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The second document about
the Maccabees

Introduction

The Second Document about the Maccabees gives another account of the struggle to preserve Jewish worship and the temple in Yerushalem (Jerusalem). Its main account overlaps the earlier part of *The First Document about the Maccabees*, concentrating on events leading up to and during the leadership of Yehudah (Judas) Makabi. The writer explains that this is a shortened version of a history written in five books by Yason of Kurainai (Cyrene).
The book opens with letters encouraging the celebration of the temple's rededication. It then describes conflict over the high priesthood, the plundering of the temple, and attempts to force the people to abandon God's instructions. Particular attention is given to Eleazar and to seven brothers and their mother, who choose death rather than disobedience and express their hope that God will raise them to life again.
The later chapters follow Yehudah's victories and the recovery of the temple. Throughout the account, prayer, God's discipline and mercy, and help from heaven are closely connected with what happens on the battlefield. The writer wants readers to honour the temple, remember those who remained faithful under suffering, and recognise God as the one who rescues his people.
The Second Document about the Maccabees is recognised as Deuterocanonical Scripture by the Romaios Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Russian Orthodox Churches.
Makabi (from which the term Maccabee is derived) is an acronym formed from the first letters of Exodus 15:11: "Mi kamokha ba'elim YHWH" — "Who is like you among the gods, Yahweh?"

Main components of this account

Letters about celebrating the temple's rededication *1:1–2:18*
The writer explains the purpose of this history *2:19-32*
The temple's protection, corrupt leaders, and persecution *3:1–6:17*
Eleazar, the seven brothers, and their mother *6:18–7:42*
Yehudah's victories and the rededication of the temple *8:1–10:8*
Further campaigns, agreements, and the defeat of Nikanor *10:9–15:36*
The writer's closing words *15:37-39*

Lighter type marks additions. Underscores join parts of a single source word.
Struck words are untranslated. The ◘ sign marks a verse with no text.
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An invitation to celebrate the temple's rededication

1:1 The kindred, the Yehudim (Jews) who are in Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and those who are in the country of Yehudah (Judea), send greetings and good peace to the kindred, the Yehudim who are throughout Mitsrayim (Egypt). **2** May God do good to you, and remember his covenant with Avraham, Yitshak (Isaac), and Ya'akov (Jacob), his faithful servants, **3** and give you all a heart to worship him and do his will with a strong heart and a willing soul. **4** May God open your heart to his law and his statutes, and make peace, **5** and listen to your requests, and be reconciled with you, and not forsake you in an evil time. **6** Now we're praying for you here.

7 In Demetrios' reign, in the one hundred and sixty-ninth year, we the Yehudim have already written to you in the suffering and in the distress that's come on us in these years, from the time that Yason and his company revolted from the holy land and the kingdom, **8** and set the gate on fire, and shed innocent blood. We prayed to the master, and were heard. We offered sacrifices and meal offerings. We lit the lamps. We set out the show bread.[1] **9** Now see that you keep the days of the feast of tabernacles in the month Kislev in the one hundred and eighty-eighth year.

A second letter to the Yehudim in Mitsrayim

10 The people of Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and those who are in Yehudah (Judea), with the senate and Yehudah, to Aristobulos, King Ptolemaios's (Ptolemy's) teacher, who's also of the stock of the anointed priests, and to the Yehudim who are in Mitsrayim (Egypt), we send greetings and health.

11 Having been saved by God out of great perils, as men arrayed against a king, we thank him greatly. **12** Because he threw out into Paras (Persia) those who fought against us in the holy city. **13** Because when the prince had come there, with an army that seemed irresistible, they were cut to pieces in Nanaia's temple by the treachery of Nanaia's priests. **14** Because Antiokos (Antiochus), on the pretence that he'd marry her, came into the place, he and his friends who were with him, that they might take a large part of the treasures as a dowry. **15** And when the priests of Nanaia's temple had set the treasures out, and he'd come there with a small company within the wall of the sacred precinct, they locked the temple when Antiokos had come in. **16** Opening the secret door of the panelled ceiling, they threw stones and struck down the prince. They cut him and his company in pieces, and cut off their heads, and threw them to the people who were outside. **17** Blessed be our god in all things, who handed over those who'd committed impiety.

The recovery of the altar's sacred fire

18 Since we're now about to celebrate the purification of the temple in the month Kislev, on the twenty-fifth day, we thought it necessary to notify you, so that you may also keep a feast of tabernacles, and remember the fire which was given when Nehemyah (Nehemiah) offered sacrifices, after he'd built both the temple and the altar.

19 Because indeed when our fathers were about to be led into the land of Paras, the godly priests of that time took some of the fire of the altar, and hid it secretly in the hollow of a well that was without water, where they made sure that the place was unknown to anyone. **20** Now after many years, when it pleased God, Nehemyah, having received a charge from the king of Paras, sent in quest of the fire the descendants of the priests who hid it. When they declared to us that they'd found no fire, but thick liquid, **21** he commanded them to draw some of it out and bring it to him. When the sacrifices had been offered, Nehemyah commanded the priests to sprinkle with that liquid both the wood and the things laid on it. **22** When that was done and some time had passed, and the sun shone out, which before was hidden with clouds, a great blaze was kindled, so that all men marvelled. **23** The priests made a prayer

1 **RV 1:8 · Note** Grk. loaves

Readers' Version

while the sacrifice was being consumed—both the priests and all the others. Yonatan (Jonathan) led and the rest responded, as Nehemyah did.

24 The prayer was like this: "O master, master God, the Creator of all things, who are awesome, strong, righteous, and merciful, who alone are King and gracious, 25 who alone supply every need, who alone are righteous, almighty, and eternal, you who save Yisrael (Israel) out of all evil, who chose the ancestors and sanctified them, 26 accept the sacrifice for all your people Yisrael, and preserve your own portion, and consecrate it. 27 Gather together our scattered people, set at liberty those who are in bondage among the heathen, look on those who are despised and abhorred, and let the heathen know that you're our god. 28 Punish those who oppress us and in arrogance shamefully entreat us. 29 Plant your people in your holy place, even as Mosheh (Moses) said."

30 Then the priests sang the hymns. 31 As soon as the sacrifice was consumed, then Nehemyah (Nehemiah) commanded that the rest of the liquid be poured on large stones. 32 When this was done, a flame was kindled; but when the light from the altar shone back, it went out. 33 When the matter became known, and it was told the king of the Persians that, in the place where the priests who were led away had hid the fire, the liquid appeared which Nehemyah and those who were with him purified the sacrifice, 34 then the king enclosed the place and made it sacred after he'd investigated the matter. 35 When the king would show favour to any, he'd exchange many presents and give them some of this liquid. 36 Nehemyah and those who were with him called this thing "Nephthar", which is by interpretation, "Cleansing"; but most men call it Nephthai.

Yirmiyah hides the sacred tent and chest

2:1 It's also found in the records that the prophet Yirmiyah (Jeremiah) commanded those who were carried away to take some of the fire, as has been mentioned, 2 and how that the prophet charged those who were carried away, having given them the law, that they shouldn't forget the statutes of the master or be led astray in their minds when they saw images of gold and silver, and their adornment. 3 With other such words exhorted he them, that the law shouldn't depart from their hearts.

4 It was in the writing that the prophet, being warned by God, commanded that the tabernacle and the ark should follow with him,[2] when he went out to the mountain where Mosheh (Moses) had gone up and saw God's inheritance. 5 Yirmiyah came and found a cave, he brought the tabernacle, the ark, and the altar of incense into it; then he sealed the entrance. 6 Some of those who followed with him came there that they might mark the way, and couldn't find it. 7 But when Yirmiyah learnt about that, he rebuked them, saying, "The place will be unknown until God gathers the people together again and shows mercy. 8 Then the master will disclose these things, and the master's glory will be seen with the cloud, as it was also shown to Mosheh, also as Shelomoh (Solomon) implored that the place might be consecrated greatly, 9 and it was also declared that he, having wisdom, offered a sacrifice of dedication, and of the finishing of the temple. 10 As Mosheh prayed to the master and fire came down out of heaven and consumed the sacrifice, even so Shelomoh also prayed, and the fire came down and consumed the burnt offerings. 11 Mosheh[3] said, 'Because the sin offering hadn't been eaten, it was consumed in the same way.' 12 Likewise Shelomoh kept the eight days."

13 The same things were reported both in the public archives and in Nehemyah's (Nehemiah's) records, and also how he, founding a library, gathered together the books about the kings and prophets, and the writings of David, and letters of kings about sacred gifts. 14 In the

2 **RV 2:4 · Note** Grk. and when. The Greek text here is probably corrupt.

3 **RV 2:11 · Note** See Leviticus 10:16 and 9:24.

same way Yehudah (Judas) also gathered together for us all those books that'd been scattered because of the war, and they're still with us. **15** If therefore you have need of them, send some people to bring them to you.

16 Seeing then that we're about to celebrate the purification, we write to you. You'll therefore do well if you celebrate the days. **17** Now God, who saved all his people, and restored the heritage to all, with the kingdom, the priesthood, and the consecration, **18** even as he promised through the law—in God have we hope, that he'll soon have mercy on us, and gather us together out of everywhere under heaven into his holy place; for he delivered us out of great evils, and purified the place.

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The writer explains the purpose of this history

19 Now the things about Yehudah (Judas) Makabi (Maccabaeus) and his brothers, the purification of the greatest temple, the dedication of the altar, **20** and further the wars against Antiokos (Antiochus) Epifanes (Epiphanes) and Eupator his son, **21** and the manifestations that came from heaven to those who fought with one another in brave actions for the religion of the Yehudim (Jews); so that, being but a few, they seized the whole country, chased the barbarous multitudes, **22** recovered again the temple renowned all the world over, freed the city, and restored the laws which were about to be overthrown, seeing the master became gracious to them with all kindness.
23 These things which have been declared by Yason of Kurainai (Cyrene) in five books, we'll attempt to abridge in one book. **24** Because having in view the confused mass of the numbers, and the[4] difficulty which awaits those who'd enter into the narratives of the history, because of the abundance of the matter, **25** we were careful that those who choose to read may be attracted, and that those who wish us well may find it easy to recall, and that all readers may benefit. **26** Although to us, who've taken on ourselves the painful labour of the abridgement, the task isn't easy, but a matter of sweat and sleeplessness, **27** even as it's no light thing to him who prepares a banquet, and seeks the benefit of others. Nevertheless, for the sake of the gratitude of the many we'll gladly endure the painful labour, **28** leaving to the historian the exact handling of every particular, and again having no strength to fill in the outlines of our abridgement. **29** Because as the master-builder of a new house must care for the whole structure, and again he who undertakes to decorate and paint it must seek out the things fit for its adorning; even so I think it's also with us. **30** To occupy the ground, and to indulge in long discussions, and to be curious in particulars, is fitting for the first author of the history; **31** but to strive after brevity of expression, and to avoid a laboured fullness in the treatment, is to be granted to him who'd bring a writing into a new form. **32** Here then let's begin the narration, only adding this much to that which has already been said; for it's a foolish thing to make a long prologue to the history, and to abridge the history itself.

