

BOOK 12

**FROM THE DEATH OF
ALEXANDER THE GREAT TO
THE DEATH OF JUDAS
MACCABEUS**

Flavius Josephus

Chapter 1

Ptolemy Took Jerusalem and Judea

1. Now when Alexander, king of Macedon, had put an end to the dominion of the Persians, and had settled the affairs in Judea after the forementioned manner, he ended his life. And as his government fell among many, Antigonus obtained Asia, Seleucus Babylon; and of the other nations which were there, Lysimachus governed the Hellespont, and Cassander possessed Macedonia; as did Ptolemy the son of Lagus seize upon Egypt. And while these princes ambitiously strove one against another, every one for his own principality, it came to pass that there were continual wars, and those lasting wars too; and the cities were sufferers, and lost a great many of their inhabitants in these times of distress, insomuch that all Syria, by the means of Ptolemy the son of Lagus, underwent the reverse of that denomination of Savior, which he then had. He also seized upon Jerusalem, and for that end made use of deceit and treachery; for as he came into the city on a sabbath day, as if he would offer sacrifices (1) he, without any trouble, gained the city, while the Jews did not oppose him, for they did not suspect him to be their enemy; and he gained it thus, because they were free from suspicion of him, and because on that day they were at rest and quietness; and when he had gained it, he ruled over it in a cruel manner. Nay, Agatharchides of Cnidus, who wrote the acts of Alexander's successors, reproaches us with superstition, as if we, by it, had lost our liberty; where he says thus: "There is a nation called the nation of the Jews, who inhabit a city strong and great, named Jerusalem. These men took no care, but let it come into the hands of Ptolemy, as not willing to take arms, and thereby they submitted to be under a hard master, by reason of their unseasonable superstition." This is what Agatharchides relates of our nation. But when Ptolemy had taken a great many captives, both from the mountainous parts of Judea, and from the places about Jerusalem and Samaria, and the places

near Mount Gerizzim, he led them all into Egypt, (2) and settled them there. And as he knew that the people of Jerusalem were most faithful in the observation of oaths and covenants; and this from the answer they made to Alexander, when he sent an embassage to them, after he had beaten Darius in battle; so he distributed many of them into garrisons, and at Alexandria gave them equal privileges of citizens with the Macedonians themselves; and required of them to take their oaths, that they would keep their fidelity to the posterity of those who committed these places to their care. Nay, there were not a few other Jews who, of their own accord, went into Egypt, as invited by the goodness of the soil, and by the liberality of Ptolemy. However, there were disorders among their posterity, with relation to the Samaritans, on account of their resolution to preserve that conduct of life which was delivered to them by their forefathers, and they thereupon contended one with another, while those of Jerusalem said that their temple was holy, and resolved to send their sacrifices thither; but the Samaritans were resolved that they should be sent to Mount Gerizzim.

Footnotes:

1. Here Josephus uses the very word *koinoptagia*, "eating things common," for "eating things unclean;" as does our New Testament, Acts 10:14, 15, 28; 11:8, 9; Romans 14:14,
2. The great number of these Jews and Samaritans that were formerly carried into Egypt by Alexander, and now by Ptolemy the son of Lagus, appear afterwards in the vast multitude who as we shall see presently, were soon ransomed by Philadelphus, and by him made free, before he sent for the seventy-two interpreters; in the many garrisons and other soldiers of that nation in Egypt; in the famous settlement of Jews, and the number of their synagogues at Alexandria, long afterward; and in the vehement contention between the Jews and Samaritans under Philometer, about the place appointed for public worship in the law of Moses, whether at the Jewish temple of Jerusalem, or at the Samaritan

temple of Gerizzim; of all which our author treats hereafter. And as to the Samaritans carried into Egypt under the same princes, Scaliger supposes that those who have a great synagogue at Cairo, as also those whom the Arabic geographer speaks of as having seized on an island in the Red Sea, are remains of them at this very day, as the notes here inform us.

Chapter 2

Ptolemy Philadelphus Procured the Laws of the Jews to Be Translated into the Greek Tongue

1. When Alexander had reigned twelve years, and after him Ptolemy Soter forty years, Philadelphus then took the kingdom of Egypt, and held it forty years within one. He procured the law to be interpreted, and set free those that were come from Jerusalem into Egypt, and were in slavery there, who were a hundred and twenty thousand. The occasion was this: Demetrius Phalerius, who was library keeper to the king, was now endeavoring, if it were possible, to gather together all the books that were in the habitable earth, and buying whatsoever was any where valuable, or agreeable to the king's inclination, (who was very earnestly set upon collecting of books,) to which inclination of his Demetrius was zealously subservient. And when once Ptolemy asked him how many ten thousands of books he had collected, he replied, that he had already about twenty times ten thousand; but that, in a little time, he should have fifty times ten thousand. But he said he had been informed that there were many books of laws among the Jews worthy of inquiring after, and worthy of the king's library, but which, being written in characters and in a dialect of their own, will cause no small pains in getting them translated into the Greek tongue; (1) that the character in which they are written seems to be like to that which is the proper character of the Syrians, and that its sound, when pronounced, is like theirs also; and that this sound appears to be peculiar to themselves. Wherefore he said that nothing hindered why they might not get those books to be translated also; for while nothing is wanting that is necessary for that purpose, we may have their books also in this library. So the king thought that Demetrius was very zealous to procure him abundance of books, and that he suggested what was exceeding proper for him to do; and therefore he wrote to the Jewish high priest, that he should act accordingly.

2. Now there was one Aristeus, who was among the king's most intimate friends, and on account of his modesty very acceptable to him. This Aristeus resolved frequently, and that before now, to petition the king that he would set all the captive Jews in his kingdom free; and he thought this to be a convenient opportunity for the making that petition. So he discoursed, in the first place, with the captains of the king's guards, Sosibius of Tarentum, and Andreas, and persuaded them to assist him in what he was going to intercede with the king for. Accordingly Aristeus embraced the same opinion with those that have been before mentioned, and went to the king, and made the following speech to him: "It is not fit for us, O king, to overlook things hastily, or to deceive ourselves, but to lay the truth open. For since we have determined not only to get the laws of the Jews transcribed, but interpreted also, for thy satisfaction, by what means can we do this, while so many of the Jews are now slaves in thy kingdom? Do thou then what will be agreeable to thy magnanimity, and to thy good nature: free them from the miserable condition they are in, because that God, who supporteth thy kingdom, was the author of their laws as I have learned by particular inquiry; for both these people, and we also, worship the same God the framer of all things. We call him, and that truly, by the name of GREEK, [or life, or Jupiter,] because he breathes life into all men. Wherefore do thou restore these men to their own country, and this do to the honor of God, because these men pay a peculiarly excellent worship to him. And know this further, that though I be not of kin to them by birth, nor one of the same country with them, yet do I desire these favors to be done them, since all men are the workmanship of God; and I am sensible that he is well-pleased with those that do good. I do therefore put up this petition to thee, to do good to them."

3. When Aristeus was saying thus, the king looked upon him with a cheerful and joyful countenance, and said, "How many ten thousands dost thou suppose there are of such as want to be made free?" To which Andreas replied, as he stood by, and said, "A few more than ten times ten thousand."

The king made answer, "And is this a small gift that thou askest, Aristeus?" But Sosibius, and the rest that stood by, said that he ought to offer such a thank-offering as was worthy of his greatness of soul, to that God who had given him his kingdom. With this answer he was much pleased; and gave order, that when they paid the soldiers their wages, they should lay down [a hundred and] twenty drachmas (2) for every one of the slaves? And he promised to publish a magnificent decree, about what they requested, which should confirm what Aristeus had proposed, and especially what God willed should be done; whereby he said he would not only set those free who had been led away captive by his father and his army, but those who were in this kingdom before, and those also, if any such there were, who had been brought away since. And when they said that their redemption money would amount to above four hundred talents, he granted it. A copy of which decree I have determined to preserve, that the magnanimity of this king may be made known. Its contents were as follows: "Let ail those who were soldiers under our father, and who, when they overran Syria and Phoenicia, and laid waste Judea, took the Jews captives, and made them slaves, and brought them into our cities, and into this country, and then sold them; as also all those that were in my kingdom before them, and if there be any that have been lately brought thither, - be made free by those that possess them; and let them accept of [a hundred and] twenty drachmas for every slave. And let the soldiers receive this redemption money with their pay, but the rest out of the king's treasury: for I suppose that they were made captives without our father's consent, and against equity; and that their country was harassed by the insolence of the soldiers, and that, by removing them into Egypt, the soldiers have made a great profit by them. Out of regard therefore to justice, and out of pity to those that have been tyrannized over, contrary to equity, I enjoin those that have such Jews in their service to set them at liberty, upon the receipt of the before-mentioned sum; and that no one use any deceit about them, but obey what is here commanded. And I will that they give in their names within three days after the publication of this edict, to such as are appointed to execute the same, and to produce the slaves before them also,

for I think it will be for the advantage of my affairs. And let every one that will inform against those that do not obey this decree, and I will that their estates be confiscated into the king's treasury." When this decree was read to the king, it at first contained the rest that is here inserted, and omitted only those Jews that had formerly been brought, and those brought afterwards, which had not been distinctly mentioned; so he added these clauses out of his humanity, and with great generosity. He also gave order that the payment, which was likely to be done in a hurry, should be divided among the king's ministers, and among the officers of his treasury. When this was over, what the king had decreed was quickly brought to a conclusion; and this in no more than seven days' time, the number of the talents paid for the captives being above four hundred and sixty, and this, because their masters required the [hundred and] twenty drachmas for the children also, the king having, in effect, commanded that these should be paid for, when he said in his decree, that they should receive the forementioned sum for every slave.

4. Now when this had been done after so magnificent a manner, according to the king's inclinations, he gave order to Demetrius to give him in writing his sentiments concerning the transcribing of the Jewish books; for no part of the administration is done rashly by these kings, but all things are managed with great circumspection. On which account I have subjoined a copy of these epistles, and set down the multitude of the vessels sent as gifts [to Jerusalem], and the construction of every one, that the exactness of the artificers' workmanship, as it appeared to those that saw them, and which workman made every vessel, may be made manifest, and. this on account of the excellency of the vessels themselves. Now the copy of the epistle was to this purpose: "Demetrius to the great king. When thou, O king, gavest me a charge concerning the collection of books that were wanting to fill your library, and concerning the care that ought to be taken about such as are imperfect, I have used the utmost diligence about those matters. And I let you know, that we want the books of the Jewish legislation, with some others; for they are written in the Hebrew characters, and being in the

language of that nation, are to us unknown. It hath also happened to them, that they have been transcribed more carelessly than they ought to have been, because they have not had hitherto royal care taken about them. Now it is necessary that thou shouldst have accurate copies of them. And indeed this legislation is full of hidden wisdom, and entirely blameless, as being the legislation of God; for which cause it is, as Hecateus of Abdera says, that the poets and historians make no mention of it, nor of those men who lead their lives according to it, since it is a holy law, and ought not to be published by profane mouths. If then it please thee, O king, thou mayst write to the high priest of the Jews, to send six of the elders out of every tribe, and those such as are most skillful of the laws, that by their means we may learn the clear and agreeing sense of these books, and may obtain an accurate interpretation of their contents, and so may have such a collection of these as may be suitable to thy desire."

5. When this epistle was sent to the king, he commanded that an epistle should be drawn up for Eleazar, the Jewish high priest, concerning these matters; and that they should inform him of the release of the Jews that had been in slavery among them. He also sent fifty talents of gold for the making of large basons, and vials, and cups, and an immense quantity of precious stones. He also gave order to those who had the custody of the chest that contained those stones, to give the artificers leave to choose out what sorts of them they pleased. He withal appointed, that a hundred talents in money should be sent to the temple for sacrifices, and for other uses. Now I will give a description of these vessels, and the manner of their construction, but not till after I have set down a copy of the epistle which was written to Eleazar the high priest, who had obtained that dignity on the occasion following: When Onias the high priest was dead, his son Simon became his successor. He was called Simon the Just (3) because of both his piety towards God, and his kind disposition to those of his own nation. When he was dead, and had left a young son, who was called Onias, Simon's brother Eleazar, of whom we are speaking, took the high priesthood; and he it was to

whom Ptolemy wrote, and that in the manner following: "King Ptolemy to Eleazar the high priest, sendeth greeting. There are many Jews who now dwell in my kingdom, whom the Persians, when they were in power, carried captives. These were honored by my father; some of them he placed in the army, and gave them greater pay than ordinary; to others of them, when they came with him into Egypt, he committed his garrisons, and the guarding of them, that they might be a terror to the Egyptians. And when I had taken the government, I treated all men with humanity, and especially those that are thy fellow citizens, of whom I have set free above a hundred thousand that were slaves, and paid the price of their redemption to their masters out of my own revenues; and those that are of a fit age, I have admitted into them number of my soldiers. And for such as are capable of being faithful to me, and proper for my court, I have put them in such a post, as thinking this [kindness done to them] to be a very great and an acceptable gift, which I devote to God for his providence over me. And as I am desirous to do what will be grateful to these, and to all the other Jews in the habitable earth, I have determined to procure an interpretation of your law, and to have it translated out of Hebrew into Greek, and to be deposited in my library. Thou wilt therefore do well to choose out and send to me men of a good character, who are now elders in age, and six in number out of every tribe. These, by their age, must be skillful in the laws, and of abilities to make an accurate interpretation of them; and when this shall be finished, I shall think that I have done a work glorious to myself. And I have sent to thee Andreas, the captain of my guard, and Aristeus, men whom I have in very great esteem; by whom I have sent those first-fruits which I have dedicated to the temple, and to the sacrifices, and to other uses, to the value of a hundred talents. And if thou wilt send to us, to let us know what thou wouldst have further, thou wilt do a thing acceptable to me."

6. When this epistle of the king was brought to Eleazar, he wrote an answer to it with all the respect possible: "Eleazar the high priest to king Ptolemy, sendeth greeting. If thou and thy queen Arsinoe, (4) and thy

children, be well, we are entirely satisfied. When we received thy epistle, we greatly rejoiced at thy intentions; and when the multitude were gathered together, we read it to them, and thereby made them sensible of the piety thou hast towards God. We also showed them the twenty vials of gold, and thirty of silver, and the five large basons, and the table for the shew-bread; as also the hundred talents for the sacrifices, and for the making what shall be needful at the temple; which things Andreas and Aristeus, those most honored friends of thine, have brought us; and truly they are persons of an excellent character, and of great learning, and worthy of thy virtue. Know then that we will gratify thee in what is for thy advantage, though we do what we used not to do before; for we ought to make a return for the numerous acts of kindness which thou hast done to our countrymen. We immediately, therefore, offered sacrifices for thee and thy sister, with thy children and friends; and the multitude made prayers, that thy affairs may be to thy mind, and that thy kingdom may be preserved in peace, and that the translation of our law may come to the conclusion thou desirest, and be for thy advantage. We have also chosen six elders out of every tribe, whom we have sent, and the law with them. It will be thy part, out of thy piety and justice, to send back the law, when it hath been translated, and to return those to us that bring it in safety. Farewell."

