trumpets
and war songs, ²⁶ but the men of Judas closed with the enemy
uttering invocations and prayers. ²⁷ Fighting with their hands
and praying to God with their hearts, they cut down at least
thirty-five thousand men and were greatly cheered by this

²¹ The literal translation of 'elephants' is 'animals' (as also in v. 20).

²² The WEBBE opens this verse with, "And calling upon God, he said this."

²³ In place of 'dismay', the WEBBE has 'trembling'.

²⁴ The NJB opens with 'May these men' in place of 'Let them', here following the WEBBE.

²⁵ The WEBBE, takes the last sentence of v. 24 as a prefix to this paragraph, reading, "As he finished these words, ²⁵ Nicanor and his company ..."

²⁶ In place of 'closed', the WEBBE has 'joined battle'.

²⁷ The NJB has 'in their hearts' in place of 'with their hearts', here following the WEBBE.

τοῦ Θεοῦ μεγάλως εὐφρανθέντες ἐπιφανεία. ²⁸ γενόμενοι δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς χρείας καὶ μετὰ χαρᾶς ἀναλύοντες ἐπέγνωσαν προπεπτωκότα Νικάνορα σὺν τῇ πανοπλίᾳ.

²⁹ γενομένης δὲ κραυγῆς καὶ ταραχῆς εὐλόγουν τὸν δυνάστην τῇ πατρίῳ φωνῇ. ³⁰ καὶ προσέταξεν ὁ καθ' ἅπαν σώματι καὶ ψυχῇ πρωταγωνιστῆς ὑπὲρ τῶν πολιτῶν ὁ τὴν τῆς ἡλικίας εὖνοιαν εἰς ὁμοεθνεῖς διαφυλάξας τὴν τοῦ Νικάνορος κεφαλὴν ἀποτεμόντας καὶ τὴν χεῖρα σὺν τῷ ὥμῳ φέρειν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα. ³¹ παραγερόμενος δὲ ἐκεῖ καὶ συγκαλέσας τοὺς ὁμοεθνεῖς καὶ τοὺς ἱερεῖς πρὸ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου στήσας μετεπέμψατο τοὺς ἐκ τῆς ἄκρας. ³² καὶ ἐπιδειξάμενος τὴν τοῦ μιαιοῦ Νικάνορος κεφαλὴν καὶ τὴν χεῖρα τοῦ δυσφήμου, ἣν ἐκτείνας ἐπὶ τὸν ἅγιον τοῦ παντοκράτορος οἶκον ἐμεγαλαύκησεν, ³³ καὶ τὴν γλῶσσαν τοῦ δυσσεβοῦς Νικάνορος ἐκτεμὼν ἔφη κατὰ μέρος δώσειν τοῖς ὀρνέοις, τὰ δ' ἐπίχειρα τῆς ἀνοίας κατέναντι τοῦ ναοῦ κρεμάσαι. ³⁴ οἱ δὲ πάντες εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εὐλόγησαν τὸν ἐπιφανῆ κύριον λέγοντες Εὐλογητὸς ὁ διατηρήσας τὸν ἑαυτοῦ τόπον ἀμίαντον.

manifestation of God. ²⁸ When the engagement was over and they were withdrawing in triumph, they recognised Nicanor, lying dead in full armour.

²⁹ With shouting and noise, they blessed the Sovereign Lord in their ancestral tongue. ³⁰ He who, as protagonist, had devoted himself, body and soul, to his citizens, and had kept the love he felt in youth for those of his own race, ordered Nicanor's head to be cut off, with his hand and arm, and taken to Jerusalem. ³¹ When he had arrived there, he called his countrymen together, set the priests before the altar and then sent for the people from the Citadel. ³² He showed them the head of the vile Nicanor and the hand that this infamous man had stretched out so insolently against the holy house of the Almighty. ³³ Then, cutting out godless Nicanor's tongue, he ordered it to be fed piecemeal to the birds and for the salary of his folly to be hung up in front of the Temple. ³⁴ At this, everyone sent blessing heavenwards to the glorious Lord, saying, "Blessed be he who has preserved his holy place from pollution!"

²⁸ The WEBBE has 'with joy' in place of 'in triumph', here following the NJB.

²⁹ The 'ancestral tongue' was Hebrew; Palestinian Jews spoke Aramaic but formal prayer, using the language of Scripture, was often in Hebrew.

³⁰ The word 'protagonist' (the actor who plays the leading role in a drama) does not occur elsewhere in the Bible; the NRSV has 'defender' instead.