Heliodoros tries to seize the temple's money

3:1 When the holy city was inhabited with unbroken peace and the laws were kept very well because of the godliness of Honyo (Onias) the high priest and his hatred of wickedness, **2** it happened that even the kings themselves honoured the place and glorified the temple with the noblest presents, **3** so that even King Seleukos (Seleucus) of Asia bore all the costs belonging to the services of the sacrifices out of his own revenues. **4** But a man named Shim'on (Simon) of the tribe of Benyamin, having been made guardian of the temple, disagreed with the high priest about the ruling of the market in the city. **5** When he couldn't overcome Honyo, he went to Apolonios of Tarsos,[5] who at that time was governor of Coele-Syria and Foinikai. **6** He brought him word how that the treasury in Yerushalem was

4 **RV 2:24 · Note** Or, weariness

5 **RV 3:5 · Note** Greek Thraseas

Readers' Version

full of untold sums of money, so that the multitude of the funds was innumerable, and that they didn't pertain to the account of the sacrifices, but that it was possible that these should fall under the king's power. 7 When Apolonios met the king, he informed him of the money about which he'd been told. So the king appointed Heliodoros, who was his chancellor, and sent him with a command to accomplish the removal of the reported money. 8 So Heliodoros set out on his journey at once, ostensibly to visit the cities of Coele-Syria and Foinikai, but in fact to execute the king's purpose.

9 When he'd come to Yerushalem (Jerusalem) and had been courteously received by the high priest of the city, he told him about the information which had been given, and declared why he'd come; and he enquired if in truth these things were so. 10 The high priest explained to him that there were in the treasury deposits of widows and orphans, 11 and moreover some money belonging to Hurkanos the son of Toviyah (Tobias), a man in very high place, not as that impious Shim'on falsely alleged; and that in all there were four hundred talents of silver and two hundred of gold, 12 and that it was altogether impossible that wrong should be done to those who'd put trust in the holiness of the place, and in the majesty and inviolable sanctity of the temple, honoured over all the world. 13 But Heliodoros, because of the king's command given him, said that in any case this money must be confiscated for the king's treasury.

14 So having appointed a day, he entered in to direct the enquiry about these matters; and there was no small distress throughout the whole city. 15 The priests, prostrating themselves before the altar in their priestly clothes, and called towards heaven on him who gave the law about deposits, that he should preserve these treasures safe for those who'd deposited them. 16 Anyone who saw the appearance of the high priest was wounded in mind; for his face and the change of his colour betrayed the distress of his soul. 17 Because a terror and a shuddering of the body had come over the man, by which the pain that was in his heart was plainly shown to those who looked at him. 18 Those who were in the houses rushed out in crowds to make a universal supplication, because the place was about to come into dishonour. 19 The women, girded with sackcloth under their breasts, thronged the streets. The virgins who were kept indoors ran together, some to the gates, others to the walls, and some looked out through the windows. 20 All, stretching out their hands towards heaven, made their solemn supplication. 21 Then it was pitiful to see the multitude prostrating themselves all mixed together, and the anxiety of the high priest in his great distress.

God protects the temple treasury

22 While therefore they called on the Almighty master to keep the things entrusted to them safe and secure[6] for those who'd entrusted them, 23 Heliodoros went on to execute that which had been decreed. 24 But when he was already present there with his guards near the treasury, the Sovereign of spirits and of all authority caused a great manifestation, so that all who'd presumed to come with him, stricken with dismay at God's power, fainted in terror. 25 Because they saw a horse with a frightening rider, adorned with beautiful trappings, and he rushed fiercely and struck at Heliodoros with his forefeet. It seemed like he who sat on the horse had complete armour of gold. 26 Two others also appeared to him, young men notable in their strength, and beautiful in their glory, and splendid in their clothing, who stood by him on either side, and scourged him unceasingly, inflicting on him many sore stripes. 27 When he'd fallen suddenly to the ground, and great darkness had come over him, his guards picked him up and put him on a stretcher, 28 and carried him—this man who'd just now entered with a great retinue and all his guard into the aforesaid treasury, himself

6 **RV 3:22 · Note** Grk. safe with all security.

Readers' Version

now brought to utter helplessness, manifestly made to recognise the sovereignty of God.
29 So, while he, through the working of God, speechless and bereft of all hope and deliverance, lay prostrate, 30 they blessed the master who acted marvellously for his own place. The temple, which a little before was full of terror and alarm, was filled with joy and gladness after the Almighty master appeared.

31 But quickly some of Heliodoros's familiar friends implored Honyo (Onias) to call on the Most High to grant life to him who lay quite at the last gasp. 32 The high priest, secretly afraid that the king might think that some treachery towards Heliodoros had been perpetrated by the Yehudim (Jews), brought a sacrifice for the recovery of the man. 33 But as the high priest was making the atoning sacrifice, the same young men appeared again to Heliodoros, arrayed in the same clothes. They stood and said, "Give Honyo the high priest great thanks, for his sake the master has granted you life. 34 See that you, since you've been scourged from heaven, proclaim to all men the sovereign majesty of God." When they'd spoken these words, they vanished out of sight. 35 So Heliodoros, having offered a sacrifice to the master and vowed great[7] vows to him who'd saved his life, and having bidden Honyo farewell, returned with his army to the king. 36 He testified to all men the works of the greatest God, which he'd seen with his eyes.

37 When the king asked Heliodoros what sort of man was fit to be sent yet once again to Yerushalem (Jerusalem), he said, 38 "If you have any enemy or conspirator against the state, send him there, and you'll receive him back well scourged, if he even escapes with his life; because truly there's some power of God in that place. 39 Because he who has his dwelling in heaven himself has his eyes on that place and helps it. Those who come to hurt it, he strikes and destroys."

40 This was the history of Heliodoros and the keeping of the treasury.

Conflict over the high priesthood

4:1 The previously mentioned Shim'on (Simon), who'd given information about the money against his country, slandered Honyo (Onias), saying that it was he who'd incited Heliodoros and had been the real cause of these evils. 2 He dared to call him a conspirator against the state who was actually the benefactor of the city, the guardian of his fellow countrymen, and a zealot for the laws. 3 When his hatred grew so great that even murders were perpetrated through one of Shim'on's approved agents, 4 Honyo, seeing the danger of the contention, and that Apolonios[8] the son of Menestheus, the governor of Coele-Syria and Foinikai, was increasing Shim'on's malice, 5 appealed to the king, not to be an accuser of his fellow-citizens, but looking to the good of all the[9] people, both public and private; 6 for he saw that without the king's involvement it was impossible for the state to obtain peace any more, and that Shim'on wouldn't cease from his madness.

Yason introduces Greek customs

7 When Seleukos (Seleucus) was deceased, and Antiokos (Antiochus), who was called Epifanes (Epiphanes), succeeded to the kingdom, Yason the brother of Honyo supplanted his brother in the high priesthood, 8 having promised to the king at an audience three hundred and sixty talents of silver, and out of another fund eighty talents. 9 In addition to this, he undertook to assign one hundred and fifty more, if it might be allowed him through[10] the king's authority to set him up a gymnasium and a body of youths to be trained in it, and to register the inhabitants of Yerushalem (Jerusalem) as citizens of Antiokeia. 10 When

7 **RV 3:35 · Note** Grk. greatest.

8 **RV 4:4 · Note** Compare 2 Maccabees 4:21. See also 2 Maccabees 3:5. The Greek as commonly read means Apollonius, as being the governor...Phoenicia, did rage, and increase etc.

9 **RV 4:5 · Note** Grk. multitude.

10 **RV 4:9 · Note** Grk. through his.

Readers' Version

the king had assented, and Yason had taken possession of the office, he immediately shifted those of his own race to the Greek way of life. 11 Setting aside the royal ordinances of special favour to the Yehudim (Jews), granted by the means of Yohan (John) the father of Eupolemos, who went on the mission to the Romaios to establish friendship and alliance, and seeking to overthrow the lawful ways of living, he brought in new customs forbidden by the law. 12 Because he eagerly established a gymnasium under the citadel itself, and caused the noblest of the young men to wear the Greek hat. 13 Thus there was an extreme of hellenisation, and an advance of a foreign religion, because of the exceeding profaneness of Yason, who was an ungodly man and not a high priest; 14 so that the priests had no more any zeal for the services of the altar; but despising the sanctuary and neglecting the sacrifices, they hastened to enjoy that which was unlawfully provided in the wrestling arena, after the summons to the discus-throwing. 15 They despised the honours of their fathers, and valued the prestige of the Hellains (Greeks) best of all. 16 Because this reason, severe calamity overtook them. The men whose ways of living they earnestly followed, and to whom they desired to be made like in all things, these became their enemies and punished them. 17 Because it isn't a light thing to show irreverence to God's laws, but later events will make this clear.

18 Now when certain games that came every fifth year were kept at Tsor (Tyre), and the king was present, 19 the vile Yason sent sacred envoys,[11] as being Antiochians of Yerushalem, bearing three hundred drachmas of silver to the sacrifice of Herakles, which even those carrying it didn't think was right to use for any sacrifice, because it wasn't fit, but to spend it for another purpose. 20 Although the intended purpose of the sender this money was for the sacrifice of Herakles, yet on account of present[12] circumstances it went to the construction of trireme warships.

21 Now when Apolonios the son of Menestheus was sent into Mitsrayim (Egypt) for the enthronement[13] of Filometor as king, Antiokos (Antiochus), learning that Filometor had shown himself hostile towards the government, took precautions for the security of his realm. Therefore, going to Yafo (Joppa), he travelled on to Yerushalem (Jerusalem). 22 Being magnificently received by Yason and the city, he was brought in with torches and shouting. Then he led his army down into Foinikai.

Menelaos buys the high priesthood

23 Now after a space of three years, Yason sent Menelaos, the previously mentioned Shim'on's (Simon's) brother, to carry the money to the king, and to make reports about some necessary matters. 24 But he being commended to the king, and having been glorified by the display of his authority, secured the high priesthood for himself, outbidding Yason by three hundred talents of silver. 25 After receiving the royal mandates, he returned bringing nothing worthy of the high priesthood, but having the passion of a cruel tyrant and the rage of a savage animal. 26 So Yason, who'd supplanted his own brother, was supplanted by another and driven as a fugitive into the country of the Amonim, 27 Menelaos had possession of the office; but of the money that'd been promised to the king nothing was regularly paid, even though Sostratos the governor of the citadel demanded it— 28 for his job was the gathering of the revenues—so they were both called by the king to his presence. 29 Menelaos left his own brother Lusimakos for his[14] deputy in the high priesthood; and Sostratos left Krates, who was over the Cyprians.

The murder of Honyo

30 Now while this was the state of things, it

11 **RV 4:19 · Note** See ver. 9.

12 **RV 4:20 · Note** Some authorities read the bearers.

13 **RV 4:21 · Note** The exact meaning of the Greek word is uncertain.

14 **RV 4:29 · Note** Grk. successor.