7. This was the reply which the high priest made. But it does not seem to me to be necessary to set down the names of the seventy [two] elders who were sent by Eleazar, and carried the law, which yet were subjoined at the end of the epistle. However, I thought it not improper to give an account of those very valuable and artificially contrived vessels which the king sent to God, that all may see how great a regard the king had for God; for the king allowed a vast deal of expenses for these vessels, and came often to the workmen, and viewed their works, and suffered nothing of carelessness or negligence to be any damage to their operations. And I will relate how rich they were as well as I am able, although perhaps the nature of this history may not require such a description; but I imagine I shall thereby recommend

the elegant taste and magnanimity of this king to those that read this history.

8. And first I will describe what belongs to the table. It was indeed in the king's mind to make this table vastly large in its dimensions; but then he gave orders that they should learn what was the magnitude of the table which was already at Jerusalem, and how large it was, and whether there was a possibility of making one larger than it. And when he was informed how large that was which was already there, and that nothing hindered but a larger might be made, he said that he was willing to have one made that should be five times as large as the present table; but his fear was, that it might be then useless in their sacred ministrations by its too great largeness; for he desired that the gifts he presented them should not only be there for show, but should be useful also in their sacred ministrations. According to which reasoning, that the former table was made of so moderate a size for use, and not for want of gold, he resolved that he would not exceed the former table in largeness; but would make it exceed it in the variety and elegancy of its materials. And as he was sagacious in observing the nature of all things, and in having a just notion of what was new and surprising, and where there was no sculptures, he would invent such as were proper by his own skill, and would show them to the workmen, he commanded that such sculptures should now be made, and that those which were delineated should be most accurately formed by a constant regard to their delineation.

9. When therefore the workmen had undertaken to make the table, they framed it in length two cubits [and a half], in breadth one cubit, and in height one cubit and a half; and the entire structure of the work was of gold. They withal made a crown of a hand-breadth round it, with wave-work wreathed about it, and with an engraving which imitated a cord, and was admirably turned on its three parts; for as they were of a triangular figure, every angle had the same disposition of its sculptures, that when you turned them about, the very same form of them was turned about without any variation. Now that part of the crown-work that was enclosed under the table had its

sculptures very beautiful; but that part which went round on the outside was more elaborately adorned with most beautiful ornaments, because it was exposed to sight, and to the view of the spectators; for which reason it was that both those sides which were extant above the rest were acute, and none of the angles, which we before told you were three, appeared less than another, when the table was turned about. Now into the cordwork thus turned were precious stones inserted, in rows parallel one to the other, enclosed in golden buttons, which had ouches in them; but the parts which were on the side of the crown, and were exposed to the sight, were adorned with a row of oval figures obliquely placed, of the most excellent sort of precious stones, which imitated rods laid close, and encompassed the table round about. But under these oval figures, thus engraven, the workmen had put a crown all round it, where the nature of all sorts of fruit was represented, insomuch that the bunches of grapes hung up. And when they had made the stones to represent all the kinds of fruit before mentioned, and that each in its proper color, they made them fast with gold round the whole table. The like disposition of the oval figures, and of the engraved rods, was framed under the crown, that the table might on each side show the same appearance of variety and elegance of its ornaments; so that neither the position of the wave-work nor of the crown might be different, although the table were turned on the other side, but that the prospect of the same artificial contrivances might be extended as far as the feet; for there was made a plate of gold four fingers broad, through the entire breadth of the table, into which they inserted the feet, and then fastened them to the table by buttons and button-holes, at the place where the crown was situate, that so on what side soever of the table one should stand, it might exhibit the very same view of the exquisite workmanship, and of the vast expeses bestowed upon it: but upon the table itself they engraven a meander, inserting into it very valuable stones in the middle like stars, of various colors; the carbuncle and the emerald, each of which sent out agreeable rays of light to the spectators; with such stones of other sorts also as were most curious and best esteemed, as being most precious in their kind. Hard by this meander a texture of net-work

ran round it, the middle of which appeared like a rhombus, into which were inserted rock-crystal and amber, which, by the great resemblance of the appearance they made, gave wonderful delight to those that saw them. The chapters of the feet imitated the first buddings of lilies, while their leaves were bent and laid under the table, but so that the chives were seen standing upright within them. Their bases were made of a carbuncle; and the place at the bottom, which rested on that carbuncle, was one palm deep, and eight fingers in breadth. Now they had engraven upon it with a very fine tool, and with a great deal of pains, a branch of ivy and tendrils of the vine, sending forth clusters of grapes, that you would guess they were nowise different from real tendrils; for they were so very thin, and so very far extended at their extremities, that they were moved with the wind, and made one believe that they were the product of nature, and not the representation of art. They also made the entire workmanship of the table appear to be threefold, while the joints of the several parts were so united together as to be invisible, and the places where they joined could not be distinguished. Now the thickness of the table was not less than half a cubit. So that this gift, by the king's great generosity, by the great value of the materials, and the variety of its exquisite structure, and the artificer's skill in imitating nature with graying tools, was at length brought to perfection, while the king was very desirous, that though in largeness it were not to be different from that which was already dedicated to God, yet that in exquisite workmanship, and the novelty of the contrivances, and in the splendor of its construction, it should far exceed it, and be more illustrious than that was.

10. Now of the cisterns of gold there were two, whose sculpture was of scale-work, from its basis to its belt-like circle, with various sorts of stones enchased in the spiral circles. Next to which there was upon it a meander of a cubit in height; it was composed of stones of all sorts of colors. And next to this was the rod-work engraven; and next to that was a rhombus in a texture of net-work, drawn out to the brim of the basin, while small shields, made of stones, beautiful in their kind, and of four fingers' depth, filled up the middle

parts. About the top of the basin were wreathed the leaves of lilies, and of the convolvulus, and the tendrils of vines in a circular manner. And this was the construction of the two cisterns of gold, each containing two firkins. But those which were of silver were much more bright and splendid than looking-glasses, and you might in them see the images that fell upon them more plainly than in the other. The king also ordered thirty vials; those of which the parts that were of gold, and filled up with precious stones, were shadowed over with the leaves of ivy and of vines, artificially engraven. And these were the vessels that were after an extraordinary manner brought to this perfection, partly by the skill of the workmen, who were admirable in such fine work, but much more by the diligence and generosity of the king, who not only supplied the artificers abundantly, and with great generosity, with what they wanted, but he forbade public audiences for the time, and came and stood by the workmen, and saw the whole operation. And this was the cause why the workmen were so accurate in their performance, because they had regard to the king, and to his great concern about the vessels, and so the more indefatigably kept close to the work.

11. And these were what gifts were sent by Ptolemy to Jerusalem, and dedicated to God there. But when Eleazar the high priest had devoted them to God, and had paid due respect to those that brought them, and had given them presents to be carried to the king, he dismissed them. And when they were come to Alexandria, and Ptolemy heard that they were come, and that the seventy elders were come also, he presently sent for Andreas and Aristens, his ambassadors, who came to him, and delivered him the epistle which they brought him from the high priest, and made answer to all the questions he put to them by word of mouth. He then made haste to meet the elders that came from Jerusalem for the interpretation of the laws; and he gave command, that every body who came on other occasions should be sent away, which was a thing surprising, and what he did not use to do; for those that were drawn thither upon such occasions used to come to him on the fifth day, but ambassadors at the month's end. But when he had sent those away,

he waited for these that were sent by Eleazar; but as the old men came in with the presents, which the high priest had given them to bring to the king, and with the membranes, upon which they had their laws written in golden letters (5) he put questions to them concerning those books; and when they had taken off the covers wherein they were wrapt up, they showed him the membranes. So the king stood admiring the thinness of those membranes, and the exactness of the junctures, which could not be perceived; (so exactly were they connected one with another;) and this he did for a considerable time. He then said that he returned them thanks for coming to him, and still greater thanks to him that sent them; and, above all, to that God whose laws they appeared to be. Then did the elders, and those that were present with them, cry out with one voice, and wished all happiness to the king. Upon which he fell into tears by the violence of the pleasure he had, it being natural to men to afford the same indications in great joy that they do under sorrows. And when he had bid them deliver the books to those that were appointed to receive them, he saluted the men, and said that it was but just to discourse, in the first place, of the errand they were sent about, and then to address himself to themselves. He promised, however, that he would make this day on which they came to him remarkable and eminent every year through the whole course of his life; for their coming to him, and the victory which he gained over Antigonus by sea, proved to be on the very same day. He also gave orders that they should sup with him; and gave it in charge that they should have excellent lodgings provided for them in the upper part of the city.

12. Now he that was appointed to take care of the reception of strangers, Nicanor by name, called for Dorotheus, whose duty it was to make provision for them, and bid him prepare for every one of them what should be requisite for their diet and way of living; which thing was ordered by the king after this manner: he took care that those that belonged to every city, which did not use the same way of living, that all things should be prepared for them according to the custom of those that came to him, that, being feasted

according to the usual method of their own way of living, they might be the better pleased, and might not be uneasy at any thing done to them from which they were naturally averse. And this was now done in the case of these men by Dorotheus, who was put into this office because of his great skill in such matters belonging to common life; for he took care of all such matters as concerned the reception of strangers, and appointed them double seats for them to sit on, according as the king had commanded him to do; for he had commanded that half of their seats should be set at his right hand, and the other half behind his table, and took care that no respect should be omitted that could be shown them. And when they were thus set down, he bid Dorotheus to minister to all those that were come to him from Judea, after the manner they used to be ministered to; for which cause he sent away their sacred heralds, and those that slew the sacrifices, and the rest that used to say grace; but called to one of those that were come to him, whose name was Eleazar, who was a priest, and desired him to say grace; (6) who then stood in the midst of them, and prayed, that all prosperity might attend the king, and those that were his subjects. Upon which an acclamation was made by the whole company, with joy and a great noise; and when that was over, they fell to eating their supper, and to the enjoyment of what was set before them. And at a little interval afterward, when the king thought a sufficient time had been interposed, he began to talk philosophically to them, and he asked every one of them a philosophical question (7) and such a one as might give light in those inquiries; and when they had explained all the problems that had been proposed by the king about every point, he was well-pleased with their answers. This took up the twelve days in which they were treated; and he that pleases may learn the particular questions in that book of Aristeus, which he wrote on this very occasion.

13. And while not the king only, but the philosopher Menedemus also, admired them, and said that all things were governed by Providence, and that it was probable that thence it was that such force or beauty was discovered in these men's words, they then left off asking any more such questions. But the

king said that he had gained very great advantages by their coming, for that he had received this profit from them, that he had learned how he ought to rule his subjects. And he gave order that they should have every one three talents given them, and that those that were to conduct them to their lodging should do it. Accordingly, when three days were over, Demetrius took them, and went over the causeway seven furlongs long: it was a bank in the sea to an island. And when they had gone over the bridge, he proceeded to the northern parts, and showed them where they should meet, which was in a house that was built near the shore, and was a quiet place, and fit for their discoursing together about their work. When he had brought them thither, he entreated them (now they had all things about them which they wanted for the interpretation of their law) that they would suffer nothing to interrupt them in their work. Accordingly, they made an accurate interpretation, with great zeal and great pains, and this they continued to do till the ninth hour of the day; after which time they relaxed, and took care of their body, while their food was provided for them in great plenty: besides, Dorotheus, at the king's command, brought them a great deal of what was provided for the king himself. But in the morning they came to the court and saluted Ptolemy, and then went away to their former place, where, when they had washed their hands, (8) and purified themselves, they betook themselves to the interpretation of the laws. Now when the law was transcribed, and the labor of interpretation was over, which came to its conclusion in seventy-two days, Demetrius gathered all the Jews together to the place where the laws were translated, and where the interpreters were, and read them over. The multitude did also approve of those elders that were the interpreters of the law. They withal commended Demetrius for his proposal, as the inventor of what was greatly for their happiness; and they desired that he would give leave to their rulers also to read the law. Moreover, they all, both the priest and the ancientest of the elders, and the principal men of their commonwealth, made it their request, that since the interpretation was happily finished, it might continue in the state it now was, and might not be altered. And when they all commended that determination of theirs, they

enjoined, that if any one observed either any thing superfluous, or any thing omitted, that he would take a view of it again, and have it laid before them, and corrected; which was a wise action of theirs, that when the thing was judged to have been well done, it might continue for ever.

14. So the king rejoiced when he saw that his design of this nature was brought to perfection, to so great advantage; and he was chiefly delighted with hearing the Laws read to him; and was astonished at the deep meaning and wisdom of the legislator. And he began to discourse with Demetrius, "How it came to pass, that when this legislation was so wonderful, no one, either of the poets or of the historians, had made mention of it." Demetrius made answer, "that no one durst be so bold as to touch upon the description of these laws, because they were Divine and venerable, and because some that had attempted it were afflicted by God." He also told him, that "Theopompus was desirous of writing somewhat about them, but was thereupon disturbed in his mind for above thirty days' time; and upon some intermission of his distemper, he appeased God [by prayer], as suspecting that his madness proceeded from that cause." Nay, indeed, he further saw in a dream, that his distemper befell him while he indulged too great a curiosity about Divine matters, and was desirous of publishing them among common men; but when he left off that attempt, he recovered his understanding again. Moreover, he informed him of Theodectes, the tragic poet, concerning whom it was reported, that when in a certain dramatic representation he was desirous to make mention of things that were contained in the sacred books, he was afflicted with a darkness in his eyes; and that upon his being conscious of the occasion of his distemper, and appeasing God [by prayer], he was freed from that affliction.

15. And when the king had received these books from Demetrius, as we have said already, he adored them, and gave order that great care should be taken of them, that they might remain uncorrupted. He also desired that the interpreters would come often to him out of Judea, and that both on account

of the respects that he would pay them, and on account of the presents he would make them; for he said it was now but just to send them away, although if, of their own accord, they would come to him hereafter, they should obtain all that their own wisdom might justly require, and what his generosity was able to give them. So he then sent them away, and gave to every one of them three garments of the best sort, and two talents of gold, and a cup of the value of one talent, and the furniture of the room wherein they were feasted. And these were the things he presented to them. But by them he sent to Eleazar the high priest ten beds, with feet of silver, and the furniture to them belonging, and a cup of the value of thirty talents; and besides these, ten garments, and purple, and a very beautiful crown, and a hundred pieces of the finest woven linen; as also vials and dishes, and vessels for pouring, and two golden cisterns to be dedicated to God. He also desired him, by an epistle, that he would give these interpreters leave, if any of them were desirous of coming to him, because he highly valued a conversation with men of such learning, and should be very willing to lay out his wealth upon such men. And this was what came to the Jews, and was much to their glory and honor, from Ptolemy Philadelphus.