³¹ The citadel on the Ophel hill was held by the Syrians (1M 1:33, 6:18) but the Jews had built another fort (1M 4:60).

³² The NJB has 'abominable' in place of 'vile', here following the WEBBE.

³³ The phrase 'the salary' (τὰ δ' ἐπίχειρα) also means 'the arm' and makes a play on words with 'the hand' (χεῖρα) in the previous verse.

³⁴ For this verse, the WEBBE reads, "They all, looking up to heaven, blessed the Lord who had manifested himself, saying, 'Blessed is he who has preserved his own place undefiled!'"

³⁵ ἐξέδησεν δὲ τὴν τοῦ Νικάνορος προτομὴν ἐκ τῆς ἄκρας ἐπὶ δὴλον πᾶσιν καὶ φανερόν τῆς τοῦ κυρίου βοηθείας σημεῖον.

³⁶ ἐδογματίσαν δὲ πάντες μετὰ κοινοῦ ψηφίσματος μηδαμῶς ἑᾶσαι ἀπαρασήμαντον τήνδε τὴν ἡμέραν, ἔχειν δὲ ἐπίσημον τὴν τρισκαιδεκάτην τοῦ δωδεκάτου μηνὸς – Ἀδαρ λέγεται τῇ Συριακῇ φωνῇ – πρὸ μιᾶς ἡμέρας τῆς Μαρδοχαικῆς ἡμέρας.

³⁷ Τῶν οὖν κατὰ Νικάνορα χωρησάντων οὕτως καὶ ἀπ' ἐκείνων τῶν καιρῶν κρατηθείσης τῆς πόλεως ὑπὸ τῶν Εβραίων καὶ αὐτὸς αὐτόθι τὸν λόγον καταπαύσω. ³⁸ καὶ εἰ μὲν καλῶς εὐδίκτως τῇ συντάξει, τοῦτο καὶ αὐτὸς ἤθελον· εἰ δὲ εὐτελῶς καὶ μετρίως, τοῦτο ἐφικτὸν ἦν μοι. ³⁹ καθάπερ γὰρ οἶνον κατὰ μόνας πίνειν, ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ ὕδωρ πάλιν πολέμιον· ὃν δὲ τρόπον οἶνος ὕδατι συγκερασθεῖς ἡδὺς καὶ ἐπιτερπὴ τὴν χάριν ἀποτελεῖ, οὕτως καὶ τὸ τῆς κατασκευῆς τοῦ λόγου τέρπει τὰς ἀκοὰς τῶν ἐντυγχανόντων τῇ συντάξει. ἐνταῦθα δὲ ἔσται ἡ τελευτή.

³⁵ He hung Nicanor's head and shoulder from the Citadel, as a clear and evident sign to all of the help of the Lord. ³⁶ They all ordained, by common decree, never to let that day go by undistinguished, but to mark with honour the thirteenth day of the twelfth month – which is called Adar in the Aramaic language – it is the day before of what is called the Day of Mordecai.

³⁷ This is how matters turned out with Nicanor and since, from that time, the city has been in the possession of the Hebrews, I shall end my own work here too. ³⁸ If it is well composed and to the point, that is just what I wanted; if it is worthless and mediocre, that is all I could manage. ³⁹ Just as it is distasteful to drink wine by itself, or again water alone, whereas wine mixed with water is pleasant and produces a delightful sense of well-being, so skill in presenting the incidents is what delights the understanding of those who read the book. Here is the end.

³⁵ Hanging of the head from the Citadel seems unlikely, since the Acra was not cleared of the Syrians until nine years later (1M 13:51). The anachronism has been compared to that in 1S 17:54. Here, too, it may be a later addition, since the author describes how Nicanor's remains were put on display (v. 33).

³⁶ The literal translation of 'Aramaic' is 'Syriac', a word that the LXX renders as 'Aramaic' in 2K 18:26, Ezr 4:7 and Dn 2:4.

³⁷ By 'city', the author means the religious city (Mount Zion in 1M), since the Citadel, remaining in Syrian hands, does not concern him. Judas' victory over Nicanor has saved the sanctuary, the threats to which have now been removed, and the author, having attained the aim that he intended, brings his work to a close.

³⁸ The WEBBE has 'poorly done' in place of 'worthless'.

³⁹ The NJB has 'injurious' in place of 'distasteful', here following the WEBBE, which gives 'hurtful' as an alternative in a footnote.