Readers' Version

happened that the people of Tarsos and Malos revolted because they were to be given as a present to Antiokis, the king's concubine.
31 The king therefore quickly came to settle matters, leaving for his deputy[15] Andronikos, a man of high rank. 32 Then Menelaos, supposing that he had gotten a favourable opportunity, presented to Andronikos certain vessels of gold belonging to the temple, which he'd stolen. He'd already sold others into Tsor (Tyre) and the neighbouring cities. 33 When Honyo (Onias) had sure knowledge of this, he sharply reproved him, having withdrawn himself into a sanctuary at Dafne, that lies by Antiokeia.
34 Therefore Menelaos, taking Andronikos aside, asked him to kill Honyo. Coming to Honyo, and being persuaded to use treachery, and being received as a friend, Andronikos gave him his right hand with oaths and, though he was suspicious, persuaded him to come out of the sanctuary. Then, with no regard for justice, he immediately put him to death. 35 Because this reason not only Yehudim (Jews), but many also of the other nations, had indignation and displeasure at the unjust murder of the man.
36 And when the king had come back from the places in Kilikia, the Yehudim who were in the city appealed to him against Andronikos (the Hellains (Greeks) also joining with them in hatred of the wickedness), urging that Honyo had been wrongfully slain. 37 Antiokos (Antiochus) therefore was heartily sorry, and was moved to pity, and wept, because of the sober and well ordered life of him who was dead. 38 Being inflamed with anger, he immediately stripped off Andronikos's purple robe, and tore off his under clothes, and when he'd led him round through the whole city to that very place where he'd committed the outrage against Honyo, there he put the murderer out of the way, the master rendering to him the punishment he'd deserved.

The people protest against temple theft

39 Now when many sacrileges had been committed in the city by Lusimakos with the consent of Menelaos, and when the report of them had spread abroad outside, the people gathered themselves together against Lusimakos, after many vessels of gold had already been stolen.
40 When the multitudes were rising against him and were filled with anger, Lusimakos armed about three thousand men, and with unrighteous violence began the attack under the leadership of Havran, a man far gone in years and no less also in folly. 41 But when they perceived the assault of Lusimakos, some caught up stones, others logs of wood, and some took handfuls of the ashes that lay near, and they flung them all in wild confusion at Lusimakos and those who were with him. 42 As a result, they wounded many of them, they killed some, and they forced the rest of them to flee, but the author of the sacrilege himself they killed beside the treasury.
43 But about these matters, there was an accusation laid against Menelaos. 44 When the king had come to Tsor (Tyre), the three men who were sent by the senate pleaded the cause before him. 45 But Menelaos, seeing himself now defeated, promised much money to Ptolemaios (Ptolemy) the son of Dorumenes, that he might win over the king. 46 Therefore Ptolemaios taking the king aside into a cloister, as if to get some fresh air, convinced him to change his mind. 47 He who was the cause of all the evil, Menelaos, he discharged from the accusations; but these hapless men, who, if they'd pleaded even before Scythians, would have been discharged uncondemned, them he sentenced to death. 48 Those who were spokesmen for the city and the families of Yisrael (Israel) and the holy vessels soon suffered that unrighteous penalty. 49 Therefore even certain Tsorim (Tyrians), moved with hatred of the wickedness, provided magnificently for their burial. 50 But Menelaos, through the covetous dealings of those who were in power, remained still in his office, growing in wickedness, established as a great conspirator against his fellow-citizens.

15 **RV 4:31 · Note** Grk. successor.

Readers' Version

Yason attacks Yerushalem

5:1 Now about this time Antiokos (Antiochus) made his second invasion into Mitsrayim (Egypt). **2** It happened that throughout all the city, for almost forty days, cavalry appeared in the middle of the sky in swift motion, wearing robes woven with gold and carrying spears, equipped with troops for battle— **3** drawing swords, squadrons of cavalry in array, encounters and pursuits of both armies, shaking shields, multitudes of lances, throwing of missiles, flashing of golden trappings, and putting on all sorts of armour. **4** Therefore everyone prayed that the manifestation might have been given for good.

5 When a false rumour had arisen that Antiokos was dead, Yason took not less than a thousand men, and suddenly made an assault on the city. When those who were on the wall were being routed, and the city was at length nearly taken, Menelaos took refuge in the citadel. **6** But Yason slaughtered his own citizens without mercy, not considering that good success against kinsmen is the greatest misfortune, but supposing himself to be setting up trophies over enemies, and not over fellow-countrymen. **7** He didn't win control of the government, but receiving shame as the result of his conspiracy, he fled again as a fugitive into the country of the Amonim. **8** At last therefore he met with a miserable end. Having been imprisoned at the court of Aretas the prince of the Aravim, fleeing from city to city, pursued by all men, hated as an rebel against the laws, and abhorred as the executioner of his country and his fellow citizens, he was thrown ashore in Mitsrayim. **9** He who'd driven many from their own country into exile perished in exile, having crossed the sea to the Spartans, hoping to find shelter there because they were[16] near of kin. **10** He who'd thrown out a multitude unburied had none to mourn for him. He didn't have any funeral at all and no place in the tomb of his ancestors.

Antiokos plunders Yerushalem and the temple

11 Now when news came to the king about that which was done, he thought that Yehudah (Judea) was in revolt. So, setting out from Mitsrayim in a rage, he took the city by force of weapons, **12** and commanded his soldiers to cut down without mercy those who came in their way, and to kill those who went into their houses. **13** Then there was killing of young and old, destruction of boys, women, and children, and slaying of virgins and infants. **14** In a total of three days, eighty thousand were destroyed, of which forty thousand were slain in close combat, and no fewer were sold into slavery than slain.

15 Not content with this, he presumed to enter into the most holy temple of all the earth, having Menelaos for his guide (who'd proved himself a traitor both to the laws and to his country), **16** even taking the sacred vessels with his polluted hands, and dragging down with his profane hands the offerings that'd been dedicated by other kings to enhance the glory and honour of the place. **17** Antiokos was lifted up in mind, not seeing that because of the sins of those who lived in the city the Sovereign master had been provoked to anger a little while, and therefore his eye was turned away from the place. **18** But had it not been so that they were already bound by many sins, this man, even as Heliodoros who was sent by King Seleukos (Seleucus) to view the treasury, would, as soon as he came forward, have been scourged and turned back from his daring deed. **19** However the master didn't choose the nation for the place's sake, but the place for the nation's sake. **20** Therefore also the place itself, having shared in the calamities that happened to the nation, did afterward share in its benefits; and the place which was forsaken in the Almighty's anger was, at the reconciliation of the great Sovereign, restored again with all glory.

21 As for Antiokos (Antiochus), when he'd carried away out of the temple one thousand and eight hundred talents, he hurried away to An-

16 RV 5:9 · Note See 1 Maccabees 12:7.

Readers' Version

tiokeia, thinking in his arrogance that he could sail on land and walk on the sea, because his heart was lifted up. 22 Moreover he left governors to afflict the race: at Yerushalem (Jerusalem), Filippos (Philip), by race a Phrygian, and in character more barbarous than him who set him there; 23 and at Gerizim, Andronikos; and besides these, Menelaos, who worse than all the rest, exalted himself against his fellow-citizens. Having a malicious mind[17] towards the Yehudim[18] whom he'd made his citizens, 24 he sent that[19] lord of pollutions Apolonios with an army of twenty-two thousand, commanding him to kill all those who were of full age, and to sell the women and the boys as slaves. 25 He came to Yerushalem, and pretending to be a man of peace, waited till the holy day of the Sabbath, and finding the Yehudim at rest from work, he commanded his men to parade fully armed. 26 He put to the sword all those who came out to the spectacle. Running into the city with the armed men, he killed great multitudes. 27 But Yehudah (Judas), who's also called Makabi (Maccabaeus), with about nine others, withdrew himself, and with his company kept himself alive in the mountains like wild animals do. They continued feeding on what grew wild, that they might not be partakers of the defilement.

The king forbids obedience to God's law

6:1 Not long after this, the king sent out an[20] old man of Athainai to compel the Yehudim (Jews) to depart from the laws of their fathers and not to live by God's laws, 2 and also to pollute the sanctuary in Yerushalem and to call it by the name of Olympian Zeus, and to call the sanctuary in Gerizim by the name of Zeus the Protector of foreigners, even as the people who lived in that place did.

3 The visitation of this evil was harsh and utterly grievous. 4 Because the temple was filled with debauchery and revelling by the heathen, who dallied with prostitutes,[21] and had intercourse with women within the sacred precincts, and moreover brought inside things that weren't appropriate. 5 The altar was filled with those abominable things which had been prohibited by the laws. 6 A man could neither keep the Sabbath, nor observe the feasts of their ancestors, nor so much as confess himself to be a Yehudi (Jew).

7 On the day of the king's birth every month, they were led along with bitter constraint to eat of the sacrifices. When the feast of Dionusia came, they were compelled to go in procession in honour of Dionusos, wearing wreaths of ivy. 8 A decree went out to the neighbouring Greek cities, by the suggestion of Ptolemaios (Ptolemy), that they should observe the same conduct against the Yehudim, and should make them eat of the sacrifices, 9 and that they should kill those who didn't choose to go over to the Greek rites. So the present misery was for all to see. 10 Because example, two women were brought in for having circumcised their children. These, when they'd led them publicly around the city with the babes hung from their breasts, they threw down headlong from the wall. 11 Others who'd run together into the caves nearby to keep the seventh day secretly, were betrayed to Filippos (Philip) and were all burnt together, because their piety kept them from defending themselves, in view of the honour of that most solemn day.

God's discipline and mercy

12 I urge those who read this book to not be discouraged because of the calamities, but recognise that these punishments weren't for the destruction, but for the chastening of our race. 13 Because indeed it's a sign of great kindness that those who act impiously aren't let

17 **RV 5:23 · Note** Some authorities read towards the Jews, he sent. The Greek text of this sentence is uncertain.

18 **RV 5:23 · Note** Compare 2 Maccabees 4:9, 19; 9:19.

19 **RV 5:24 · Note** Grk. Μυσάρχην, which also may mean ruler of the Mysians.

20 **RV 6:1 · Note** Or, Geron an Athenian

21 **RV 6:4 · Note** Or, idled with their fellows

Readers' Version

alone for a long time, but immediately meet with retribution. **14** Because in the case of the other nations, the Sovereign master waits patiently to punish them until they've attained to the full measure of their sins; but not with us, **15** that he may not take vengeance on us afterward,[22] when we've come to the[23] height of our sins. **16** Therefore he never withdraws his mercy from us; but though he chastens with calamity, he doesn't forsake his own people. **17** However let this that we've spoken suffice to remind you; but after a few words, we must come to the narrative.

Eleazar chooses death over disobedience

18 Eleazar, one of the principal scribes, a man already well advanced in years, and of a noble face, was compelled to open his mouth to eat swine's flesh. **19** But he, welcoming death with honour rather than life with defilement, advanced of his own accord to the instrument of torture, but first spat out the flesh, **20** as men ought to come who are resolute to repel such things as not even for the natural love of life is it lawful to taste.