Footnotes:

1. Of the translation of the other parts of the Old Testament by seventy Egyptian Jews, in the reigns of Ptolemy the son of Lagus, and Philadelphus; as also of the translation of the Pentateuch by seventy-two Jerusalem Jews, in the seventh year of Philadelphus at Alexandria, as given us an account of by Aristeus, and thence by Philo and Josephus, with a vindication of Aristeus's history; see the Appendix to Lit. Accorap. of Proph. at large, p. 117--152.
2. Although this number one hundred and twenty drachmee [of Alexandria, or sixty Jewish shekels] be here three times repeated, and that in all Josephus's copies, Greek and Latin; yet since all the copies of Aristeus, whence Josephus took his relation, have this sum several times, and still

as no more than twenty drachmae, or ten Jewish shekels; and since the sum of the talents, to be set down presently, which is little above four hundred and sixty, for somewhat more than one hundred thousand slaves, and is nearly the same in Josephus and Aristeus, does better agree to twenty than to one hundred and twenty drachmae; and since the value of a slave of old was at the utmost but thirty shekels, or sixty drachmae; see Exodus 21:32; while in the present circumstances of these Jewish slaves, and those so very numerous, Philadelphus would rather redeem them at a cheaper than at a dearer rate; - there is great reason to prefer here Aristeus's copies before Josephus's.

3. We have a very great encomium of this Simon the Just, the son of Onias, in the fiftieth chapter of the Ecclesiasticus, through the whole chapter. Nor is it improper to consult that chapter itself upon this occasion.
4. When we have here and presently mention made of Philadelphus's queen and sister Arsinoe, we are to remember, with Spanheim, that Arsinoe was both his sister and his wife, according to the old custom of Persia, and of Egypt at this very time; nay, of the Assyrians long afterwards. See Antiq. B. XX. ch. 2. sect. 1. Whence we have, upon the coins of Philadelphus, this known inscription, "The divine brother and sister."
5. The Talmudists say, that it is not lawful to write the law in letters of gold, contrary to this certain and very ancient example. See Hudson's and Reland's notes here.
6. This is the most ancient example I have met with of a grace, or short prayer, or thanksgiving before meat; which, as it is used to be said by a heathen priest, was now said by Eleazar, a Jewish priest, who was one of these seventy-two interpreters. The next example I have met with, is that of the Essenes, (Of the War, B. II. ch. 8. sect. 5,) both before and after it; those of our Savior before it, Mark 8:6; John 6:11, 23; and St. Paul, Acts 27:35; and a form of such a grace or prayer for Christians, at the end of the fifth book of the Apostolical Constitutions, which seems to have been intended for both times, both before and after meat.
7. They were rather political questions and answers, tending to the good

and religious government of mankind.

8. This purification of the interpreters, by washing in the sea, before they prayed to God every morning, and before they set about translating, may be compared with the like practice of Peter the apostle, in the Recognitions of Clement, B. IV. ch. 3., and B. V. ch. 36., and with the places of the Proseuchre, or of prayer, which were sometimes built near the sea or rivers also; of which matter see Antiq. B. XIV. ch. 10. sect. 9,3; Acts 16:13. 16.

Chapter 3

The Kings of Asia Honored the Nation of the Jews

1. The Jews also obtained honors from the kings of Asia when they became their auxiliaries; for Seleucus Nicator made them citizens in those cities which he built in Asia, and in the lower Syria, and in the metropolis itself, Antioch; and gave them privileges equal to those of the Macedonians and Greeks, who were the inhabitants, insomuch that these privileges continue to this very day: an argument for which you have in this, that whereas the Jews do not make use of oil prepared by foreigners, (1) they receive a certain sum of money from the proper officers belonging to their exercises as the value of that oil; which money, when the people of Antioch would have deprived them of, in the last war, Mucianus, who was then president of Syria, preserved it to them. And when the people of Alexandria and of Antioch did after that, at the time that Vespasian and Titus his son governed the habitable earth, pray that these privileges of citizens might be taken away, they did not obtain their request. in which behavior any one may discern the equity and generosity of the Romans, (2) especially of Vespasian and Titus, who, although they had been at a great deal of pains in the war against the Jews, and were exasperated against them, because they did not deliver up their weapons to them, but continued the war to the very last, yet did not they take away any of their forementioned privileges belonging to them as citizens, but restrained their anger, and overcame the prayers of the Alexandrians and Antiochians, who were a very powerful people, insomuch that they did not yield to them, neither out of their favor to these people, nor out of their old grudge at those whose wicked opposition they had subdued in the war; nor would they alter any of the ancient favors granted to the Jews, but said, that those who had borne arms against them, and fought them, had suffered punishment already, and that it was not just to deprive those that had not offended of the privileges they enjoyed.

2. We also know that Marcus Agrippa was of the like disposition towards the Jews: for when the people of Ionia were very angry at them, and besought Agrippa that they, and they only, might have those privileges of citizens which Antiochus, the grandson of Seleucus, (who by the Greeks was called The God,) had bestowed on them, and desired that, if the Jews were to be joint-partakers with them, they might be obliged to worship the gods they themselves worshipped: but when these matters were brought to the trial, the Jews prevailed, and obtained leave to make use of their own customs, and this under the patronage of Nicolaus of Damascus; for Agrippa gave sentence that he could not innovate. And if any one hath a mind to know this matter accurately, let him peruse the hundred and twenty-third and hundred and twenty-fourth books of the history of this Nicolaus. Now as to this determination of Agrippa, it is not so much to be admired, for at that time our nation had not made war against the Romans. :But one may well be astonished at the generosity of Vespasian and Titus, that after so great wars and contests which they had from us, they should use such moderation. But I will now return to that part of my history whence I made the present digression.

3. Now it happened that in the reign of Antiochus the Great, who ruled over all Asia, that the Jews, as well as the inhabitants of Celesyria, suffered greatly, and their land was sorely harassed; for while he was at war with Ptolemy Philopater, and with his son, who was called Epiphanes, it fell out that these nations were equally sufferers, both when he was beaten, and when he beat the others: so that they were very like to a ship in a storm, which is tossed by the waves on both sides; and just thus were they in their situation in the middle between Antiochus's prosperity and its change to adversity. But at length, when Antiochus had beaten Ptolemy, he seized upon Judea; and when Philopater was dead, his son sent out a great army under Scopas, the general of his forces, against the inhabitants of Celesyria, who took many of their cities, and in particular our nation; which when he fell upon them, went

over to him. Yet was it not long afterward when Antiochus overcame Scopas, in a battle fought at the fountains of Jordan, and destroyed a great part of his army. But afterward, when Antiochus subdued those cities of Celesyria which Scopas had gotten into his possession, and Samaria with them, the Jews, of their own accord, went over to him, and received him into the city [Jerusalem], and gave plentiful provision to all his army, and to his elephants, and readily assisted him when he besieged the garrison which was in the citadel of Jerusalem. Wherefore Antiochus thought it but just to requite the Jews' diligence and zeal in his service. So he wrote to the generals of his armies, and to his friends, and gave testimony to the good behavior of the Jews towards him, and informed them what rewards he had resolved to bestow on them for that their behavior. I will set down presently the epistles themselves which he wrote to the generals concerning them, but will first produce the testimony of Polybius of Megalopolis; for thus does he speak, in the sixteenth book of his history: "Now Scopas, the general of Ptolemy's army, went in haste to the superior parts of the country, and in the winter time overthrew the nation of the Jews?" He also saith, in the same book, that "when Scopas was conquered by Antiochus, Antiochus received Batanea, and Samaria, and Abila, and Gadara; and that, a while afterwards, there came in to him those Jews that inhabited near that temple which was called Jerusalem; concerning which, although I have more to say, and particularly concerning the presence of God about that temple, yet do I put off that history till another opportunity." This it is which Polybius relates. But we will return to the series of the history, when we have first produced the epistles of king Antiochus.

King Antiochus To Ptolemy, Sendeth Greeting

"Since the Jews, upon our first entrance on their country, demonstrated their friendship towards us, and when we came to their city [Jerusalem], received us in a splendid manner, and came to meet us with their senate, and gave abundance of provisions to our soldiers, and to the elephants, and

joined with us in ejecting the garrison of the Egyptians that were in the citadel, we have thought fit to reward them, and to retrieve the condition of their city, which hath been greatly depopulated by such accidents as have befallen its inhabitants, and to bring those that have been scattered abroad back to the city. And, in the first place, we have determined, on account of their piety towards God, to bestow on them, as a pension, for their sacrifices of animals that are fit for sacrifice, for wine, and oil, and frankincense, the value of twenty thousand pieces of silver, and [six] sacred artabrae of fine flour, with one thousand four hundred and sixty medimni of wheat, and three hundred and seventy-five medimni of salt. And these payments I would have fully paid them, as I have sent orders to you. I would also have the work about the temple finished, and the cloisters, and if there be any thing else that ought to be rebuilt. And for the materials of wood, let it be brought them out of Judea itself and out of the other countries, and out of Libanus tax free; and the same I would have observed as to those other materials which will be necessary, in order to render the temple more glorious; and let all of that nation live according to the laws of their own country; and let the senate, and the priests, and the scribes of the temple, and the sacred singers, be discharged from poll-money and the crown tax and other taxes also. And that the city may the sooner recover its inhabitants, I grant a discharge from taxes for three years to its present inhabitants, and to such as shall come to it, until the month Hyperheretus. We also discharge them for the future from a third part of their taxes, that the losses they have sustained may be repaired. And all those citizens that have been carried away, and are become slaves, we grant them and their children their freedom, and give order that their substance be restored to them."

4. And these were the contents of this epistle. He also published a decree through all his kingdom in honor of the temple, which contained what follows: "It shall be lawful for no foreigner to come within the limits of the temple round about; which thing is forbidden also to the Jews, unless to those who, according to their own custom, have purified themselves. Nor let

any flesh of horses, or of mules, or of asses, he brought into the city, whether they be wild or tame; nor that of leopards, or foxes, or hares; and, in general, that of any animal which is forbidden for the Jews to eat. Nor let their skins be brought into it; nor let any such animal be bred up in the city. Let them only be permitted to use the sacrifices derived from their forefathers, with which they have been obliged to make acceptable atonements to God. And he that transgresseth any of these orders, let him pay to the priests three thousand drachmae of silver." Moreover, this Antiochus bare testimony to our piety and fidelity, in an epistle of his, written when he was informed of a sedition in Phrygia and Lydia, at which time he was in the superior provinces, wherein he commanded Zenxis, the general of his forces, and his most intimate friend, to send some of our nation out of Babylon into Phrygia. The epistle was this:

King Antiochus To Zeuxis His Father, Sendeth Greeting

"If you are in health, it is well. I also am in health. Having been informed that a sedition is arisen in Lydia and Phrygia, I thought that matter required great care; and upon advising with my friends what was fit to be done, it hath been thought proper to remove two thousand families of Jews, with their effects, out of Mesopotamia and Babylon, unto the castles and places that lie most convenient; for I am persuaded that they will be well-disposed guardians of our possessions, because of their piety towards God, and because I know that my predecessors have borne witness to them, that they are faithful, and with alacrity do what they are desired to do. I will, therefore, though it be a laborious work, that thou remove these Jews, under a promise, that they shall be permitted to use their own laws. And when thou shalt have brought them to the places forementioned, thou shalt give everyone of their families a place for building their houses, and a portion of the land for their husbandry, and for the plantation of their vines; and thou shalt discharge them from paying taxes of the fruits of the earth for ten years; and let them have a proper quantity of wheat for the maintenance of their

servants, until they receive bread corn out of the earth; also let a sufficient share be given to such as minister to them in the necessaries of life, that by enjoying the effects of our humanity, they may show themselves the more willing and ready about our affairs. Take care likewise of that nation, as far as thou art able, that they may not have any disturbance given them by any one." Now these testimonials which I have produced are sufficient to declare the friendship that Antiochus the Great bare to the Jews.

Footnotes:

1. The use of oil was much greater, and the donatives of it much more valuable, in Judea, and the neighboring countries, than it is amongst us. It was also, in the days of Josephus, thought unlawful for Jews to make use of any oil that was prepared by heathens, perhaps on account of some superstitions intermixed with its preparation by those heathens. When therefore the heathens were to make them a donative of oil, they paid them money instead of it. See *Of the War*, B. II. ch. 21. sect. 2; the *Life of Josephus*, sect. 13; and Hudson's note on the place before us.
2. This, and the like great and just characters, of the justice, and equity. and generosity of the old Romans, both to the Jews and other conquered nations, affords us a very good reason why Almighty God, upon the rejection of the Jews for their wickedness, chose them for his people, and first established Christianity in that empire; of which matter see Josephus here, sect. 2; as also *Antiq.* B. XIV. ch. 10. sect. 22, 23; B. XVI. ch. 2. sect. 4.

Chapter 4

Antiochus Made a League with Ptolemy

1. After this Antiochus made a friendship and league with Ptolemy, and gave him his daughter Cleopatra to wife, and yielded up to him Celesyria, and Samaria, and Judea, and Phoenicia, by way of dowry. And upon the division of the taxes between the two kings, all the principal men framed the taxes of their several countries, and collecting the sum that was settled for them, paid the same to the [two] kings. Now at this time the Samaritans were in a flourishing condition, and much distressed the Jews, cutting off parts of their land, and carrying off slaves. This happened when Onias was high priest; for after Eleazar's death, his uncle Manasseh took the priesthood, and after he had ended his life, Onias received that dignity. He was the son of Simon, who was called The Just: which Simon was the brother of Eleazar, as I said before. This Onias was one of a little soul, and a great lover of money; and for that reason, because he did not pay that tax of twenty talents of silver, which his forefathers paid to these things out of their own estates, he provoked king Ptolemy Euergetes to anger, who was the father of Philopater. Euergetes sent an ambassador to Jerusalem, and complained that Onias did not pay his taxes, and threatened, that if he did not receive them, he would seize upon their land, and send soldiers to live upon it. When the Jews heard this message of the king, they were confounded; but so sordidly covetous was Onias, that nothing of things nature made him ashamed.