21 But those who had the charge of that forbidden sacrificial feast took the man aside, for the acquaintance which of old times they had with him, and privately implored him to bring flesh of his own providing, such as was proper for him to use, and to make as if he did eat of the flesh from the sacrifice, as had been commanded by the king; **22** that by so doing he might be delivered from death, and so his ancient friendship with them might be treated kindly. **23** But he, having formed a high resolve, and one that became his years, the dignity of old age, and the grey hairs[24] which he'd reached with honour, and his excellent[25] education from a child, or rather the holy laws[26] of God's ordaining, declared his mind accordingly, bidding them to quickly send him to Haidais.

24 "Because it doesn't become our years to dissemble," he said, "that many of the young should suppose that Eleazar, the man of ninety years, had gone over to an alien religion; **25** and so they, because of my deception, and for the sake of this brief and momentary life, would be led astray because of me, and I defile and disgrace myself in my old age. **26** Because even if for the present time I'd remove from me the punishment of men, yet whether I live or die, I wouldn't escape the Almighty's hands. **27** Therefore, by bravely parting with my life now, I'll show myself worthy of my old age, **28** and leave[27] behind a noble example to the young to die willingly and nobly a glorious death for the revered and holy laws."

When he'd said these words, he went immediately to the instrument of torture. **29** When they changed the good will they bore towards him a little before into ill will because these words of his were, as they thought, sheer madness,[28] **30** and when he was at the point to die with the[29] blows, he groaned aloud and said, "To the master, who has the holy knowledge, it's manifest that, while I might have been delivered from death, I endure severe pains in my body by being scourged; but in soul I gladly suffer these things because of my fear of him."

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

Seven brothers die for God's law

7:1 It happened that seven brothers and their mother were at the king's command taken and

22 RV 6:15 · Note Or, when our sins have come to their height

23 RV 6:15 · Note Grk. end.

24 RV 6:23 · Note The Greek text appears to be corrupt.

25 RV 6:23 · Note Some authorities read manner of life.

26 RV 6:23 · Note Grk. legislation.

27 RV 6:28 · Note Grk. one that has left behind.

28 RV 6:29 · Note The Greek text of this verse is uncertain.

29 RV 6:30 · Note Or, blows

Readers' Version

shamefully handled with scourges and cords, to compel them to taste of the abominable swine's flesh. 2 One of them made himself the spokesman and said, "What'd you ask and learn from us? Because we're ready to die rather than transgress the laws of our ancestors."

3 The king fell into a rage, and commanded that pans and cauldrons be heated. 4 When these were immediately heated, he gave orders to cut out the tongue of him who'd been their spokesman, and to scalp him, and to cut off his extremities, with the rest of his brothers and his mother looking on. 5 And when he was utterly[30] maimed, the king gave orders to bring him to the fire, being yet alive, and to fry him in the pan. And as the smoke from the pan spread far, they and their mother also exhorted one another to die nobly, saying this: 6 "The master God sees, and in truth is[31] entreated for us, as Mosheh (Moses) declared in his[32] song, which witnesses against the people to their faces, saying, 'And he'll have compassion on his servants.' "

7 And when the first had died like this, they brought the second to the mocking; and they pulled off the skin of his head with the hair and asked him, "Will you eat, before your body is punished in every limb?"

8 But he answered in the language of his ancestors and said to them, "No." Therefore he also underwent the next torture in succession, as the first had done. 9 When he was at the last gasp, he said, "You, miscreant, release us out of this present life, but the King of the world will raise us who've died for his laws up to an eternal renewal of life."

10 After him, the third was made a victim of their mocking. When he was required, he quickly put out his tongue, and stretched out his hands courageously, 11 and nobly said, "I got these from heaven. Because his laws' sake I treat these with contempt. From him, I hope to receive these back again." 12 As a result, the king himself and those who were with him were astonished at the young man's soul, for he regarded the pains as nothing.

13 When he too was dead, they shamefully handled and tortured the fourth in the same way. 14 Being near to death he said this: "It's good to die at the hands of men and look for the hope which is given by God, that we'll be raised up again by him. Because as for you, you'll have no resurrection to life."

15 Next after him, they brought the fifth and shamefully handled him. 16 But he looked towards the[33] king and said, "Because you have authority among men, though you're corruptible, you do what you please. But don't think that our race has been forsaken by God. 17 But hold on to your ways, and see how his sovereign majesty will torture you and your descendants!"

18 After him they brought the sixth. When he was about to die, he said, "Don't be vainly deceived, for we suffer these things for our own doings, as sinning against our own God. Astounding things have happen; 19 but don't think you that you'll be unpunished, having tried to fight against God!"

A mother encourages her sons to remain faithful

20 But above all, the mother was marvellous and worthy of honourable memory; for when she watched seven sons perishing within the space of one day, she bore the sight with a good courage because of her hope in the master. 21 She exhorted each one of them in the language of their fathers, filled with a noble spirit and stirring up her woman's thoughts with manly courage, saying to them, 22 "I don't know how you came into my womb. It wasn't I who gave you your spirit[34] and your life. It wasn't I who brought into or-

30 **RV 7:5 · Note** Grk. useless.

31 **RV 7:6 · Note** Or, comforted in

32 **RV 7:6 · Note** See Deuteronomy 31:21 and 32:36.

33 **RV 7:16 · Note** Grk. him.

34 **RV 7:22 · Note** Or, breath

der the first elements of each one of you.
23 Therefore the Creator of the world, who shaped the first origin of man and devised the first origin of all things, in mercy gives back to you again both your spirit[35] and your life, as you now treat yourselves with contempt for his laws' sake."

24 But Antiokos (Antiochus), thinking himself to be despised, and suspecting the reproachful voice, while the youngest was yet alive didn't only make his appeal to him by words, but also at the same time promised with oaths that he'd enrich him and[36] raise him to high honour if he'd turn from the ways of his ancestors, and that he'd take him for his friend[37] and entrust him with public affairs. **25** But when the young man would in no way listen, the king called to him his mother, and urged her to advise the youth to save himself. **26** When he'd urged her with many words, she undertook to persuade her son. **27** But bending towards him, laughing the cruel tyrant to scorn, she spoke this in the language of her fathers: "My son, have pity on me who carried you nine months in my womb, and nursed you three years, and nourished and brought you up to this age, and sustained you. **28** I beg you, my child, to lift your eyes to the sky and the earth, and to see all things that are in it, and thus to recognise that God made them not of things that were, and that the race of men in this way comes into being. **29** Don't be afraid of this butcher, but, proving yourself worthy of your brothers, accept your death, that in God's mercy I may receive you again with your brothers."

30 But before she'd finished speaking, the young man said, "What are you all waiting for? I don't obey the king's commandment, but I listen to the commandment of the law that was given to our fathers through Mosheh (Moses). **31** But you, who've devised all kinds of evil against the Ivrim (Hebrews), will in no way escape God's hands. **32** Because we're suffering because of our own sins. **33** If for rebuke and chastening, our living master has been angered a little while, yet he'll again be reconciled with his own servants. **34** But you, Oh unholy man and of all most vile, don't be vainly lifted up in your wild pride with uncertain hopes, raising your hand against the heavenly children. **35** Because you haven't yet escaped the judgement of the Almighty God who sees all things. **36** Because these our brothers, having endured a short pain that brings eternal life,[38] have now died under God's covenant.[39] But you, through God's judgement, will receive in just measure the penalties of your arrogance. **37** But I, as my brothers, give up both body and soul for the laws of our fathers, calling on God that he may speedily become gracious[40] to the nation, and that you, amidst trials and deadly diseases, may confess that he alone is God, **38** and that in me and my brothers you may bring to an end[41] the Almighty's anger which has been justly brought on our whole race."

39 But the king, falling into a rage, handled him worse than all the rest, being exasperated at his mocking. **40** So he also died pure, putting his whole trust in the master.

41 Last of all, after her sons, the mother died.

42 Let it then suffice to have said thus much about the sacrificial feasts and the extreme tortures.

Yehudah Makabi gathers a resistance force

8:1 But Yehudah (Judas), who's also called Makabi (Maccabaeus), and those

35 **RV 7:23 · Note** Or, breath

36 **RV 7:24 · Note** Grk. make him one that is counted happy.

37 **RV 7:24 · Note** See 2 Maccabees 8:9.

38 **RV 7:36 · Note** Grk. short pain of ever-flowing life.

39 **RV 7:36 · Note** Grk. died. By the omission of one Greek letter the words would signify having endured a short pain, have now drunk of ever-flowing life under God's covenant.

40 **RV 7:37 · Note** Grk. propitious.

41 **RV 7:38 · Note** Some authorities read may be stayed.

Readers' Version

who were with him, making their way secretly into the villages, called to them their kindred. Taking to them those who'd continued in the Yehudim' (Jews') religion, gathered together about six thousand. 2 They called on the master to look at the people who were oppressed by all, and to have compassion on the sanctuary that'd been profaned by the ungodly men, 3 and to have pity on the city that was suffering ruin and ready to be levelled to the ground, and to listen to the blood that cried out to him, 4 and to remember the lawless destruction of the innocent infants, and about the blasphemies that'd been committed against his name, and to show his hatred of wickedness.

5 When Makabi had trained his men for service, the heathen at once found him irresistible, for the master's anger was turned into mercy. 6 Coming[42] without warning, he set fire to cities and villages. And in winning back the most important positions, putting to flight no small number of the enemies, 7 he especially took advantage of the nights for such assaults. His courage was loudly talked of everywhere.

Yehudah defeats Nikanor's army

8 But when Filippos (Philip) saw the man gaining ground little by little, and increasing more and more in his success, he wrote to Ptolemaios (Ptolemy), the governor of Coele-Syria and Foinikai, that he should support the king's cause. 9 Ptolemaios quickly appointed Nikanor the son of Patroklos, one of the king's chief friends,[43] and sent him, in command of no fewer than twenty thousand of all nations, to destroy the whole race of Yehudah. With him he joined Gorgias also, a captain and one who had experience in matters of war. 10 Nikanor resolved by the sale of the captive Yehudim (Jews) to make up for the king the tribute of two thousand talents which he was to pay to the Romaios. 11 Immediately he sent to the cities on the sea coast, inviting them to buy Jewish slaves,[44] promising to deliver seventy slaves[45] for a talent, not expecting the judgement that was to overtake him from the Almighty.

12 News came to Yehudah (Judas) about Nikanor's invasion. When he communicated to those who were with him the presence of the army, 13 those who were cowardly and distrustful of God's judgement ran[46] away and left the country. 14 Others sold all that they'd left, and at the same time implored the master to deliver those who'd been sold as slaves by the impious Nikanor before he ever met them, 15 if not for their own sakes, then for the covenants made with their ancestors, and because he'd called them by his holy and glorious name. 16 So Makabi (Maccabaeus) gathered his men together, six thousand in number, and exhorted them not to be frightened by the enemy, nor to fear the great multitude of the heathen who came wrongfully against them, but to fight nobly, 17 setting before their eyes the outrage that'd been lawlessly perpetrated on the holy place, and the torture of the city that'd been turned to mockery, and further the overthrow of the way of life received from their ancestors. 18 "Because they," he said, "trust their weapons and daring actions, but we trust in the almighty God, since he's able at a nod to throw down those who are coming against us, and even the whole world." 19 Moreover, he recounted to them the help given from time to time in the days of their ancestors, both in the days of Sanheriv (Sennacherib), when one hundred and eighty-five thousand perished, 20 and in the land of Bavel (Babylon), in the battle that was fought against the[47] Gauls, how they came to the battle with eight thousand in all, with four

42 **RV 8:6 · Note** The Greek text of verses 6 and 7 is uncertain.