2. There was now one Joseph, young in age, but of great reputation among the people of Jerusalem, for gravity, prudence, and justice. His father's name was Tobias; and his mother was the sister of Onias the high priest, who informed him of the coming of the ambassador; for he was then sojourning at a village named Phicol, (1) where he was born. Hereupon he came to the city [Jerusalem], and reprov'd Onias for not taking care of the

preservation of his countrymen, but bringing the nation into dangers, by not paying this money. For which preservation of them, he told him he had received the authority over them, and had been made high priest; but that, in case he was so great a lover of money, as to endure to see his country in danger on that account, and his countrymen suffer the greatest damages, he advised him to go to the king, and petition him to remit either the whole or a part of the sum demanded. Onias's answer was this: That he did not care for his authority, and that he was ready, if the thing were practicable, to lay down his high priesthood; and that he would not go to the king, because he troubled not himself at all about such matters. Joseph then asked him if he would not give him leave to go ambassador on behalf of the nation. He replied, that he would give him leave. Upon which Joseph went up into the temple, and called the multitude together to a congregation, and exhorted them not to be disturbed nor afrighted, because of his uncle Onias's carelessness, but desired them to be at rest, and not terrify themselves with fear about it; for he promised them that he would be their ambassador to the king, and persuade him that they had done him no wrong. And when the multitude heard this, they returned thanks to Joseph. So he went down from the temple, and treated Ptolemy's ambassador in a hospitable manner. He also presented him with rich gifts, and feasted him magnificently for many days, and then sent him to the king before him, and told him that he would soon follow him; for he was now more willing to go to the king, by the encouragement of the ambassador, who earnestly persuaded him to come into Egypt, and promised him that he would take care that he should obtain every thing that he desired of Ptolemy; for he was highly pleased with his frank and liberal temper, and with the gravity of his deportment.

3. When Ptolemy's ambassador was come into Egypt, he told the king of the thoughtless temper of Onias; and informed him of the goodness of the disposition of Joseph; and that he was coming to him to excuse the multitude, as not having done him any harm, for that he was their patron. In short, he was so very large in his encomiums upon the young man, that he

disposed both the king and his wife Cleopatra to have a kindness for him before he came. So Joseph sent to his friends at Samaria, and borrowed money of them, and got ready what was necessary for his journey, garments and cups, and beasts for burden, which amounted to about twenty thousand drachmae, and went to Alexandria. Now it happened that at this time all the principal men and rulers went up out of the cities of Syria and Phoenicia, to bid for their taxes; for every year the king sold them to the men of the greatest power in every city. So these men saw Joseph journeying on the way, and laughed at him for his poverty and meanness. But when he came to Alexandria, and heard that king Ptolemy was at Memphis, he went up thither to meet with him; which happened as the king was sitting in his chariot, with his wife, and with his friend Athenion, who was the very person who had been ambassador at Jerusalem, and had been entertained by Joseph. As soon therefore as Athenion saw him, he presently made him known to the king, how good and generous a young man he was. So Ptolemy saluted him first, and desired him to come up into his chariot; and as Joseph sat there, he began to complain of the management of Onias: to which he answered, "Forgive him, on account of his age; for thou canst not certainly be unacquainted with this, that old men and infants have their minds exactly alike; but thou shalt have from us, who are young men, every thing thou desirest, and shalt have no cause to complain." With this good humor and pleasantry of the young man, the king was so delighted, that he began already, as though he had had long experience of him, to have a still greater affection for him, insomuch that he bade him take his diet in the king's palace, and be a guest at his own table every day. But when the king was come to Alexandria, the principal men of Syria saw him sitting with the king, and were much offended at it.

4. And when the day came on which the king was to let the taxes of the cities to farm, and those that were the principal men of dignity in their several countries were to bid for them, the sum of the taxes together, of Celesyria, and Phoenicia, and Judea, with Samaria, [as they were bidden for,]

came to eight thousand talents. Hereupon Joseph accused the bidders, as having agreed together to estimate the value of the taxes at too low a rate; and he promised that he would himself give twice as much for them: but for those who did not pay, he would send the king home their whole substance; for this privilege was sold together with the taxes themselves. The king was pleased to hear that offer; and because it augmented his revenues, he said he would confirm the sale of the taxes to him. But when he asked him this question, Whether he had any sureties that would be bound for the payment of the money? he answered very pleasantly, "I will give such security, and those of persons good and responsible, and which you shall have no reason to distrust." And when he bid him name them who they were, he replied, "I give thee no other persons, O king, for my sureties, than thyself, and this thy wife; and you shall be security for both parties." So Ptolemy laughed at the proposal, and granted him the farming of the taxes without any sureties. This procedure was a sore grief to those that came from the cities into Egypt, who were utterly disappointed; and they returned every one to their own country with shame.

5. But Joseph took with him two thousand foot soldiers from the king, for he desired he might have some assistance, in order to force such as were refractory in the cities to pay. And borrowing of the king's friends at Alexandria five hundred talents, he made haste back into Syria. And when he was at Askelon, and demanded the taxes of the people of Askelon, they refused to pay any thing, and affronted him also; upon which he seized upon about twenty of the principal men, and slew them, and gathered what they had together, and sent it all to the king, and informed him what he had done. Ptolemy admired the prudent conduct of the man, and commended him for what he had done, and gave him leave to do as he pleased. When the Syrians heard of this, they were astonished; and having before them a sad example in the men of Askelon that were slain, they opened their gates, and willingly admitted Joseph, and paid their taxes. And when the inhabitants of Scythopolis attempted to affront him, and would not pay him those taxes

which they formerly used to pay, without disputing about them, he slew also the principal men of that city, and sent their effects to the king. By this means he gathered great wealth together, and made vast gains by this farming of the taxes; and he made use of what estate he had thus gotten, in order to support his authority, as thinking it a piece of prudence to keep what had been the occasion and foundation of his present good fortune; and this he did by the assistance of what he was already possessed of, for he privately sent many presents to the king, and to Cleopatra, and to their friends, and to all that were powerful about the court, and thereby purchased their good-will to himself.

6. This good fortune he enjoyed for twenty-two years, and was become the father of seven sons by one wife; he had also another son, whose name was Hyrcanus, by his brother Solymius's daughter, whom he married on the following occasion. He once came to Alexandria with his brother, who had along with him a daughter already marriageable, in order to give her in wedlock to some of the Jews of chief dignity there. He then supped with the king, and falling in love with an actress that was of great beauty, and came into the room where they feasted, he told his brother of it, and entreated him, because a Jew is forbidden by their law to come near to a foreigner, to conceal his offense; and to be kind and subservient to him, and to give him an opportunity of fulfilling his desires. Upon which his brother willingly entertained the proposal of serving him, and adorned his own daughter, and brought her to him by night, and put her into his bed. And Joseph, being disordered with drink, knew not who she was, and so lay with his brother's daughter; and this did he many times, and loved her exceedingly; and said to his brother, that he loved this actress so well, that he should run the hazard of his life [if he must part with her], and yet probably the king would not give him leave [to take her with him]. But his brother bid him be in no concern about that matter, and told him he might enjoy her whom he loved without any danger, and might have her for his wife; and opened the truth of the matter to him, and assured him that he chose rather to have his own daughter

abused, than to overlook him, and see him come to [public] disgrace. So Joseph commended him for this his brotherly love, and married his daughter; and by her begat a son, whose name was Hyrcanus, as we said before. And when this his youngest son showed, at thirteen years old, a mind that was both courageous and wise, and was greatly envied by his brethren, as being of a genius much above them, and such a one as they might well envy, Joseph had once a mind to know which of his sons had the best disposition to virtue; and when he sent them severally to those that had then the best reputation for instructing youth, the rest of his children, by reason of their sloth and unwillingness to take pains, returned to him foolish and unlearned. After them he sent out the youngest, Hyrcanus, and gave him three hundred yoke of oxen, and bid him go two days' journey into the wilderness, and sow the land there, and yet kept back privately the yokes of the oxen that coupled them together. When Hyrcanus came to the place, and found he had no yokes with him, he contemned the drivers of the oxen, who advised him to send some to his father, to bring them some yokes; but he thinking that he ought not to lose his time while they should be sent to bring him the yokes, he invented a kind of stratagem, and what suited an age older than his own; for he slew ten yoke of the oxen, and distributed their flesh among the laborers, and cut their hides into several pieces, and made him yokes, and yoked the oxen together with them; by which means he sowed as much land as his father had appointed him to sow, and returned to him. And when he was come back, his father was mightily pleased with his sagacity, and commended the sharpness of his understanding, and his boldness in what he did. And he still loved him the more, as if he were his only genuine son, while his brethren were much troubled at it.

7. But when one told him that Ptolemy had a son just born, and that all the principal men of Syria, and the other countries subject to him, were to keep a festival, on account of the child's birthday, and went away in haste with great retinues to Alexandria, he was himself indeed hindered from going by old age; but he made trial of his sons, whether any of them would

be willing to go to the king. And when the elder sons excused themselves from going, and said they were not courtiers good enough for such conversation, and advised him to send their brother Hyrcanus, he gladly hearkened to that advice, and called Hyrcanus, and asked him whether he would go to the king, and whether it was agreeable to him to go or not. And upon his promise that he would go, and his saying that he should not want much money for his journey, because he would live moderately, and that ten thousand drachmas would be sufficient, he was pleased with his son's prudence. After a little while, the son advised his father not to send his presents to the king from thence, but to give him a letter to his steward at Alexandria, that he might furnish him with money, for purchasing what should be most excellent and most precious. So he thinking that the expense of ten talents would be enough for presents to be made the king, and commending his son, as giving him good advice, wrote to Arion his steward, that managed all his money matters at Alexandria; which money was not less than three thousand talents on his account, for Joseph sent the money he received in Syria to Alexandria. And when the day appointed for the payment of the taxes to the king came, he wrote to Arion to pay them. So when the son had asked his father for a letter to the steward, and had received it, he made haste to Alexandria. And when he was gone, his brethren wrote to all the king's friends, that they should destroy him.

8. But when he was come to Alexandria, he delivered his letter to Arion, who asked him how many talents he would have (hoping he would ask for no more than ten, or a little more); he said he wanted a thousand talents. At which the steward was angry, and rebuked him, as one that intended to live extravagantly; and he let him know how his father had gathered together his estate by painstaking, and resisting his inclinations, and wished him to imitate the example of his father: he assured him withal, that he would give him but ten talents, and that for a present to the king also. The son was irritated at this, and threw Arion into prison. But when Arion's wife had informed Cleopatra of this, with her entreaty, that she would rebuke the child

for what he had done, (for Arion was in great esteem with her,) Cleopatra informed the king of it. And Ptolemy sent for Hyrcanus, and told him that he wondered, when he was sent to him by his father, that he had not yet come into his presence, but had laid the steward in prison. And he gave order, therefore, that he should come to him, and give an account of the reason of what he had done. And they report that the answer he made to the king's messenger was this: That "there was a law of his that forbade a child that was born to taste of the sacrifice, before he had been at the temple and sacrificed to God. According to which way of reasoning he did not himself come to him in expectation of the present he was to make to him, as to one who had been his father's benefactor; and that he had punished the slave for disobeying his commands, for that it mattered not Whether a master was little or great: so that unless we punish such as these, thou thyself mayst also expect to be despised by thy subjects." Upon hearing this his answer he fell a laughing, and wondered at the great soul of the child.

9. When Arion was apprized that this was the king's disposition, and that he had no way to help himself, he gave the child a thousand talents, and was let out of prison. So after three days were over, Hyrcanus came and saluted the king and queen. They saw him with pleasure, and feasted him in an obliging manner, out of the respect they bare to his father. So he came to the merchants privately, and bought a hundred boys, that had learning, and were in the flower of their ages, each at a talent apiece; as also he bought a hundred maidens, each at the same price as the other. And when he was invited to feast with the king among the principal men in the country, he sat down the lowest of them all, because he was little regarded, as a child in age still; and this by those who placed every one according to their dignity. Now when all those that sat with him had laid the bones Of the several parts on a heap before Hyrcanus, (for they had themselves taken away the flesh belonging to them,) till the table where he sat was filled full with them, Trypho, who was the king's jester, and was appointed for jokes and laughter at festivals, was now asked by the guests that sat at the table [to expose him

to laughter]. So he stood by the king, and said, "Dost thou not see, my lord, the bones that lie by Hyrcanus? by this similitude thou mayst conjecture that his father made all Syria as bare as he hath made these bones." And the king laughing at what Trypho said, and asking of Hyrcanus, How he came to have so many bones before him? he replied, "Very rightfully, my lord; for they are dogs that eat the flesh and the bones together, as these thy guests have done, (looking in the mean time at those guests,) for there is nothing before them; but they are men that eat the flesh, and cast away the bones, as I, who am also a man, have now done." Upon which the king admired at his answer, which was so wisely made; and bid them all make an acclamation, as a mark of their approbation of his jest, which was truly a facetious one. On the next day Hyrcanus went to every one of the king's friends, and of the men powerful at court, and saluted them; but still inquired of the servants what present they would make the king on his son's birthday; and when some said that they would give twelve talents, and that others of greater dignity would every one give according to the quantity of their riches, he pretended to every one of them to be grieved that he was not able to bring so large a present; for that he had no more than five talents. And when the servants heard what he said, they told their masters; and they rejoiced in the prospect that Joseph would be disapproved, and would make the king angry, by the smallness of his present. When the day came, the others, even those that brought the most, offered the king not above twenty talents; but Hyrcanus gave to every one of the hundred boys and hundred maidens that he had bought a talent apiece, for them to carry, and introduced them, the boys to the king, and the maidens to Cleopatra; every body wondering at the unexpected richness of the presents, even the king and queen themselves. He also presented those that attended about the king with gifts to the value of a great number of talents, that he might escape the danger he was in from them; for to these it was that Hyrcanus's brethren had written to destroy him. Now Ptolemy admired at the young man's magnanimity, and commanded him to ask what gift he pleased. But he desired nothing else to be done for him by the king than to write to his father and brethren about him. So when

the king had paid him very great respects, and had given him very large gifts, and had written to his father and his brethren, and all his commanders and officers, about him, he sent him away. But when his brethren heard that Hyrcanus had received such favors from the king, and was returning home with great honor, they went out to meet him, and to destroy him, and that with the privity of their father; for he was angry at him for the [large] sum of money that he bestowed for presents, and so had no concern for his preservation. However, Joseph concealed the anger he had at his son, out of fear of the king. And when Hyrcanus's brethren came to fight him, he slew many others of those that were with them, as also two of his brethren themselves; but the rest of them escaped to Jerusalem to their father. But when Hyrcanus came to the city, where nobody would receive him, he was afraid for himself, and retired beyond the river Jordan, and there abode, but obliging the barbarians to pay their taxes.

10. At this time Seleucus, who was called Soter, reigned over Asia, being the son of Antiochus the Great. And [now] Hyrcanus's father, Joseph, died. He was a good man, and of great magnanimity; and brought the Jews out of a state of poverty and meanness, to one that was more splendid. He retained the farm of the taxes of Syria, and Phoenicia, and Samaria twenty-two years. His uncle also, Onias, died [about this time], and left the high priesthood to his son Simeon. And when he was dead, Onias his son succeeded him in that dignity. To him it was that Areus, king of the Lacedemonians, sent an embassy, with an epistle; the copy whereof here follows:

Areus, King Of The Lacedemonians, To Onias, Sendeth Greeting

"We have met with a certain writing, whereby we have discovered that both the Jews and the Lacedemonians are of one stock, and are derived from the kindred of Abraham (2) It is but just therefore that you, who are our brethren, should send to us about any of your concerns as you please. We

will also do the same thing, and esteem your concerns as our own, and will look upon our concerns as in common with yours. Demoteles, who brings you this letter, will bring your answer back to us. This letter is four-square; and the seal is an eagle, with a dragon in his claws."

11. And these were the contents of the epistle which was sent from the king of the Lacedemonians. But, upon the death of Joseph, the people grew seditious, on account of his sons. For whereas the elders made war against Hyrcanus, who was the youngest of Joseph's sons, the multitude was divided, but the greater part joined with the elders in this war; as did Simon the high priest, by reason he was of kin to them. However, Hyrcanus determined not to return to Jerusalem any more, but seated himself beyond Jordan, and was at perpetual war with the Arabians, and slew many of them, and took many of them captives. He also erected a strong castle, and built it entirely of white stone to the very roof, and had animals of a prodigious magnitude engraven upon it. He also drew round it a great and deep canal of water. He also made caves of many furlongs in length, by hollowing a rock that was over against him; and then he made large rooms in it, some for feasting, and some for sleeping and living in. He introduced also a vast quantity of waters which ran along it, and which were very delightful and ornamental in the court. But still he made the entrances at the mouth of the caves so narrow, that no more than one person could enter by them at once. And the reason why he built them after that manner was a good one; it was for his own preservation, lest he should be besieged by his brethren, and run the hazard of being caught by them. Moreover, he built courts of greater magnitude than ordinary, which he adorned with vastly large gardens. And when he had brought the place to this state, he named it Tyre. This place is between Arabia and Judea, beyond Jordan, not far from the country of Heshbon. And he ruled over those parts for seven years, even all the time that Seleucus was king of Syria. But when he was dead, his brother Antiochus, who was called Epiphanes, took the kingdom. Ptolemy also, the king of Egypt, died, who was besides called Epiphanes. He left two sons, and both young in age; the elder of which was

called Philometer, and the youngest Physcon. As for Hyrcanus, when he saw that Antiochus had a great army, and feared lest he should be caught by him, and brought to punishment for what he had done to the Arabians, he ended his life, and slew himself with his own hand; while Antiochus seized upon all his substance.

Footnotes:

1. The name of this place, Phicol, is the very same with that of the chief captain of Abimelech's host, in the days of Abraham, Genesis 21:22, and might possibly be the place of that Phicol's nativity or abode, for it seems to have been in the south part of Palestine, as that was.
2. Whence it comes that these Lacedemonians declare themselves here to be of kin to the Jews, as derived from the same ancestor, Abraham, I cannot tell, unless, as Grotius supposes, they were derived from Dores, that came of the Pelasgi. These are by Herodotus called Barbarians, and perhaps were derived from the Syrians and Arabians, the posterity of Abraham by Keturah. See *Antiq. B. XIV. ch. 10. sect. 22*; and *Of the War, B. I. ch. 26. sect. 1*; and *Grot. on 1 Macc. 12:7*. We may further observe from the *Recognitions of Clement*, that Eliezer, of Damascus, the servant of Abraham, Genesis 15:2; 24., was of old by some taken for his son. So that if the Lacedemonians were sprung from him, they might think themselves to be of the posterity of Abraham, as well as the Jews, who were sprung from Isaac. And perhaps this Eliezer of Damascus is that very Damascus whom Trogus Pompeius, as abridged by Justin, makes the founder of the Jewish nation itself, though he afterwards blunders, and makes Azelus, Adores, Abraham, and Israel kings of Judea, and successors to this Damascus. It may not be improper to observe further, that Moses Chorenensis, in his history of the Armenians, informs us, that the nation of the Parthians was also derived from Abraham by Keturah and her children.

Chapter 5

The Samaritans Followed the Customs of the Greeks

1. About this time, upon the death of Onias the high priest, they gave the high priesthood to Jesus his brother; for that son which Onias left [or Onias IV.] was yet but an infant; and, in its proper place, we will inform the reader of all the circumstances that befell this child. But this Jesus, who was the brother of Onias, was deprived of the high priesthood by the king, who was angry with him, and gave it to his younger brother, whose name also was Onias; for Simon had these three sons, to each of which the priesthood came, as we have already informed the reader. This Jesus changed his name to Jason, but Onias was called Menelaus. Now as the former high priest, Jesus, raised a sedition against Menelaus, who was ordained after him, the multitude were divided between them both. And the sons of Tobias took the part of Menelaus, but the greater part of the people assisted Jason; and by that means Menelaus and the sons of Tobias were distressed, and retired to Antiochus, and informed him that they were desirous to leave the laws of their country, and the Jewish way of living according to them, and to follow the king's laws, and the Grecian way of living. Wherefore they desired his permission to build them a Gymnasium at Jerusalem. (1) And when he had given them leave, they also hid the circumcision of their genitals, that even when they were naked they might appear to be Greeks. Accordingly, they left off all the customs that belonged to their own country, and imitated the practices of the other nations.

2. Now Antiochus, upon the agreeable situation of the affairs of his kingdom, resolved to make an expedition against Egypt, both because he had a desire to gain it, and because he contemned the son of Ptolemy, as now weak, and not yet of abilities to manage affairs of such consequence; so he

came with great forces to Pelusium, and circumvented Ptolemy Philometor by treachery, and seized upon Egypt. He then came to the places about Memphis; and when he had taken them, he made haste to Alexandria, in hopes of taking it by siege, and of subduing Ptolemy, who reigned there. But he was driven not only from Alexandria, but out of all Egypt, by the declaration of the Romans, who charged him to let that country alone; according as I have elsewhere formerly declared. I will now give a particular account of what concerns this king, how he subdued Judea and the temple; for in my former work I mentioned those things very briefly, and have therefore now thought it necessary to go over that history again, and that with great accuracy.

3. King Antiochus returning out of Egypt (2) for fear of the Romans, made an expedition against the city Jerusalem; and when he was there, in the hundred and forty-third year of the kingdom of the Seleucidse, he took the city without fighting, those of his own party opening the gates to him. And when he had gotten possession of Jerusalem, he slew many of the opposite party; and when he had plundered it of a great deal of money, he returned to Antioch.

4. Now it came to pass, after two years, in the hundred forty and fifth year, on the twenty-fifth day of that month which is by us called Chasleu, and by the Macedonians Apelleus, in the hundred and fifty-third olympiad, that the king came up to Jerusalem, and, pretending peace, he got possession of the city by treachery; at which time he spared not so much as those that admitted him into it, on account of the riches that lay in the temple; but, led by his covetous inclination, (for he saw there was in it a great deal of gold, and many ornaments that had been dedicated to it of very great value,) and in order to plunder its wealth, he ventured to break the league he had made. So he left the temple bare, and took away the golden candlesticks, and the golden altar [of incense], and table [of shew-bread], and the altar [of burnt-offering]; and did not abstain from even the veils, which were made of fine

linen and scarlet. He also emptied it of its secret treasures, and left nothing at all remaining; and by this means cast the Jews into great lamentation, for he forbade them to offer those daily sacrifices which they used to offer to God, according to the law. And when he had pillaged the whole city, some of the inhabitants he slew, and some he carried captive, together with their wives and children, so that the multitude of those captives that were taken alive amounted to about ten thousand. He also burnt down the finest buildings; and when he had overthrown the city walls, he built a citadel in the lower part of the city, (3) for the place was high, and overlooked the temple; on which account he fortified it with high walls and towers, and put into it a garrison of Macedonians. However, in that citadel dwelt the impious and wicked part of the [Jewish] multitude, from whom it proved that the citizens suffered many and sore calamities. And when the king had built an idol altar upon God's altar, he slew swine upon it, and so offered a sacrifice neither according to the law, nor the Jewish religious worship in that country. He also compelled them to forsake the worship which they paid their own God, and to adore those whom he took to be gods; and made them build temples, and raise idol altars in every city and village, and offer swine upon them every day. He also commanded them not to circumcise their sons, and threatened to punish any that should be found to have transgressed his injunction. He also appointed overseers, who should compel them to do what he commanded. And indeed many Jews there were who complied with the king's commands, either voluntarily, or out of fear of the penalty that was denounced. But the best men, and those of the noblest souls, did not regard him, but did pay a greater respect to the customs of their country than concern as to the punishment which he threatened to the disobedient; on which account they every day underwent great miseries and bitter torments; for they were whipped with rods, and their bodies were torn to pieces, and were crucified, while they were still alive, and breathed. They also strangled those women and their sons whom they had circumcised, as the king had appointed, hanging their sons about their necks as they were upon the crosses. And if there were any sacred book of the law found, it was

destroyed, and those with whom they were found miserably perished also.

5. When the Samaritans saw the Jews under these sufferings, they no longer confessed that they were of their kindred, nor that the temple on Mount Gerizzim belonged to Almighty God. This was according to their nature, as we have already shown. And they now said that they were a colony of Medes and Persians; and indeed they were a colony of theirs. So they sent ambassadors to Antiochus, and an epistle, whose contents are these: "To king Antiochus the god, Epiphanes, a memorial from the Sidonians, who live at Shechem. Our forefathers, upon certain frequent plagues, and as following a certain ancient superstition, had a custom of observing that day which by the Jews is called the Sabbath. (4) And when they had erected a temple at the mountain called Gerrizzim, though without a name, they offered upon it the proper sacrifices. Now, upon the just treatment of these wicked Jews, those that manage their affairs, supposing that we were of kin to them, and practiced as they do, make us liable to the same accusations, although we be originally Sidonians, as is evident from the public records. We therefore beseech thee, our benefactor and Savior, to give order to Apollonius, the governor of this part of the country, and to Nicanor, the procurator of thy affairs, to give us no disturbance, nor to lay to our charge what the Jews are accused for, since we are aliens from their nation, and from their customs; but let our temple, which at present hath no name at all be named the Temple of Jupiter Hellenius. If this were once done, we should be no longer disturbed, but should be more intent on our own occupation with quietness, and so bring in a greater revenue to thee." When the Samaritans had petitioned for this, the king sent them back the following answer, in an epistle: "King Antiochus to Nicanor. The Sidonians, who live at Shechem, have sent me the memorial enclosed. When therefore we were advising with our friends about it, the messengers sent by them represented to us that they are no way concerned with accusations which belong to the Jews, but choose to live after the customs of the Greeks. Accordingly, we declare them free from such accusations, and order that, agreeable to their

petition, their temple be named the Temple of Jupiter Hellenius." He also sent the like epistle to Apollonius, the governor of that part of the country, in the forty-sixth year, and the eighteenth day of the month Hecatorabeom.

Footnotes:

1. This word "Gymnasium" properly denotes a place where the exercises were performed naked, which because it would naturally distinguish circumcised Jews from uncircumcised Gentiles, these Jewish apostates endeavored to appear uncircumcised, by means of a surgical operation, hinted at by St. Paul, 1 Corinthians 7:18, and described by Celsus, B. VII. ch. 25., as Dr. Hudson here informs us.
2. Hereabout Josephus begins to follow the First Book of the Maccabees, a most excellent and most authentic history; and accordingly it is here, with great fidelity and exactness, abridged by him; between whose present copies there seem to be fewer variations than in any other sacred Hebrew book of the Old Testament whatsoever, (for this book also was originally written in Hebrew,) which is very natural, because it was written so much nearer to the times of Josephus than the rest were.
3. This citadel, of which we have such frequent mention in the following history, both in the Maccabees and Josephus, seems to have been a castle built on a hill, lower than Mount Zion, though upon its skirts, and higher than Mount Moriah, but between them both; which hill the enemies of the Jews now got possession of, and built on it this citadel, and fortified it, till a good while afterwards the Jews regained it, demolished it, and leveled the hill itself with the common ground, that their enemies might no more recover it, and might thence overlook the temple itself, and do them such mischief as they had long undergone from it, Antiq. B. XIII. ch. 6. sect. 6.
4. This allegation of the Samaritans is remarkable, that though they were not Jews, yet did they, from ancient times, observe the Sabbath day, and, as they elsewhere pretend, the Sabbatic year also, Antiq. B. XI. ch. 8.

sect. 6.

Chapter 6

Mattathias Overcame the Generals of Antiochus's Army

1. Now at this time there was one whose name was Mattathias, who dwelt at Modin, the son of John, the son of Simeon, the son of Asamoneus, a priest of the order of Joarib, and a citizen of Jerusalem. He had five sons; John, who was called Gaddis, and Simon, who was called Matthes, and Judas, who was called Maccabeus, (1) and Eleazar, who was called Auran, and Jonathan, who was called Apphus. Now this Mattathias lamented to his children the sad state of their affairs, and the ravage made in the city, and the plundering of the temple, and the calamities the multitude were under; and he told them that it was better for them to die for the laws of their country, than to live so ingloriously as they then did.