43 **RV 8:9 · Note** See 1 Maccabees 10:65. Compare 2 Maccabees 1:14; 7:24; 10:13; 14:11; 1 Maccabees 2:18.

44 **RV 8:11 · Note** Grk. bodies.

45 **RV 8:11 · Note** Grk. bodies.

46 **RV 8:13 · Note** The Greek text here is uncertain.

47 **RV 8:20 · Note** Grk. Galatians.

Readers' Version

thousand people from Makedonia, and how, the people from Makedonia being hard pressed, the six[48] thousand destroyed the hundred and twenty thousand because of the help which they had from heaven, and took a great deal of plunder.

21 And when he had with these words filled them with courage and made them ready to die for the laws and their country, he divided his army into four parts. **22** He appointed his brothers, Shim'on (Simon), Yosef (Joseph), and Yonatan (Jonathan), to be leaders of the divisions with him, giving each the command of one thousand and five hundred men. **23** Moreover Eleazar also, having read aloud the sacred book, and having given as watchword, "THE HELP OF GOD", leading the first band himself, joined battle with Nikanor.

24 Since the Almighty fought on their side, they killed more than nine thousand of the enemy, and wounded and[49] disabled most of Nikanor's army, and compelled them all to flee. **25** They took the money of those who'd come there to buy them as slaves. After they'd pursued them for some distance,[50] they returned, being constrained by the time of the day; **26** for it was the day before the Sabbath, and for this reason they made no effort to chase them far. **27** When they'd gathered the weapons of the enemy[51] together,[52] and had stripped off their spoils, they kept the Sabbath, greatly blessing and thanking the master who'd saved them to this day, because he'd begun to show mercy to them. **28** After the Sabbath, when they'd given some of the spoils to the maimed,[53] and to the widows and orphans, they distributed the rest among themselves and their children. **29** When they'd accomplished these things and had made a common supplication, they implored the merciful master to be wholly reconciled with his servants.

Further victories and Nikanor's escape

30 Having had an encounter with the forces of Timotheos and Bakides, they killed more than twenty thousand of them, and made themselves masters of extremely high fortresses, and divided very much plunder, giving the maimed,[54] orphans, widows, and the aged an equal share with themselves. **31** When they'd gathered the weapons of the enemy[55] together,[56] they stored them all up carefully in the most strategic positions, and they carried the rest of the spoils to Yerushalem (Jerusalem). **32** They killed the phylarch[57] of Timotheos's forces, a most unholy man, and one who'd done the Yehudim much harm. **33** As they celebrated the feast of victory in the city[58] of their fathers, they burnt those who'd set the sacred gates[59] on fire, including Kalisthenes, who'd fled into a[60] little house. So they received the proper reward for their impiety.[61]

48 RV 8:20 · Note Some authorities read eight.

49 RV 8:24 · Note Grk. disabled in their limbs.

50 RV 8:25 · Note Or, while

51 RV 8:27 · Note Grk. their weapons...the spoils of the enemy.

52 RV 8:27 · Note The exact meaning of this clause is uncertain.

53 RV 8:28 · Note Or, wounded Grk. shamefully handled.

54 RV 8:30 · Note Or, wounded Grk. shamefully handled.

55 RV 8:31 · Note Grk. of them.

56 RV 8:31 · Note The exact meaning of this clause is uncertain.

57 RV 8:32 · Note That is, probably, the captain of an irregular auxiliary force. Some write Phylarches, as a proper name.

58 RV 8:33 · Note Or, country

59 RV 8:33 · Note Or, porches

60 RV 8:33 · Note Or, a solitary hut

61 RV 8:33 · Note The Greek text here is perhaps corrupt.

Readers' Version

34 The thrice-accursed Nikanor, who'd brought the thousand merchants to buy the Yehudim (Jews) as slaves, 35 being through the help of the master humbled by them who in his eyes were held to be of least account, took off his glorious clothing, and passing through the country, shunning[62] all company like a fugitive slave, arrived at Antiokeia, having, as he thought, had the greatest possible good fortune, though his army was destroyed.[63] 36 He who'd taken on himself to make tribute sure for the Romaios by the captivity of the men of Yerushalem published abroad that the Yehudim had One who fought for them, and that because[64] this was so, the Yehudim were invulnerable, because they followed the laws ordained by him.

Antiokos' suffering and death

9:1 Now about that time, Antiokos (Antiochus) retreated in[65] disorder from the region of Paras (Persia). 2 Because he'd entered into the city called Persepolis, and he attempted to rob a[66] temple and to control the city. Therefore the multitudes rushed in and the people of the country turned to defend themselves with weapons; and it happened that Antiokos was put to flight by the people of the country and broke his camp with disgrace. 3 While he was at Ahmeta, news was brought to him about what had happened to Nikanor and the forces of Timotheos. 4 Being overcome by his anger, he planned to make the Yehudim suffer for the evil activities of those who'd put him to flight. Therefore, with judgement from heaven even now accompanying him, he ordered his charioteer to drive without ceasing until he completed the journey; for he arrogantly said this: "I'll make Yerushalem a common graveyard of Yehudim when I come there."

5 But the All-seeing master, the god of Yisrael (Israel), struck him with a fatal[67] and invisible stroke. As soon as he'd finished speaking this word, an incurable pain of the bowels seized him, with bitter torments of the inner parts— 6 and that most justly, for he'd tormented other men's bowels with many and strange sufferings. 7 But he in no way ceased from his rude insolence. No, he was filled with even more arrogance, breathing fire in his passion against the Yehudim, and giving orders to hasten the journey. But it happened moreover that he fell from his chariot as it rushed along, and having a grievous fall was tortured in all of the members of his body. 8 He who'd just supposed himself to have the waves of the sea at his bidding because he was so superhumanly arrogant, and who thought to weigh the heights of the mountains in a balance, was now brought to the ground and carried in a litter, showing[68] to all that the power was obviously God's, 9 so that worms swarmed out of the impious man's body, and while he was still living in anguish and pains, his flesh fell off, and because of the stench all the army turned with loathing from his decay. 10 The man who a little before supposed himself to touch the stars of heaven, no one could endure to carry because of his intolerable stench. 11 Therefore he began in great part to cease from his arrogance, being broken in spirit, and to come to knowledge under the scourge of God, his pains increasing every moment. 12 When he himself couldn't stand his own smell, he said these words: "It's right to be subject to God, and that one who's mortal shouldn't think they're equal to God."

13 The vile man vowed to the sovereign master, who now no more would have pity on him, saying 14 that the holy city, to which he was go-

62 **RV 8:35 · Note** Grk. having made himself solitary.

63 **RV 8:35 · Note** Or, having won the greatest possible favour by reason of the destruction of his army

64 **RV 8:36 · Note** Or, because of this their way of life Grk. because of this manner.

65 **RV 9:1 · Note** Or, with dishonour

66 **RV 9:2 · Note** Or, temples

67 **RV 9:5 · Note** Grk. remediless.

68 **RV 9:8 · Note** Or, showing manifestly to all the power of God

ing in haste to lay it even with the ground and to make[69] it a common graveyard, he'd declare free. 15 About the Yehudim, whom he'd decided not even to count worthy of burial, but to throw them out to the animals with their infants for the birds to devour, he'd make them all equal to citizens of Athainai. 16 The holy sanctuary, which before he'd plundered, he'd adorn with best offerings, and would restore all the sacred vessels many times multiplied, and out of his own revenues would defray the charges that were required for the sacrifices. 17 Beside all this, he said that he'd become a Yehudi (Jew) and would visit every inhabited place, proclaiming God's power. 18 But when his sufferings did in no way cease, for God's judgement had come on him in righteousness, having given up all hope for himself, he wrote to the Yehudim the letter written below, having the nature of a supplication, to this effect:

19 "To the worthy Jewish citizens, Antiokos (Antiochus), king and general, wishes much joy and health and prosperity. 20 May you and your children fare well, and may your affairs be as you wish. Having my hope in heaven, 21 I remembered with affection your honour and good will. Returning out of the region of Paras (Persia), and being taken with an annoying sickness, I deemed it necessary to take thought for the common safety of all, 22 not despairing of myself, but having great hope to escape from the sickness. 23 But considering that my father also, at the time he led an army into the upper country, appointed his successor, 24 to the end that, if anything fell out contrary to expectation, or if any unwelcome tidings were brought, the people in the country, knowing to whom the state had been left, might not be troubled, 25 and, moreover, observing how the princes who are along the borders and neighbours to my kingdom watch for opportunities and look for the future event, I've appointed my son Antiokos to be king, whom I often entrusted and commended to most of you when I was hurrying to the upper provinces. I've written to him what's written below. 26 I therefore urge you and beg you, having in your remembrance the benefits done to you in common and severally, to preserve your present good will, each of you, towards me and my son. 27 Because I'm persuaded that he in gentleness and kindness will follow my purpose and treat you with moderation and kindness.

28 So the murderer and blasphemer, having endured the most intense sufferings, even as he had dealt with other men, ended his life among the mountains by a most piteous fate in a strange land. 29 Filippos (Philip) his foster brother took the body home and then, fearing the son of Antiokos, he withdrew himself to Ptolemaios (Ptolemy) Filometor in Mitsrayim (Egypt).

The temple is cleansed and rededicated

10:1 Then Makabi (Maccabaeus) and those who were with him, the master leading them on, recovered the temple and the city. 2 They pulled down the altars that'd been built in the marketplace by the foreigners, and also the sacred enclosures. 3 Having cleansed the sanctuary, they made another altar of sacrifice. Striking[70] flint and starting a fire, they offered sacrifices after they'd ceased for two years, burnt incense, lit lamps, and set out the show bread. 4 When they'd done these things, they fell prostrate and implored the master that they might fall no more into such evils; but that, if they ever did sin, they might be chastened by him with forbearance, and not be delivered to blaspheming and barbarous heathen. 5 Now on the same day that the sanctuary was profaned by foreigners, on that very day it happened that the sanctuary was cleansed, even on the twenty-fifth day of the same month, which is Kislev. 6 They observed eight days with gladness in the manner of the feast of tabernacles, remembering how not[71]

69 **RV 9:14 · Note** Grk. build.

70 **RV 10:3 · Note** Grk. firing.

71 **RV 10:6 · Note** Or, not long before they kept the feast of tabernacles by wandering

Readers' Version

long before, during the feast of tabernacles, they were wandering in the mountains and in the caves like wild animals. 7 Therefore carrying wands wreathed with leaves, and beautiful branches, and palm fronds also, they offered up hymns of thanksgiving to him who'd successfully brought to pass the cleansing of his own place. 8 They ordained also with a public statute and decree, for all the nation of the Yehudim (Jews), that they should observe these days every year.