2. But when those that were appointed by the king were come to Modin, that they might compel the Jews to do what they were commanded, and to enjoin those that were there to offer sacrifice, as the king had commanded, they desired that Mattathias, a person of the greatest character among them, both on other accounts, and particularly on account of such a numerous and so deserving a family of children, would begin the sacrifice, because his fellow citizens would follow his example, and because such a procedure would make him honored by the king. But Mattathias said he would not do it; and that if all the other nations would obey the commands of Antiochus, either out of fear, or to please him, yet would not he nor his sons leave the religious worship of their country. But as soon as he had ended his speech, there came one of the Jews into the midst of them, and sacrificed, as Antiochus had commanded. At which Mattathias had great indignation, and ran upon him violently, with his sons, who had swords with them, and slew both the man himself that sacrificed, and Apelles the king's general, who

compelled them to sacrifice, with a few of his soldiers. He also overthrew the idol altar, and cried out, "If," said he, "any one be zealous for the laws of his country, and for the worship of God, let him follow me." And when he had said this, he made haste into the desert with his sons, and left all his substance in the village. Many others did the same also, and fled with their children and wives into the desert, and dwelt in caves. But when the king's generals heard this, they took all the forces they then had in the citadel at Jerusalem, and pursued the Jews into the desert; and when they had overtaken them, they in the first place endeavored to persuade them to repent, and to choose what was most for their advantage, and not put them to the necessity of using them according to the law of war. But when they would not comply with their persuasions, but continued to be of a different mind, they fought against them on the sabbath day, and they burnt them as they were in the caves, without resistance, and without so much as stopping up the entrances of the caves. And they avoided to defend themselves on that day, because they were not willing to break in upon the honor they owed the sabbath, even in such distresses; for our law requires that we rest upon that day. There were about a thousand, with their wives and children, who were smothered and died in these caves; but many of those that escaped joined themselves to Mattathias, and appointed him to be their ruler, who taught them to fight, even on the sabbath day; and told them that unless they would do so, they would become their own enemies, by observing the law [so rigorously], while their adversaries would still assault them on this day, and they would not then defend themselves, and that nothing could then hinder but they must all perish without fighting. This speech persuaded them. And this rule continues among us to this day, that if there be a necessity, we may fight on sabbath days. So Mattathias got a great army about him, and overthrew their idol altars, and slew those that broke the laws, even all that he could get under his power; for many of them were dispersed among the nations round about them for fear of him. He also commanded that those boys which were not yet circumcised should be circumcised now; and he drove those away that were appointed to hinder such their circumcision.

3. But when he had ruled one year, and was fallen into a distemper, he called for his sons, and set them round about him, and said, "O my sons, I am going the way of all the earth; and I recommend to you my resolution, and beseech you not to be negligent in keeping it, but to be mindful of the desires of him who begat you, and brought you up, and to preserve the customs of your country, and to recover your ancient form of government, which is in danger of being overturned, and not to be carried away with those that, either by their own inclination, or out of necessity, betray it, but to become such sons as are worthy of me; to be above all force and necessity, and so to dispose your souls, as to be ready, when it shall be necessary, to die for your laws; as sensible of this, by just reasoning, that if God see that you are so disposed he will not overlook you, but will have a great value for your virtue, and will restore to you again what you have lost, and will return to you that freedom in which you shall live quietly, and enjoy your own customs. Your bodies are mortal, and subject to fate; but they receive a sort of immortality, by the remembrance of what actions they have done. And I would have you so in love with this immortality, that you may pursue after glory, and that, when you have undergone the greatest difficulties, you may not scruple, for such things, to lose your lives. I exhort you, especially, to agree one with another; and in what excellency any one of you exceeds another, to yield to him so far, and by that means to reap the advantage of every one's own virtues. Do you then esteem Simon as your father, because he is a man of extraordinary prudence, and be governed by him in what counsels he gives you. Take Maccabeus for the general of your army, because of his courage and strength, for he will avenge your nation, and will bring vengeance on your enemies. Admit among you the righteous and religious, and augment their power."

4. When Mattathias had thus discoursed to his sons, and had prayed to God to be their assistant, and to recover to the people their former constitution, he died a little afterward, and was buried at Modin; all the

people making great lamentation for him. Whereupon his son Judas took upon him the administration of public affairs, in the hundred fbrty and sixth year; and thus, by the ready assistance of his brethren, and of others, Judas cast their enemies out of the country, and put those of their own country to death who had transgressed its laws, and purified the land of all the pollutions that were in it.

Footnote:

1. That this appellation of Maccabee was not first of all given to Judas Maccabeus, nor was derived from any initial letters of the Hebrew words on his banner, "Mi Kamoka Be Elire, Jehovah?" ("Who is like unto thee among the gods, O Jehovah?") Exodus 15:11 as the modern Rabbins vainly pretend, see Authent. Rec. Part I. p. 205, 206. Only we may note, by the way, that the original name of these Maccabees, and their posterity, was Asamoneans; which was derived from Asamoneus, the great-grandfather of Mattathias, as Josephus here informs us.

Chapter 7

Judas Purified the Temple

1. When Apollonius, the general of the Samaritan forces, heard this, he took his army, and made haste to go against Judas, who met him, and joined battle with him, and beat him, and slew many of his men, and among them Apollonius himself, their general, whose sword being that which he happened then to wear, he seized upon, and kept for himself; but he wounded more than he slew, and took a great deal of prey from the enemy's camp, and went his way. But when Seron, who was general of the army of Celesyria, heard that many had joined themselves to Judas, and that he had about him an army sufficient for fighting, and for making war, he determined to make an expedition against him, as thinking it became him to endeavor to punish those that transgressed the king's injunctions. He then got together an army, as large as he was able, and joined to it the runagate and wicked Jews, and came against Judas. He came as far as Bethhoron, a village of Judea, and there pitched his camp; upon which Judas met him; and when he intended to give him battle, he saw that his soldiers were backward to fight, because their number was small, and because they wanted food, for they were fasting, he encouraged them, and said to them, that victory and conquest of enemies are not derived from the multitude in armies, but in the exercise of piety towards God; and that they had the plainest instances in their forefathers, who, by their righteousness, exerting themselves on behalf of their own laws, and their own children, had frequently conquered many ten thousands, - for innocence is the strongest army. By this speech he induced his men to contemn the multitude of the enemy, and to fall upon Seron. And upon joining battle with him, he beat the Syrians; and when their general fell among the rest, they all ran away with speed, as thinking that to be their best way of escaping. So he pursued them unto the plain, and slew about eight hundred of the enemy; but the rest escaped to the region which lay near to

the sea.

2. When king Antiochus heard of these things, he was very angry at what had happened; so he got together all his own army, with many mercenaries, whom he had hired from the islands, and took them with him, and prepared to break into Judea about the beginning of the spring. But when, upon his mustering his soldiers, he perceived that his treasures were deficient, and there was a want of money in them, for all the taxes were not paid, by reason of the seditions there had been among the nations he having been so magnanimous and so liberal, that what he had was not sufficient for him, he therefore resolved first to go into Persia, and collect the taxes of that country. Hereupon he left one whose name was Lysias, who was in great repute with him governor of the kingdom, as far as the bounds of Egypt, and of the Lower Asia, and reaching from the river Euphrates, and committed to him a certain part of his forces, and of his elephants, and charged him to bring up his son Antiochus with all possible care, until he came back; and that he should conquer Judea, and take its inhabitants for slaves, and utterly destroy Jerusalem, and abolish the whole nation. And when king Antiochus had given these things in charge to Lysias, he went into Persia; and in the hundred and forty-seventh year he passed over Euphrates, and went to the superior provinces.

3. Upon this Lysias chose Ptolemy, the son of Dorymenes, and Nicanor, and Gorgias, very potent men among the king's friends, and delivered to them forty thousand foot soldiers, and seven thousand horsemen, and sent them against Judea, who came as far as the city Emmaus, and pitched their camp in the plain country. There came also to them auxiliaries out of Syria, and the country round about; as also many of the runagate Jews. And besides these came some merchants to buy those that should be carried captives, (having bonds with them to bind those that should be made prisoners,) with that silver and gold which they were to pay for their price. And when Judas saw their camp, and how numerous their enemies were, he persuaded his

own soldiers to be of good courage, and exhorted them to place their hopes of victory in God, and to make supplication to him, according to the custom of their country, clothed in sackcloth; and to show what was their usual habit of supplication in the greatest dangers, and thereby to prevail with God to grant you the victory over your enemies. So he set them in their ancient order of battle used by their forefathers, under their captains of thousands, and other officers, and dismissed such as were newly married, as well as those that had newly gained possessions, that they might not fight in a cowardly manner, out of an inordinate love of life, in order to enjoy those blessings. When he had thus disposed his soldiers, he encouraged them to fight by the following speech, which he made to them: "O my fellow soldiers, no other time remains more opportune than the present for courage and contempt of dangers; for if you now fight manfully, you may recover your liberty, which, as it is a thing of itself agreeable to all men, so it proves to be to us much more desirable, by its affording us the liberty of worshipping God. Since therefore you are in such circumstances at present, you must either recover that liberty, and so regain a happy and blessed way of living, which is that according to our laws, and the customs of our country, or to submit to the most opprobrious sufferings; nor will any seed of your nation remain if you be beat in this battle. Fight therefore manfully; and suppose that you must die, though you do not fight; but believe, that besides such glorious rewards as those of the liberty of your country, of your laws, of your religion, you shall then obtain everlasting glory. Prepare yourselves, therefore, and put yourselves into such an agreeable posture, that you may be ready to fight with the enemy as soon as it is day tomorrow morning."

4. And this was the speech which Judas made to encourage them. But when the enemy sent Gorgias, with five thousand foot and one thousand horse, that he might fall upon Judas by night, and had for that purpose certain of the runagate Jews as guides, the son of Mattathias perceived it, and resolved to fall upon those enemies that were in their camp, now their forces were divided. When they had therefore supped in good time, and had left

many fires in their camp, he marched all night to those enemies that were at Emmaus. So that when Gorgias found no enemy in their camp, but suspected that they were retired, and had hidden themselves among the mountains, he resolved to go and seek them wheresoever they were. But about break of day Judas appeared to those enemies that were at Emmaus, with only three thousand men, and those ill armed, by reason of their poverty; and when he saw the enemy very well and skillfully fortified in their camp, he encouraged the Jews, and told them that they ought to fight, though it were with their naked bodies, for that God had sometimes of old given such men strength, and that against such as were more in number, and were armed also, out of regard to their great courage. So he commanded the trumpeters to sound for the battle; and by thus falling upon the enemies when they did not expect it, and thereby astonishing and disturbing their minds, he slew many of those that resisted him, and went on pursuing the rest as far as Gadara, and the plains of Idumea, and Ashdod, and Jamnia; and of these there fell about three thousand. Yet did Judas exhort his soldiers not to be too desirous of the spoils, for that still they must have a contest and battle with Gorgias, and the forces that were with him; but that when they had once overcome them, then they might securely plunder the camp, because they were the only enemies remaining, and they expected no others. And just as he was speaking to his soldiers, Gorgias's men looked down into that army which they left in their camp, and saw that it was overthrown, and the camp burnt; for the smoke that arose from it showed them, even when they were a great way off, what had happened. When therefore those that were with Gorgias understood that things were in this posture, and perceived that those that were with Judas were ready to fight them, they also were affrighted, and put to flight; but then Judas, as though he had already beaten Gorgias's soldiers without fighting, returned and seized on the spoils. He took a great quantity of gold, and silver, and purple, and blue, and then returned home with joy, and singing hymns to God for their good success; for this victory greatly contributed to the recovery of their liberty.

5. Hereupon Lysias was confounded at the defeat of the army which he had sent, and the next year he got together sixty thousand chosen men. He also took five thousand horsemen, and fell upon Judea; and he went up to the hill country of Bethsur, a village of Judea, and pitched his camp there, where Judas met him with ten thousand men; and when he saw the great number of his enemies, he prayed to God that he would assist him, and joined battle with the first of the enemy that appeared, and beat them, and slew about five thousand of them, and thereby became terrible to the rest of them. Nay, indeed, Lysias observing the great spirit of the Jews, how they were prepared to die rather than lose their liberty, and being afraid of their desperate way of fighting, as if it were real strength, he took the rest of the army back with him, and returned to Antioch, where he listed foreigners into the service, and prepared to fall upon Judea with a greater army.

6. When therefore the generals of Antiochus's armies had been beaten so often, Judas assembled the people together, and told them, that after these many victories which God had given them, they ought to go up to Jerusalem, and purify the temple, and offer the appointed sacrifices. But as soon as he, with the whole multitude, was come to Jerusalem, and found the temple deserted, and its gates burnt down, and plants growing in the temple of their own accord, on account of its desertion, he and those that were with him began to lament, and were quite confounded at the sight of the temple; so he chose out some of his soldiers, and gave them order to fight against those guards that were in the citadel, until he should have purified the temple. When therefore he had carefully purged it, and had brought in new vessels, the candlestick, the table [of shew-bread], and the altar [of incense], which were made of gold, he hung up the veils at the gates, and added doors to them. He also took down the altar [of burnt-offering], and built a new one of stones that he gathered together, and not of such as were hewn with iron tools. So on the five and twentieth day of the month Casleu, which the Macedonians call Apeliens, they lighted the lamps that were on the candlestick, and offered incense upon the altar [of incense], and laid the

loaves upon the table [of shew-bread], and offered burnt-offerings upon the new altar [of burnt-offering]. Now it so fell out, that these things were done on the very same day on which their Divine worship had fallen off, and was reduced to a profane and common use, after three years' time; for so it was, that the temple was made desolate by Antiochus, and so continued for three years. This desolation happened to the temple in the hundred forty and fifth year, on the twenty-fifth day of the month Apeliens, and on the hundred fifty and third olympiad: but it was dedicated anew, on the same day, the twenty-fifth of the month Apeliens, on the hundred and forty-eighth year, and on the hundred and fifty-fourth olympiad. And this desolation came to pass according to the prophecy of Daniel, which was given four hundred and eight years before; for he declared that the Macedonians would dissolve that worship [for some time].

7. Now Judas celebrated the festival of the restoration of the sacrifices of the temple for eight days, and omitted no sort of pleasures thereon; but he feasted them upon very rich and splendid sacrifices; and he honored God, and delighted them by hymns and psalms. Nay, they were so very glad at the revival of their customs, when, after a long time of intermission, they unexpectedly had regained the freedom of their worship, that they made it a law for their posterity, that they should keep a festival, on account of the restoration of their temple worship, for eight days. And from that time to this we celebrate this festival, and call it Lights. I suppose the reason was, because this liberty beyond our hopes appeared to us; and that thence was the name given to that festival. Judas also rebuilt the walls round about the city, and reared towers of great height against the incursions of enemies, and set guards therein. He also fortified the city Bethsura, that it might serve as a citadel against any distresses that might come from our enemies.

Chapter 8

Judas Subdued the Nations Round About

1. When these things were over, the nations round about the Jews were very uneasy at the revival of their power, and rose up together, and destroyed many of them, as gaining advantage over them by laying snares for them, and making secret conspiracies against them. Judas made perpetual expeditions against these men, and endeavored to restrain them from those incursions, and to prevent the mischiefs they did to the Jews. So he fell upon the Idumeans, the posterity of Esau, at Acrabattene, and slew a great many of them, and took their spoils. He also shut up the sons of Bean, that laid wait for the Jews; and he sat down about them, and besieged them, and burnt their towers, and destroyed the men [that were in them]. After this he went thence in haste against the Ammonites, who had a great and a numerous army, of which Timotheus was the commander. And when he had subdued them, he seized on the city Jazer, and took their wives and their children captives, and burnt the city, and then returned into Judea. But when the neighboring nations understood that he was returned, they got together in great numbers in the land of Gilead, and came against those Jews that were at their borders, who then fled to the garrison of Dathema; and sent to Judas, to inform him that Timotheus was endeavoring to take the place whither they were fled. And as these epistles were reading, there came other messengers out of Galilee, who informed him that the inhabitants of Ptolemais, and of Tyre and Sidon, and strangers of Galilee, were gotten together.

2. Accordingly Judas, upon considering what was fit to be done, with relation to the necessity both these cases required, gave order that Simon his brother should take three thousand chosen men, and go to the assistance of the Jews in Galilee, while he and another of his brothers, Jonathan, made haste into the land of Gilead, with eight thousand soldiers. And he left

Joseph, the son of Zacharias, and Azarias, to be over the rest of the forces; and charged them to keep Judea very carefully, and to fight no battles with any persons whomsoever until his return. Accordingly, Simon went into Galilee, and fought the enemy, and put them to flight, and pursued them to the very gates of Ptolemais, and slew about three thousand of them, and took the spoils of those that were slain, and those Jews whom they had made captives, with their baggage, and then returned home.

3. Now as for Judas Maccabeus, and his brother Jonathan, they passed over the river Jordan; and when they had gone three days journey, they lighted upon the Nabateans, who came to meet them peaceably, and who told them how the affairs of those in the land of Gilead stood; and how many of them were in distress, and driven into garrisons, and into the cities of Galilee; and exhorted him to make haste to go against the foreigners, and to endeavor to save his own countrymen out of their hands. To this exhortation Judas hearkened, and returned to the wilderness; and in the first place fell upon the inhabitants of Bosor, and took the city, and beat the inhabitants, and destroyed all the males, and all that were able to fight, and burnt the city. Nor did he stop even when night came on, but he journeyed in it to the garrison where the Jews happened to be then shut up, and where Timotheus lay round the place with his army. And Judas came upon the city in the morning; and when he found that the enemy were making an assault upon the walls, and that some of them brought ladders, on which they might get upon those walls, and that others brought engines [to batter them], he bid the trumpeter to sound his trumpet, and he encouraged his soldiers cheerfully to undergo dangers for the sake of their brethren and kindred; he also parted his army into three bodies, and fell upon the backs of their enemies. But when Timotheus's men perceived that it was Maccabeus that was upon them, of both whose courage and good success in war they had formerly had sufficient experience, they were put to flight; but Judas followed them with his army, and slew about eight thousand of them. He then turned aside to a city of the foreigners called Malle, and took it, and slew all the males, and

burnt the city itself. He then removed from thence, and overthrew Casphom and Bosor, and many other cities of the land of Gilead.

4. But not long after this, Timotheus prepared a great army, and took many others as auxiliaries; and induced some of the Arabians, by the promise of rewards, to go with him in this expedition, and came with his army beyond the brook, over against the city Raphon; and he encouraged his soldiers, if it came to a battle with the Jews, to fight courageously, and to hinder their passing over the brook; for he said to them beforehand, that "if they come over it, we shall be beaten." And when Judas heard that Timotheus prepared himself to fight, he took all his own army, and went in haste against Timotheus his enemy; and when he had passed over the brook, he fell upon his enemies, and some of them met him, whom he slew, and others of them he so terrified, that he compelled them to throw down their arms and fly; and some of them escaped, but some of them fled to what was called the Temple of Camaim, and hoped thereby to preserve themselves; but Judas took the city, and slew them, and burnt the temple, and so used several ways of destroying his enemies.

5. When he had done this, he gathered the Jews together, with their children and wives, and the substance that belonged to them, and was going to bring them back into Judea; but as soon as he was come to a certain city, whose name was Ephron, that lay upon the road, (and it was not possible for him to go any other way, so he was not willing to go back again,) he then sent to the inhabitants, and desired that they would open their gates, and permit them to go on their way through the city; for they had stopped up the gates with stones, and cut off their passage through it. And when the inhabitants of Ephron would not agree to this proposal, he encouraged those that were with him, and encompassed the city round, and besieged it, and, lying round it by day and night, took the city, and slew every male in it, and burnt it all down, and so obtained a way through it; and the multitude of those that were slain was so great, that they went over the dead bodies. So

they came over Jordan, and arrived at the great plain, over against which is situate the city Bethshah, which is called by the Greeks Scythopolis. (1) And going away hastily from thence, they came into Judea, singing psalms and hymns as they went, and indulging such tokens of mirth as are usual in triumphs upon victory. They also offered thank-offerings, both for their good success, and for the preservation of their army, for not one of the Jews was slain in these battles.(2)

6. But as to Joseph, the son of Zacharias, and Azarias, whom Judas left generals [of the rest of his forces] at the same time when Simon was in Galilee, fighting against the people of Ptolemais, and Judas himself, and his brother Jonathan, were in the land of Gilead, did these men also affect the glory of being courageous generals in war, in order whereto they took the army that was under their command, and came to Jamnia. There Gorgias, the general of the forces of Jamnia, met them; and upon joining battle with him, they lost two thousand of their army, (3) and fled away, and were pursued to the very borders of Judea. And this misfortune befell them by their disobedience to what injunctions Judas had given them, not to fight with any one before his return. For besides the rest of Judas's sagacious counsels, one may well wonder at this concerning the misfortune that befell the forces commanded by Joseph and Azarias, which he understood would happen, if they broke any of the injunctions he had given them. But Judas and his brethren did not leave off fighting with the Idumeans, but pressed upon them on all sides, and took from them the city of Hebron, and demolished all its fortifications, and set all its towers on fire, and burnt the country of the foreigners, and the city Marissa. They came also to Ashdod, and took it, and laid it waste, and took away a great deal of the spoils and prey that were in it, and returned to Judea.

Footnotes:

1. The reason why Bethshah was called Scythopolis is well known from

Herodotus, B. I. p. 105, and Syncellus, p. 214, that the Scythians, when they overran Asia, in the days of Josiah, seized on this city, and kept it as long as they continued in Asia, from which time it retained the name of Scythopolis, or the City of the Scythians.

2. This most providential preservation of all the religious Jews in this expedition, which was according to the will of God, is observable often among God's people, the Jews; and somewhat very like it in the changes of the four monarchies, which were also providential. See Prideaux at the years 331, 333, and 334.
3. Here is another great instance of Providence, that when, even at the very time that Simon, and Judas, and Jonathan were so miraculously preserved and blessed, in the just defense of their laws and religion, these other generals of the Jews, who went to fight for honor in a vain-glorious way, and without any commission from God, or the family he had raised up to deliver them, were miserably disappointed and defeated. See 1 Macc. 5:61, 62.

Chapter 9

The Death of Antiochus Epiphane

1. About this time it was that king Antiochus, as he was going over the upper countries, heard that there was a very rich city in Persia, called Elymais; and therein a very rich temple of Diana, and that it was full of all sorts of donations dedicated to it; as also weapons and breastplates, which, upon inquiry, he found had been left there by Alexander, the son of Philip, king of Macedonia. And being incited by these motives, he went in haste to Elymais, and assaulted it, and besieged it. But as those that were in it were not terrified at his assault, nor at his siege, but opposed him very courageously, he was beaten off his hopes; for they drove him away from the city, and went out and pursued after him, insomuch that he fled away as far as Babylon, and lost a great many of his army. And when he was grieving for this disappointment, some persons told him of the defeat of his commanders whom he had left behind him to fight against Judea, and what strength the Jews had already gotten. When this concern about these affairs was added to the former, he was confounded, and by the anxiety he was in fell into a distemper, which, as it lasted a great while, and as his pains increased upon him, so he at length perceived he should die in a little time; so he called his friends to him, and told them that his distemper was severe upon him; and confessed withal, that this calamity was sent upon him for the miseries he had brought upon the Jewish nation, while he plundered their temple, and contemned their God; and when he had said this, he gave up the ghost. Whence one may wonder at Polybius of Megalopolis, who, though otherwise a good man, yet saith that "Antiochus died because he had a purpose to plunder the temple of Diana in Persia;" for the purposing to do a thing, (1) but not actually doing it, is not worthy of punishment. But if Polybius could think that Antiochus thus lost his life on that account, it is much more probable that this king died on account of his sacrilegious plundering of the

temple at Jerusalem. But we will not contend about this matter with those who may think that the cause assigned by this Polybius of Megalopolis is nearer the truth than that assigned by us.

2. However, Antiochus, before he died, called for Philip, who was one of his companions, and made him the guardian of his kingdom; and gave him his diadem, and his garment, and his ring, and charged him to carry them, and deliver them to his son Antiochus; and desired him to take care of his education, and to preserve the kingdom for him. (2) This Antiochus died in the hundred forty and ninth year; but it was Lysias that declared his death to the multitude, and appointed his son Antiochus to be king, (of whom at present he had the care,) and called him Eupator.

3. At this time it was that the garrison in the citadel of Jerusalem, with the Jewish runagates, did a great deal of harm to the Jews; for the soldiers that were in that garrison rushed out upon the sudden, and destroyed such as were going up to the temple in order to offer their sacrifices, for this citadel adjoined to and overlooked the temple. When these misfortunes had often happened to them, Judas resolved to destroy that garrison; whereupon he got all the people together, and vigorously besieged those that were in the citadel. This was in the hundred and fiftieth year of the dominion of the Seleucidse. So he made engines of war, and erected bulwarks, and very zealously pressed on to take the citadel. But there were not a few of the runagates who were in the place that went out by night into the country, and got together some other wicked men like themselves, and went to Antiochus the king, and desired of him that he would not suffer them to be neglected, under the great hardships that lay upon them from those of their own nation; and this because their sufferings were occasioned on his father's account, while they left the religious worship of their fathers, and preferred that which he had commanded them to follow: that there was danger lest the citadel, and those appointed to garrison it by the king, should be taken by Judas, and those that were with him, unless he would send them succors. When

Antiochus, who was but a child, heard this, he was angry, and sent for his captains and his friends, and gave order that they should get an army of mercenaries together, with such men also of his own kingdom as were of an age fit for war. Accordingly, an army was collected of about a hundred thousand footmen, and twenty thousand horsemen, and thirty-two elephants.

4. So the king took this army, and marched hastily out of Antioch, with Lysias, who had the command of the whole, and came to Idumea, and thence went up to the city Bethsnra, a city that was strong, and not to be taken without great difficulty. He set about this city, and besieged it. And while the inhabitants of Bethsura courageously opposed him, and sallied out upon him, and burnt his engines of war, a great deal of time was spent in the siege. But when Judas heard of the king's coming, he raised the siege of the citadel, and met the king, and pitched his camp in certain straits, at a place called Bethzachriah, at the distance of seventy furlongs from the enemy; but the king soon drew his forces from Bethsura, and brought them to those straits. And as soon as it was day, he put his men in battle-array, and made his elephants follow one another through the narrow passes, because they could not be set sideways by one another. Now round about every elephant there were a thousand footmen, and five hundred horsemen. The elephants also had high towers [upon their backs], and archers [in them]. And he also made the rest of his army to go up the mountains, and put his friends before the rest; and gave orders for the army to shout aloud, and so he attacked the enemy. He also exposed to sight their golden and brazen shields, so that a glorious splendor was sent from them; and when they shouted the mountains echoed again. When Judas saw this, he was not terrified, but received the enemy with great courage, and slew about six hundred of the first ranks. But when his brother Eleazar, whom they called Auran, saw the tallest of all the elephants armed with royal breastplates, and supposed that the king was upon him, he attacked him with great quickness and bravery. He also slew many of those that were about the elephant, and scattered the rest, and then went under the belly of the elephant, and smote him, and slew him; so the

elephant fell upon Eleazar, and by his weight crushed him to death. And thus did this man come to his end, when he had first courageously destroyed many of his enemies.

5. But Judas, seeing the strength of the enemy, retired to Jerusalem, and prepared to endure a siege. As for Antiochus, he sent part of his army to Bethsura, to besiege it, and with the rest of his army he came against Jerusalem; but the inhabitants of Bethsura were terrified at his strength; and seeing that their provisions grew scarce, they delivered themselves up on the security of oaths that they should suffer no hard treatment from the king. And when Antiochus had thus taken the city, he did them no other harm than sending them out naked. He also placed a garrison of his own in the city. But as for the temple of Jerusalem, he lay at its siege a long time, while they within bravely defended it; for what engines soever the king set against them, they set other engines again to oppose them. But then their provisions failed them; what fruits of the ground they had laid up were spent and the land being not ploughed that year, continued unsowed, because it was the seventh year, on which, by our laws, we are obliged to let it lay uncultivated. And withal, so many of the besieged ran away for want of necessaries, that but a few only were left in the temple.

6. And these happened to be the circumstances of such as were besieged in the temple. But then, because Lysias, the general of the army, and Antiochus the king, were informed that Philip was coming upon them out of Persia, and was endeavoring to get the management of public affairs to himself, they came into these sentiments, to leave the siege, and to make haste to go against Philip; yet did they resolve not to let this be known to the soldiers or to the officers: but the king commanded Lysias to speak openly to the soldiers and the officers, without saying a word about the business of Philip; and to intimate to them that the siege would be very long; that the place was very strong; that they were already in want of provisions; that many affairs of the kingdom wanted regulation; and that it was much better

to make a league with the besieged, and to become friends to their whole nation, by permitting them to observe the laws of their fathers, while they broke out into this war only because they were deprived of them, and so to depart home. When Lysias had discoursed thus to them, both the army and the officers were pleased with this resolution.

7. Accordingly the king sent to Judas, and to those that were besieged with them, and promised to give them peace, and to permit them to make use of, and live according to, the laws of their fathers; and they gladly received his proposals; and when they had gained security upon oath for their performance, they went out of the temple. But when Antiochus came into it, and saw how strong the place was, he broke his oaths, and ordered his army that was there to pluck down the walls to the ground; and when he had so done, he returned to Antioch. He also carried with him Onias the high priest, who was also called Menelaus; for Lysias advised the king to slay Menelaus, if he would have the Jews be quiet, and cause him no further disturbance, for that this man was the origin of all the mischief the Jews had done them, by persuading his father to compel the Jews to leave the religion of their fathers. So the king sent Menelaus to Berea, a city of Syria, and there had him put to death, when he had been high priest ten years. He had been a wicked and an impious man; and, in order to get the government to himself, had compelled his nation to transgress their own laws. After the death of Menelaus, Alcimus, who was also called Jacimus, was made high priest. But when king Antiochus found that Philip had already possessed himself of the government, he made war against him, and subdued him, and took him, and slew him. Now as to Onias, the son of the high priest, who, as we before informed you, was left a child when his father died, when he saw that the king had slain his uncle Menelaus, and given the high priesthood to Alcimus, who was not of the high priest stock, but was induced by Lysias to translate that dignity from his family to another house, he fled to Ptolemy, king of Egypt; and when he found he was in great esteem with him, and with his wife Cleopatra, he desired and obtained a place in the Nomus of Heliopolis,

wherein he built a temple like to that at Jerusalem; of which therefore we shall hereafter give an account, in a place more proper for it.