9 Such were the events of the end of Antiokos (Antiochus), who was called Epifanes (Epiphanes).

Fighting under the new King Antiokos

10 Now we'll declare what happened under Antiokos Eupator,[72] who proved himself a son of that ungodly man, and will summarise the main evils of the wars. 11 Because this man, when he succeeded to the kingdom, appointed one Lusias to be chancellor and supreme governor of Coele-Syria and Foinikai. 12 Because Ptolemaios (Ptolemy) who was called Makron, setting an example of observing justice towards the Yehudim because of the wrong that'd been done to them, endeavoured to deal with them on peaceful terms. 13 Whereupon being accused by the king's friends[73] before Eupator, and hearing himself called traitor at every turn because he'd abandoned Kupros (Cyprus) which Filometor had entrusted to him, and had withdrawn himself to Antiokos Epifanes, and failing to uphold the honour of his office,[74] he took poison and did away with himself.

14 But when Gorgias was made governor of the district, he maintained a force of mercenaries, and at every turn kept up war with the Yehudim. 15 Together with him the Edomim also, being masters of important fortresses, harassed the Yehudim; and received those who'd taken refuge from Yerushalem (Jerusalem), they endeavoured to keep up the war. 16 But Makabi (Maccabaeus) and his men, having made solemn supplication and having implored God to fight on their side, rushed on the fortresses of the Edomim. 17 Assaulting them vigorously, they took control of the positions, and kept off all who fought on the wall, and killed those whom they encountered, killing no fewer than twenty thousand.

18 Because no fewer than nine thousand had fled into two very strong towers having everything needed for a siege, 19 Makabi, having left Shim'on (Simon) and Yosef (Joseph), and also Zakay and those who were with him, a force sufficient to besiege them, departed himself to places where he was most needed. 20 But Shim'on and those who were with him, yielding to covetousness, were bribed by some of those who were in the towers, and receiving seventy thousand drachmas, let some of them slip away. 21 But when word was brought to Makabi of what was done, he gathered the people's leaders together, and accused those men of having sold their kindred for money by setting their enemies free to fight against them. 22 So he killed these men for having turned traitors, and immediately took possession of the two towers. 23 Prospering with his weapons in everything he undertook, he destroyed more than twenty thousand in the two fortresses.

Yehudah defeats Timotheos

24 Now Timotheos, who'd been defeated by the Yehudim (Jews) before, having gathered together foreign forces in great multitudes, and having collected the cavalry which belonged to Asia, not a few, came as though he'd take Yehudah (Judea) by force of weapons. 25 But as he drew near, Makabi and his men sprinkled dirt on their heads and girded their loins with sackcloth, in supplication to God, 26 and falling down on the step in front of the altar, implored

72 RV 10:10 · Note That is, son of a good father.

73 RV 10:13 · Note See 2 Maccabees 8:9

74 RV 10:13 · Note The Greek text here is corrupt.

Readers' Version

him to become gracious[75] to them, and be[76] an enemy to their enemies and an adversary to their adversaries, as the law declares. 27 Rising from their prayer they took up their weapons, and advanced some distance from the city. When they'd come near to their enemies, they[77] halted. 28 When the dawn was now breaking, the two armies joined in battle, the one part having this, beside virtue, for a pledge of success and victory, that they'd fled to the master for refuge, the others making their passion their leader in the fight.

29 When the battle became strong, there appeared out of heaven to their adversaries five splendid men on horses with bridles of gold, and[78] two of them, leading on the Yehudim, 30 and taking Makabi in the middle of them, and covering him with their own armour, guarded him from wounds, while they shot arrows and thunderbolts at the enemies. Because this reason, they were blinded and thrown into confusion, and were cut to pieces, filled with bewilderment. 31 Twenty thousand and five hundred were slain, beside six hundred cavalry.

32 Timotheos himself fled into a fortress called Gezer, a fortress of great strength, where[79] Kaireas was in command. 33 Then Makabi and his men were glad and laid siege to the fortress for four days. 34 Those who were within, trusting in the strength of the place, blasphemed greatly, and hurled out impious words. 35 But at dawn of the fifth day, certain young men of Makabi' company, inflamed with anger because of the blasphemies, assaulted the wall with masculine force and with furious[80] anger, and cut down whoever came in their way. 36 Others climbing up in the same way, while the enemies were distracted with those who'd made their way within, set fire to the towers, and kindled fires that burnt the blasphemers alive, while others broke open the gates, and, having given entrance to the rest of the band, occupied the city. 37 They killed Timotheos, who was hidden in a cistern, and his brother Kaireas, and Apolofanes. 38 When they'd accomplished these things, they blessed the master with hymns and thanksgiving, blessing him who provides great benefits to Yisrael (Israel) and gives them the victory.

Lusias is defeated and seeks peace

11:1 Now after a very little time, Lusias, the king's guardian, kinsman, and chancellor, being very displeased about the things that'd happened, 2 collected about eighty thousand infantry and all his cavalry and came against the Yehudim (Jews), planing to make the city a home for Hellains (Greeks), 3 and to levy tribute on the temple, as on[81] the other sacred places of the nations, and to put up the high priesthood for sale every year. 4 He took no account of God's power, but was puffed up with his ten thousands of infantry, his thousands of cavalry, and his eighty elephants. 5 Coming into Yehudah (Judea) and approaching Beyt-Tsur, which was a strong place and about five stadia[82] away from Yerushalem (Jerusalem), he pressed it hard.

6 When Makabi (Maccabaeus) and his men learnt that he was besieging the fortresses, they and all the people with lamentations and tears made supplication to the master to send a good angel to save Yisrael. 7 Makabi himself took up weapons first, and exhorted the others to put themselves in jeopardy together with

75 RV 10:26 · Note Grk. propitious.

76 RV 10:26 · Note See Exodus 23:22.

77 RV 10:27 · Note Grk. were by themselves.

78 RV 10:29 · Note Some authorities read and leading on the Jews; who also, taking.

79 RV 10:32 · Note See ver. 37.

80 RV 10:35 · Note Grk. passion as of wild animals.

81 RV 11:3 · Note Or, on all the sacred places of the heathen

82 RV 11:5 · Note One stadia was roughly 189 metres or 618 feet, so 5 stadia was about a little less than 1 km or a little more than half a mile.

Readers' Version

him and help their kindred; and they went out with him very willingly. 8 As they were there, close to Yerushalem, a horseman appeared at their head in white clothing, brandishing[83] weapons of gold. 9 They all together praised the merciful God, and were yet more strengthened in heart, being ready to assail[84] not only men but the wildest animals and walls of iron, 10 they advanced in array, having him who's in heaven to fight on their side, for the master had mercy on them. 11 Hurling themselves like lions against the enemy, they killed eleven thousand infantry and one thousand and six hundred cavalry, and forced all the rest to flee. 12 Most of them escaped wounded and naked. Lusias himself also escaped by shameful flight. 13 But as he was a man not void of understanding, pondering the defeat which had befallen him, and considering that the Ivrim (Hebrews) couldn't be overcome because the Almighty God fought on their side, he sent again 14 and persuaded them to come to terms on condition that all their rights were acknowledged, and promised that he'd also persuade the king to become their friend.[85] 15 Makabi gave consent on all the conditions which Lusias proposed to him, being careful of the common good; for whatever requests Makabi delivered in writing to Lusias about the Yehudim the king allowed.

Letters confirming the peace agreement

16 The letter written to the Yehudim (Jews) from Lusias was to this effect:

"Lusias to the people[86] of the Yehudim, greetings. 17 Yohan (John) and Avshalom (Absalom), who were sent from you, having delivered the document written below, made request about the things written there. 18 Whatever things therefore needed to be brought before the king I declared to him, and what things were possible he allowed. 19 If then you'll all preserve your good will towards the government, I'll also endeavour in the future to contribute to your good. 20 About this, I've given order in detail, both to these men and to those who are sent from me, to confer with you. 21 Farewell. Written in the one hundred and forty-eighth year, on the twenty-fourth day of the month Dioskorinthios."[87]

22 And the king's letter contained these words:

"King Antiokos (Antiochus) to his brother Lusias, greetings. 23 Seeing that our father passed to the gods having the wish that the subjects of his kingdom should[88] be undisturbed and give themselves to the care of their own affairs, 24 we, having heard that the Yehudim (Jews) don't consent to our father's purpose to turn them to the customs of the Hellains (Greeks), but choose rather their own way of living, and make request that the customs of their law be allowed to them— 25 choosing therefore that this nation also should be free from disturbance, we determine that their temple is to be restored to them, and that they live according to the customs that were in the days of their ancestors. 26 You'll therefore do well to send messengers to them and give them the right hand of friendship, that they, knowing our mind, may be of good heart, and gladly occupy themselves with the conduct of their own affairs."

27 And to the nation, the king's letter was as follows:

"King Antiokos to the senate of the Yehudim and to the other Yehudim, greetings. 28 If you're all well, it's as we desire. We ourselves also are in good health. 29 Menelaos informed us that your desire was to return home and follow your own business. 30 They therefore who depart home up to the thirtieth day of Xan-

83 RV 11:8 · Note Grk. a panoply.

84 RV 11:9 · Note Grk. wound.

85 RV 11:14 · Note The Greek text here is corrupt.

86 RV 11:16 · Note Grk. multitude.

87 RV 11:21 · Note This month name is not found elsewhere, and is perhaps corrupt.

88 RV 11:23 · Note Or, should not be disquieted but

Readers' Version

thikos will have our friendship,[89] with full permission 31 that the Yehudim use their own foods and observe their own laws, even as formerly. None of them will be in any way molested for the things that have been done in ignorance. 32 Moreover I've sent Menelaos also, that he may encourage you. 33 Farewell. Written in the one hundred and forty-eighth year, on the fifteenth day of Xanthikos."

34 The Romaios also sent to them a letter in these words:

"Kointos Memios and Titos Manios, ambassadors of the Romaios, to the people of the Yehudim, greetings. 35 In regard to the things which Lusias the king's kinsman granted you, we also give consent. 36 But as for the things which he judged should be referred to the king, send someone promptly, after you've considered them, that we may publish such decrees as are appropriate for your case; for we're on our way to Antiokeia. 37 Therefore send someone with speed, that we also may learn what's your mind. 38 Farewell.[90] Written in the one hundred and forty-eighth year, on the fifteenth day of Xanthikos.

Yehudah punishes attacks on the Yehudim

12:1 So when this agreement had been made, Lusias departed to the king, and the Yehudim went about their farming.