Footnotes:

1. Since St. Paul, a Pharisee, confesses that he had not known concupiscence, or desires, to be sinful, had not the tenth commandment said, "Thou shalt not covet," Romans 7:7, the case seems to have been much the same with our Josephus, who was of the same sect, that he had not a deep sense of the greatness of any sins that proceeded no further than the intention. However, since Josephus speaks here properly of the punishment of death, which is not intended by any law, either of God or man, for the bare intention, his words need not to be strained to mean, that sins intended, but not executed, were no sins at all.
2. No wonder that Josephus here describes Antiochus Eupator as young, and wanting tuition, when he came to the crown, since Appian informs us (Syriac. p. 177) that he was then but nine years old.

Chapter 10

The Death of Alcimus and the Succession of Judas

1. About the same time Demetrius, the son of Seleucus, fled away from Rome, and took Tripoli, a city of Syria, and set the diadem on his own head. He also gathered certain mercenary soldiers together, and entered into his kingdom, and was joyfully received by all, who delivered themselves up to him. And when they had taken Antiochus the king, and Lysias, they brought them to him alive; both which were immediately put to death by the command of Demetrius, when Antiochus had reigned two years, as we have already elsewhere related. But there were now many of the wicked Jewish runagates that came together to him, and with them Alcimus the high priest, who accused the whole nation, and particularly Judas and his brethren; and said that they had slain all his friends, and that those in his kingdom that were of his party, and waited for his return, were by them put to death; that these men had ejected them out of their own country, and caused them to be sojourners in a foreign land; and they desired that he would send some one of his own friends, and know from him what mischief Judas's party had done.

2. At this Demetrius was very angry, and sent Bacchides, a friend of Antiochus Epiphanes, (1) a good man, and one that had been intrusted with all Mesopotamia, and gave him an army, and committed Alcimus the high priest to his care; and gave him charge to slay Judas, and those that were with him. So Bacchides made haste, and went out of Antioch with his army; and when he was come into Judea, he sent to Judas and his brethren, to discourse with them about a league of friendship and peace, for he had a mind to take him by treachery. But Judas did not give credit to him, for he saw that he came with so great an army as men do not bring when they come to make peace, but to make war. However, some of the people acquiesced in what Bacchides caused to be proclaimed; and supposing they should undergo

no considerable harm from Alcimus, who was their countryman, they went over to them; and when they had received oaths from both of them, that neither they themselves, nor those of the same sentiments, should come to any harm, they intrusted themselves with them. But Bacchides troubled not himself about the oaths he had taken, but slew threescore of them, although, by not keeping his faith with those that first went over, he deterred all the rest, who had intentions to go over to him, from doing it. But as he was gone out of Jerusalem, and was at the village called Bethzetho, he sent out, and caught many of the deserters, and some of the people also, and slew them all; and enjoined all that lived in the country to submit to Alcimus. So he left him there, with some part of the army, that he might have wherewith to keep the country in obedience and returned to Antioch to king Demetrius.

3. But Alcimus was desirous to have the dominion more firmly assured to him; and understanding that, if he could bring it about that the multitude should be his friends, he should govern with greater security, he spake kind words to them all, and discoursed to each of them after an agreeable and pleasant manner; by which means he quickly had a great body of men and an army about him, although the greater part of them were of the wicked, and the deserters. With these, whom he used as his servants and soldiers, he went all over the country, and slew all that he could find of Judas's party. But when Judas saw that Alcimus was already become great, and had destroyed many of the good and holy men of the country, he also went all over the country, and destroyed those that were of the other party. But when Alcimus saw that he was not able to oppose Judas, nor was equal to him in strength, he resolved to apply himself to king Demetrius for his assistance; so he came to Antioch, and irritated him against Judas, and accused him, alleging that he had undergone a great many miseries by his means, and that he would do more mischief unless he were prevented, and brought to punishment, which must be done by sending a powerful force against him.

4. So Demetrius, being already of opinion that it would be a thing

pernicious to his own affairs to overlook Judas, now he was becoming so great, sent against him Nicanor, the most kind and most faithful of all his friends; for he it was who fled away with him from the city of Rome. He also gave him as many forces as he thought sufficient for him to conquer Judas withal, and bid him not to spare the nation at all. When Nicanor was come to Jerusalem, he did not resolve to fight Judas immediately, but judged it better to get him into his power by treachery; so he sent him a message of peace, and said there was no manner of necessity for them to fight and hazard themselves; and that he would give him his oath that he would do him no harm, for that he only came with some friends, in order to let him know what king Demetrius's intentions were, and what opinion he had of their nation. When Nicanor had delivered this message, Judas and his brethren complied with him, and suspecting no deceit, they gave him assurances of friendship, and received Nicanor and his army; but while he was saluting Judas, and they were talking together, he gave a certain signal to his own soldiers, upon which they were to seize upon Judas; but he perceived the treachery, and ran back to his own soldiers, and fled away with them. So upon this discovery of his purpose, and of the snares laid for Judas, Nicanor determined to make open war with him, and gathered his army together, and prepared for fighting him; and upon joining battle with him at a certain village called Capharsalama, he beat Judas, (2) and forced him to fly to that citadel which was at Jerusalem.

5. And when Nicanor came down from the citadel unto the temple, some of the priests and elders met him, and saluted him; and showed him the sacrifices which they offered to God for the king: upon which he blasphemed, and threatened them, that unless the people would deliver up Judas to him, upon his return he would pull clown their temple. And when he had thus threatened them, he departed from Jerusalem. But the priests fell into tears out of grief at what he had said, and besought God to deliver them from their enemies But now for Nicanor, when he was gone out of Jerusalem, and was at a certain village called Bethoron, he there pitched his

camp, another army out of Syria having joined him. And Judas pitched his camp at Adasa, another village, which was thirty furlongs distant from Bethoron, having no more than one thousand soldiers. And when he had encouraged them not to be dismayed at the multitude of their enemies, nor to regard how many they were against whom they were going to fight, but to consider who they themselves were, and for what great rewards they hazarded themselves, and to attack the enemy courageously, he led them out to fight, and joining battle with Nicanor, which proved to be a severe one, he overcame the enemy, and slew many of them; and at last Nicanor himself, as he was fighting gloriously, fell: - upon whose fall the army did not stay; but when they had lost their general, they were put to flight, and threw down their arms. Judas also pursued them and slew them, and gave notice by the sound of the trumpets to the neighboring villages that he had conquered the enemy; which, when the inhabitants heard, they put on their armor hastily, and met their enemies in the face as they were running away, and slew them, insomuch that not one of them escaped out of this battle, who were in number nine thousand. This victory happened to fall on the thirteenth day of that month which by the Jews is called Adar and by the Macedonians Dystrus; and the Jews thereon celebrate this victory every year, and esteem it as a festival day. After which the Jewish nation were, for a while, free from wars, and enjoyed peace; but afterward they returned into their former state of wars and hazards.

6. But now as the high priest Alcimus, was resolving to pull down the wall of the sanctuary, which had been there of old time, and had been built by the holy prophets, he was smitten suddenly by God, and fell down. (3) This stroke made him fall down speechless upon the ground; and undergoing torments for many days, he at length died, when he had been high priest four years. And when he was dead, the people bestowed the high priesthood on Judas; who hearing of the power of the Romans, and that they had conquered in war Galatia, and Iberia, and Carthage, and Libya; and that, besides these, they had subdued Greece, and their kings, Perseus, and Philip, and Antiochus

the Great also; he resolved to enter into a league of friendship with them. He therefore sent to Rome some of his friends, Eupolemus the son of John, and Jason the son of Eleazar, and by them desired the Romans that they would assist them, and be their friends, and would write to Demetrius that he would not fight against the Jews. So the senate received the ambassadors that came from Judas to Rome, and discoursed with them about the errand on which they came, and then granted them a league of assistance. They also made a decree concerning it, and sent a copy of it into Judea. It was also laid up in the capitol, and engraven in brass. The decree itself was this: "The decree of the senate concerning a league of assistance and friendship with the nation of the Jews. It shall not be lawful for any that are subject to the Romans to make war with the nation of the Jews, nor to assist those that do so, either by sending them corn, or ships, or money; and if any attack be made upon the Jews, the Romans shall assist them, as far as they are able; and again, if any attack be made upon the Romans, the Jews shall assist them. And if the Jews have a mind to add to, or to take away any thing from, this league of assistance, that shall be done with the common consent of the Romans. And whatsoever addition shall thus be made, it shall be of force." This decree was written by Eupolemus the son of John, and by Jason the son of Eleazar, (4) when Judas was high priest of the nation, and Simon his brother was general of the army. And this was the first league that the Romans made with the Jews, and was managed after this manner.

Footnotes:

1. It is no way probable that Josephus would call Bacchidoa, that bitter and bloody enemy of the Jews, as our present copies have it, a man good, or kind, and gentle, What the author of the First Book of Maccabees, whom Josephus here follows, instead of that character, says of him, is, that he was a great man in the kingdom, and faithful to his king; which was very probably Josephus's meaning also.
2. Josephus's copies must have been corrupted when they here give victory

to Nicanor, contrary to the words following, which imply that he who was beaten fled into the citadel, which for certain belonged to the city of David, or to Mount Zion, and was in the possession of Nicanor's garrison, and not of Judas's. As also it is contrary to the express words of Josephus's original author, 1 Macc. 7:32, who says that Nicanor lost about five thousand men, and fled to the city of David.

3. This account of the miserable death of Alcimus, or Jac-mus, the wicked high priest, (the first that was not of the family of the high priests, and made by a vile heathen, Lysias,) before the death of Judas, and of Judas's succession to him as high priest, both here, and at the conclusion of this book, directly contradicts 1 Macc. 9:54-57, which places his death after the death of Judas, and says not a syllable of the high priesthood of Judas. How well the Roman histories agree to this account of the conquests and powerful condition of the Romans at this time, see the notes in Havercamp's edition; only that the number of the senators of Rome was then just three hundred and twenty, is, I think, only known from 1 Macc. 8:15.
4. This subscription is wanting 1 Macc. 8:17, 29, and must be the words of Josephus, who by mistake thought, as we have just now seen, that Judas was at this time high priest, and accordingly then reckoned his brother Jonathan to be the general of the army, which yet he seems not to have been till after the death of Judas.

Chapter 11

Judas Fell as He Was Courageously Fighting

1. But when Demetrius was informed of the death of Nicanor, and of the destruction of the army that was with him, he sent Bacchides again with an army into Judea, who marched out of Antioch, and came into Judea, and pitched his camp at Arbela, a city of Galilee; and having besieged and taken those that were there in caves, (for many of the people fled into such places,) he removed, and made all the haste he could to Jerusalem. And when he had learned that Judas had pitched his camp at a certain village whose name was Bethzetho, he led his army against him: they were twenty thousand footmen, and two thousand horsemen. Now Judas had no more soldiers than one thousand. (1) When these saw the multitude of Bacchides's men, they were afraid, and left their camp, and fled all away, excepting eight hundred. Now when Judas was deserted by his own soldiers, and the enemy pressed upon him, and gave him no time to gather his army together, he was disposed to fight with Bacchides's army, though he had but eight hundred men with him; so he exhorted these men to undergo the danger courageously, and encouraged them to attack the enemy. And when they said they were not a body sufficient to fight so great an army, and advised that they should retire now, and save themselves and that when he had gathered his own men together, then he should fall upon the enemy afterwards, his answer was this: "Let not the sun ever see such a thing, that I should show my back to the enemy and although this be the time that will bring me to my end, and I must die in this battle, I will rather stand to it courageously, and bear whatsoever comes upon me, than by now running away bring reproach upon my former great actions, or tarnish their glory." This was the speech he made to those that remained with him, whereby he encouraged them to attack the enemy.

2. But Bacchides drew his army out of their camp, and put them in array

for the battle. He set the horsemen on both the wings, and the light soldiers and the archers he placed before the whole army, but he was himself on the right wing. And when he had thus put his army in order of battle, and was going to join battle with the enemy, he commanded the trumpeter to give a signal of battle, and the army to make a shout, and to fall on the enemy. And when Judas had done the same, he joined battle with them; and as both sides fought valiantly, and the battle continued till sun-set, Judas saw that Bacehides and the strongest part of the army was in the right wing, and thereupon took the most courageous men with him, and ran upon that part of the army, and fell upon those that were there, and broke their ranks, and drove them into the middle, and forced them to run away, and pursued them as far as to a mountain called Aza: but when those of the left wing saw that the right wing was put to flight, they encompassed Judas, and pursued him, and came behind him, and took him into the middle of their army; so being not able to fly, but encompassed round about with enemies, he stood still, and he and those that were with him fought; and when he had slain a great many of those that came against him, he at last was himself wounded, and fell and gave up the ghost, and died in a way like to his former famous actions. When Judas was dead, those that were with him had no one whom they could regard [as their commander]; but when they saw themselves deprived of such a general, they fled. But Simon and Jonathan, Judas's brethren, received his dead body by a treaty from the enemy, and carried it to the village of Modin, where their father had been buried, and there buried him; while the multitude lamented him many days, and performed the usual solemn rites of a funeral to him. And this was the end that Judas came to. He had been a man of valor and a great warrior, and mindful of the commands of their father Matrathins; and had undergone all difficulties, both in doing and suffering, for the liberty of his countrymen. And when his character was so excellent [while he was alive], he left behind him a glorious reputation and memorial, by gaining freedom for his nation, and delivering them from slavery under the Macedonians. And when he had retained the high priesthood three years, he died.

Footnote:

1. That this copy of Josephus, as he wrote it, had here not one thousand, but three thousand, with 1 Macc 9:5, is very plain, because though the main part ran away at first, even in Josephus, as well as in 1 Macc. 9:6, yet, as there, so here, eight hundred are said to have remained with Judas, which would be absurd, if the whole number had been no more than one thousand.