2 But some of the governors of districts, Timotheos and Apolonios the son of Gennaios, and also Hieronumos and Demofon, and beside them Nikanor Kupros' (Cyprus') governor, wouldn't allow them to enjoy tranquillity and live in peace. 3 Men of Yafo (Joppa) perpetrated this great impiety: they invited the Yehudim who lived among them to go with their wives and children into the boats which they'd provided, as though they had no ill will towards them. 4 When[91] the Yehudim,[92] relying on the public vote of the city, accepted the invitation, as men desiring to live in peace and suspecting nothing, they took them out to sea and drowned not less than two hundred of them. 5 When Yehudah (Judas) heard of the cruelty done to his fellow-countrymen, giving command to the men that were with him 6 and calling on God the righteous Judge, he came against the murderers of his kindred, and set the harbour on fire at night, burnt the boats, and put to the sword those who'd fled there. 7 But when the town gates were closed, he withdrew, intending to come again to root out the whole community of the men of Yafo. 8 But learning that the men of Yavneh intended to do the same thing to the Yehudim who lived among them, 9 he attacked the Jamnites at night, and set fire to the harbour together with the fleet, so that the glare of the light was seen at Yerushalem (Jerusalem), two hundred and forty furlongs[93] distant.

Victories in the east

10 Now when they'd drawn off nine furlongs[94] from there, as they marched against Timotheos, an army of Aravim attacked him, no fewer than five thousand infantry and five hundred cavalry. 11 And when a hard battle had been fought, and Yehudah and his company, by the help of God, had good success, the nomads being overcome implored Yehudah to grant them friendship, promising to give him livestock, and to help his[95] people in all other ways. 12 So Yehudah, thinking that they'd indeed be profitable in many things, agreed to live in peace with them; and receiving pledges of friendship they departed to their tents.

13 He also attacked a certain city, strong and fenced with earthworks and walls, and inhab-

89 **RV 11:30 · Note** Grk. right hand.

90 **RV 11:38 · Note** Grk. Be in good health.

91 **RV 12:4 · Note** Grk. they also.

92 **RV 12:4 · Note** Grk. after.

93 **RV 12:9 · Note** a furlong is about 201 metres or 220 yards, so 240 furlongs is about 48 km. or 30 miles

94 **RV 12:10 · Note** a furlong is about 201 metres or 220 yards, so 9 furlongs is about 1.8 km. or 1 1/8 miles

95 **RV 12:11 · Note** Grk. them.

Readers' Version

ited by a mixed multitude of various nations. It was named Kaspin. **14** Those who were within, trusting in the strength of the walls and their store of provisions, behaved themselves rudely towards Yehudah and those who were with him, railing, and furthermore blaspheming and speaking impious words. **15** But Yehudah and his company, calling on the great Sovereign of the world, who without rams and cunning engines of war hurled down Yeriho (Jericho) in the times of Yeshua (Jesus), rushed wildly against the wall. **16** Having taken the city by God's will, they made unspeakable slaughter, so much that the adjoining lake, which was two furlongs[96] broad, appeared to be filled with the deluge of blood.

Another victory over Timotheos

17 When they'd gone seven hundred and fifty furlongs[97] from there, they made their way to Karax, to the Yehudim (Jews) that are called Tubieni.[98] **18** They didn't find Timotheos in that district, for he had by then departed from the district without accomplishing anything, but had left behind a very strong garrison in one place. **19** But Dositheos and Sosipatros, who were captains under Makabi (Maccabaeus), went out and destroyed those who'd been left by Timotheos in the fortress, more than ten thousand men. **20** Makabi, arranging his own army in divisions, set these[99] two over the bands, and marched in haste against Timotheos, who had with him one hundred and twenty thousand infantry and two thousand and five hundred cavalry. **21** When Timotheos heard of the approach of Yehudah, he at once sent away the women and the children with the baggage into the fortress called Karnayim;[100] for the place was hard to besiege and difficult of access because of the narrowness of the approaches on all sides. **22** When the band of Yehudah, who led the first division, appeared in sight, and when terror and fear came on the enemy, because the manifestation of him who sees all things came on them, they fled in every direction, carried this way and that, so that they were often injured by their own men, and pierced with the points of their own swords. **23** Yehudah continued the pursuit more vigorously, putting the wicked wretches to the sword, and he destroyed as many as thirty thousand men.

24 Timotheos himself, falling in with the company of Dositheos and Sosipatros, implored them with much crafty guile to let him go with his life, because he had in his power the parents of many of them and the kindred of some. "Otherwise, he said, little regard will be shown[101] to these."[102] **25** So when he had with many words confirmed the agreement to restore them without harm, they let him go that they might save their kindred.

26 Then Yehudah, marching against Karnayim[103] and Atergatis' temple, killed twenty-five thousand people. **27** After he'd put these to flight and destroyed them, he marched against Efron also, a strong city, wherein[104] were multitudes of people of all nations. Stalwart young men placed on[105] the walls made a vigorous defence. There were great stores of war engines and darts there. **28** But calling on the Sovereign who with might shatters the

96 RV 12:16 · Note a furlong is about 201 metres or 220 yards, so 2 furlongs is about 402 metres or 1/4 mile

97 RV 12:17 · Note a furlong is about 201 metres or 220 yards, so 750 furlongs is about 151 km. or 94 miles

98 RV 12:17 · Note That is, men of Tob: see Judges 11:3, 2 Samuel 10:6, and compare 1 Maccabees 5:13.

99 RV 12:20 · Note Grk. them.

100 RV 12:21 · Note Compare Carnain, 1 Maccabees 5:26, 43, 44.

101 RV 12:24 · Note Or, have been shown

102 RV 12:24 · Note Grk. and the result will be that these be disregarded. The Greek text here is perhaps corrupt.

103 RV 12:26 · Note Compare Carnain, 1 Maccabees 5:26, 43, 44.

104 RV 12:27 · Note The Greek text here is perhaps corrupt.

105 RV 12:27 · Note Grk. in front of.

Readers' Version

strength[106] of the[107] enemy, they took the city into their hands, and killed as many as twenty-five thousand of those who were in it.

29 Setting out from there, they marched in haste against Beyt-Shean, which is six hundred furlongs[108] away from Yerushalem (Jerusalem). 30 But when the Yehudim (Jews) who were settled there testified of the good will that the Scythopolitans had shown towards them, and of their kind treatment of them in the times of their misfortune, 31 they gave thanks, and further exhorted them to remain well disposed towards the race for the future. Then they went up to Yerushalem, the feast of weeks being close at hand.

Yehudah fights Gorgias

32 But after the feast called Pentecost, they marched in haste against Gorgias Edom's governor. 33 He came out with three thousand infantry and four hundred cavalry. 34 When they'd set themselves in array, it happened that a few of the Yehudim fell. 35 A certain Dositheos, one of Bacenor's company,[109] who was on horseback and was a strong man, pressed hard on Gorgias, and taking hold of his cloak dragged him along by main force. While he planned to take the accursed man alive, one of the Thracian cavalry bore down on him and disabled his shoulder, and so Gorgias escaped to Mareshah.[110]

36 When those who were with Ezra had been fighting long and were weary, Yehudah (Judas) called on the master to show himself, fighting on their side and leading in the battle. 37 Then in the language of his ancestors he raised the battle cry joined with hymns. Then he rushed against Gorgias' troops when they weren't expecting it, and put them to flight.

Prayers and an offering for the dead

38 Yehudah gathered his army and came to the city of Adulam.[111] As the seventh day was coming on, they purified themselves according to the custom, and kept the Sabbath there.

39 On the following day, when[112] it'd become necessary, Yehudah and his company came to take up the bodies of those who'd fallen, and[113] in company with their kinsmen to bring them back to the sepulchres of their ancestors. 40 But under the clothes of each one of the dead they found consecrated[114] tokens of the idols of Yavneh, which the law forbids the Yehudim to have anything to do with. It became clear to all that it was for this cause that they'd fallen. 41 All therefore, blessing the ways of the master, the righteous Judge, who makes manifest the things that are hidden, 42 turned themselves to supplication, praying that the sin committed might be wholly blotted out. The noble Yehudah exhorted the multitude to keep themselves from sin, for they'd seen with their own eyes what happened because of the sin of those who'd fallen. 43 When he'd made a collection man by man to the sum of two thousand drachmas of silver, he sent to Yerushalem (Jerusalem) to offer a sacrifice for sin, doing very well and honourably in this, in that he took thought for the resurrection. 44 Because if he wasn't expecting that those who'd fallen would rise again, it'd be superfluous and idle to pray for the dead. 45 But if he was looking forward to an honourable memorial of gratitude

106 RV 12:28 · Note Some authorities read weight.

107 RV 12:28 · Note Or, his enemies

108 RV 12:29 · Note a furlong is about 201 metres or 220 yards, so 600 furlongs is about 121 km. or 75 miles

109 RV 12:35 · Note The Greek text is uncertain.

110 RV 12:35 · Note Compare 1 Maccabees 5:65.

111 RV 12:38 · Note Grk. Odollam.

112 RV 12:39 · Note The Greek text here is uncertain.

113 RV 12:39 · Note Or, and to bring them back to be with their kinsmen in the sepulchres

114 RV 12:40 · Note Perhaps these were consecrated images of the idols.

Readers' Version

laid up for those who die[115] in[116] godliness, then the thought was holy and godly. Therefore he made the atoning sacrifice for those who'd died, that they might be released from their sin.

Antiokos invades and Menelaos is executed

13:1 In the one hundred and forty-ninth year, news was brought to Yehudah and his company that Antiokos (Antiochus) Eupator was coming with multitudes against Yehudah, **2** and with him Lusias his guardian and chancellor, each having a Greek force of one hundred and ten thousand infantry, five thousand and three hundred cavalry, twenty-two elephants, and three hundred chariots armed with scythes.

3 And Menelaos also joined himself with them, and with great hypocrisy encouraged Antiokos, not for the saving of his country, but because he thought that he'd be set over the government. **4** But the King of kings stirred up Antiokos' anger against the wicked wretch. When Lusias informed him that this man was the cause of all the evils, the king commanded to bring him to Beroia, and to put him to death in the way customary in that place. **5** Now there's in that place a tower that's fifty cubits high, full of ashes, and it had all around it a circular[117] rim sloping steeply on every side into the ashes. **6** Here one who's guilty of sacrilege or notorious for other crimes is pushed down to destruction. **7** By such a fate it happened that the breaker of the law, Menelaos, died, without obtaining so much as a grave in the earth, and that justly; **8** for since he'd perpetrated many sins against[118] the altar, whose fire and whose ashes were holy, he received his death in ashes.

Yehudah resists the invasion

9 Now the king,[119] infuriated in spirit, was coming with intent to inflict on the Yehudim (Jews) the very worst of the sufferings that'd been done in his father's time. **10** But when Yehudah heard of these things, he commanded the multitude to call on the master day and night, if ever at any other time, so now to help those who were at the point of being deprived of the law, their country, and the holy temple, **11** and not to allow the people who'd just begun to be revived to fall into the hands of those profane heathen. **12** So when they had all done the same thing together, begging[120] the merciful master with weeping and fastings and prostration for three days without ceasing, Yehudah exhorted them and commanded they should join him.

13 Having consulted privately with the elders, he resolved that before the king's army entered into Yehudah (Judea) and made themselves masters of the city, they should go out and decide the matter by the help of God.[121] **14** And committing the decision to the master[122] of the world, and exhorting those who were with him to contend nobly even to death for laws, temple, city, country, and way of life, he pitched his camp by Modi'in. **15** He gave out to his men the watchword, "VICTORY IS GOD'S", with a chosen force of the bravest young men he attacked by the king's pavilion by night, and killed of his army as many as two thousand men, and brought[123] down the leading elephant with him who was in the tower[124] on him. **16** At last they

115 RV 12:45 · Note Grk. fall asleep.
116 RV 12:45 · Note Or, on the side of godliness
117 RV 13:5 · Note Grk. contrivance or machine.
118 RV 13:8 · Note Grk. about.
119 RV 13:9 · Note Some authorities read indignant.
120 RV 13:12 · Note Grk. and implored.
121 RV 13:13 · Note Some authorities read the master.
122 RV 13:14 · Note Some authorities read Creator.
123 RV 13:15 · Note The Greek text here is probably corrupt.
124 RV 13:15 · Note Grk. house.

Readers' Version

filled the army[125] with terror and alarm, and departed with good success. 17 This had been accomplished when the day was just dawning, because of the master's protection that gave Yehudah[126] help.

The king makes peace

18 But the king, having had a taste of the exceeding boldness of the Yehudim (Jews), made strategic attacks on their positions, 19 and on a strong fortress of the Yehudim at Beyt-Tsur. He advanced, was turned back, failed, and was defeated. 20 Yehudah sent the things that were necessary to those who were within. 21 But Rodokos, from the Jewish ranks, made secrets known to the enemy. He was searched for, arrested, and shut up in prison. 22 The king negotiated with them in Beyt-Tsur the second time, gave his hand, took theirs, departed, attacked the forces of Yehudah, was put to the worse, 23 heard that Filippos (Philip) who'd been left as chancellor in Antiokeia had become reckless, was confounded, made to the Yehudim an overture of peace, submitted himself and swore to acknowledge all their rights, came to terms with them and offered sacrifice, honoured the sanctuary and the place, 24 showed kindness and graciously received Makabi (Maccabaeus), left Hegemonides governor from Ptolemais even to the Gerrenians,[127] 25 and came to Ptolemais. The men of Ptolemais were displeased at the treaty, for they had very great indignation against the Yehudim. They desired to annul the articles of the agreement. 26 Lusias came[128] forward to speak, made the best defence that was possible, persuaded, pacified, gained their good will, and departed to Antiokeia. This was the issue of the attack and departure of the king.

Alkimos persuades Demetrios to send Nikanor

14:1 Three years later, news was brought to Yehudah and his company that Demetrios the son of Seleukos (Seleucus), having sailed into the harbour of Tripolis with a mighty army and a fleet, 2 had taken possession of the country, having made away with Antiokos (Antiochus) and his guardian Lusias.

3 But one Alkimos, who'd formerly been high priest, and had wilfully polluted himself in the times when there was no mingling with the Gentiles, considering that there was no deliverance for him in any way, nor any more access to the holy altar, 4 came to King Demetrios in about the one hundred and fifty-first year, presenting to him a crown of gold and a palm, and beside these some of the festal olive boughs of the temple. Because that day, he held his peace; 5 but having gotten opportunity to further his own madness, being called by Demetrios into a meeting of his council, and asked how the Yehudim stood affected and what they intended, he answered:

6 "Those of the Yehudim called Hasidim,[129] whose leader is Yehudah Makabi (Maccabaeus), keep up war and are seditious, not allowing the kingdom to find tranquillity. 7 Therefore, having laid aside my ancestral glory—I mean the high priesthood—I've now come here,[130] 8 first for the genuine care I have for the things that concern the king, and secondly because I have regard also to my own fellow citizens. Because through the unadvised dealing of those of whom I spoke before, our whole race is in no small misfortune. 9 Oh king, having informed yourself of these things, take thought both for our country and for our race, which is surrounded by enemies, according to the gracious

125 RV 13:16 · Note Grk. camp.

126 RV 13:17 · Note Grk. him.

127 RV 13:24 · Note The form of this word is uncertain. Compare Girzites (or Gizrites), 1 Samuel 27:8. One manuscript reads Gerarenes.

128 RV 13:26 · Note Grk. came forward to the tribune or judgement seat.

129 RV 14:6 · Note That is, Chasidim.

130 RV 14:7 · Note Some authorities read a second time.

Readers' Version

kindness with which you receive all. 10 Because as long as Yehudah remains alive, it's impossible for the government to find peace. 11 When he'd spoken such words as these, at once the[131] rest of the king's friends,[132] having ill will against Yehudah, inflamed Demetrios yet more. 12 He immediately appointed Nikanor, who'd been master of the elephants, and made him governor of Yehudah. He sent him out, 13 giving him written instructions to kill Yehudah himself and to scatter those who were with him, and to set up Alkimos as high priest of the great[133] temple. 14 Those in Yehudah who had[134] driven Yehudah into exile thronged to Nikanor in flocks, supposing that the misfortunes and calamities of the Yehudim would be successes to themselves.

15 But when the Yehudim heard of Nikanor's advance and the assault of the heathen, they sprinkled dirt on their heads and made solemn prayers to him who'd established his own people forever, and who always, making manifest his presence, upholds those who are his own heritage. 16 When[135] the leader had given orders, he immediately set out from there and joined battle with them at a village called Lessau. 17 But Shim'on (Simon), the brother of Yehudah, had encountered Nikanor, yet not till late, having been delayed because of the sudden consternation caused by his adversaries.

Nikanor makes peace with Yehudah

18 Nevertheless Nikanor, hearing of the valour of those who were with Yehudah, and their courage in fighting for their country, shrank from bringing the matter to the decision of the sword. 19 Therefore he sent Posidonios, Theodotos, and Matityah (Mattathias) to give and receive pledges of friendship. 20 So when these proposals had been long considered, and the leader had made the troops[136] acquainted with them, and it appeared that they were all of like mind, they consented to the covenants. 21 They appointed a day on which to meet together by themselves. A chariot came forward from each army. They set up seats of honour. 22 Yehudah stationed armed men ready in convenient places, in case the enemy suddenly betrayed them. They held a conference as was appropriate. 23 Nikanor waited in Yerushalem (Jerusalem), and did nothing to cause disturbance, but dismissed the flocks of people that'd gathered together. 24 He kept Yehudah always in his presence. He'd gained a hearty affection for the man. 25 He urged him to marry and have children. He married, settled quietly, and took part in common life.

Nikanor turns against Yehudah

26 But Alkimos, perceiving the good will that was between them, and[137] having taken possession of the covenants that'd been made, came to Demetrios and told him that Nikanor was disloyal to the government, for he'd appointed that conspirator against his kingdom, Yehudah, to be his successor. 27 The king, falling into a rage, and being exasperated by the false accusations of that most wicked man, wrote to Nikanor, signifying that he was displeased at the covenants, and commanding him to send Makabi (Maccabaeus) prisoner to Antiokeia in all haste. 28 When this message came to Nikanor, he was confounded, and was very troubled at the thought of annulling the articles that'd been agreed on, the man having done no wrong; 29 but because there was no opposing the king, he watched his time to execute this purpose by strategy. 30 But Makabi, when he perceived that Nikanor was behaving more harshly in his dealings with him, and that he'd

131 **RV 14:11 · Note** Or, the king's friends likewise

132 **RV 14:11 · Note** See 2 Maccabees 8:9.

133 **RV 14:13 · Note** Grk. greatest.

134 **RV 14:14 · Note** See 2 Maccabees 5:27.

135 **RV 14:16 · Note** The Greek text of this verse and the next is corrupt.

136 **RV 14:20 · Note** Or, people Grk. multitudes.

137 **RV 14:26 · Note** Or, and the covenants that had been made, took occasion and came

become ruler in his customary bearing, understanding that this harshness came not of good, gathered together not a few of his men, and concealed himself from Nikanor.

31 But the other,[138] when he became aware that he'd been bravely defeated by the strategy of Yehudah,[139] came to the great[140] and holy temple, while the priests were offering the usual sacrifices, and commanded them to hand over the man. **32** When they declared with oaths that they had no idea where the man who he was searching for was, **33** he stretched out his right hand towards the sanctuary, and swore this oath: "If you won't deliver up to me Yehudah as a prisoner, I'll level this temple[141] of God even with the ground, break down the altar, and I'll erect here a temple to Dionusos for all to see.

34 And having said this, he departed. But the priests, stretching forth their hands towards heaven, called on him who always fights for our nation, in these words: **35** "You, Oh master of the universe, who in yourself have need of nothing, were well pleased that a sanctuary of your habitation[142] should be set among us. **36** So now, Oh holy master of all holiness, keep undefiled forever this house that's been recently cleansed."

The death of Razis

37 Now information was given to Nikanor against one Razis, an elder of Yerushalem (Jerusalem), who was a lover of his countrymen and a man of very good report, and one called Father of the Yehudim (Jews) for his good will. **38** Because in the former times when there was no mingling with the Gentiles, he'd been accused of following the Yehudim' religion, and had risked body and life with all earnestness for the religion of the Yehudim.

39 Nikanor, wishing to make evident the ill will that he bore against the Yehudim, sent above five hundred soldiers to seize him; **40** for he thought by seizing him to inflict an injury on them. **41** But when the troops[143] were at the point of taking the tower, and were forcing the courtyard door, and asked for fire to burn the doors, he, being surrounded on every side, fell onto his sword, **42** choosing rather to die nobly than to fall into the hands of the wicked wretches, and suffer outrage unworthy of his own nobleness. **43** But since he missed his stroke through the excitement of the struggle, and the crowds were now rushing within the door, he ran bravely up to the wall and threw himself down bravely among the crowds. **44** But as they quickly gave back, a space was made, and he fell on the middle of his[144] side. **45** Still having breath within him, and being inflamed with anger, he rose up, and though his blood gushed out in streams and his wounds were grievous, he ran through the crowds, and standing on a steep rock, **46** when as his blood was now well near spent, he drew forth his bowels through the wound, and taking them in both his hands he shook them at the crowds. Calling on him who's master of life and spirit to restore him these[145] again, he died like this.

Nikanor's threats and Yehudah's confidence

15:1 But Nikanor, hearing that Yehudah (Judas) and his company were in the region of Shomron (Samaria), resolved to attack them with complete safety on the day of rest. **2** When the Yehudim (Jews) who were compelled to follow him said, "Don't destroy so savagely and barbarously, but give due glory to the day which he who sees all things has honoured and hallowed above other days."

138 RV 14:31 · Note Or, though he was conscious that he had been nobly defeated by

139 RV 14:31 · Note Grk. the man

140 RV 14:31 · Note Grk. greatest.

141 RV 14:33 · Note Or, chapel Grk. enclosure.

142 RV 14:35 · Note Grk. tabernacling.

143 RV 14:41 · Note Or, people Grk. multitudes.

144 RV 14:44 · Note Or, the void place

145 RV 14:46 · Note Some authorities read the same.

Readers' Version

3 Then the thrice-accursed wretch asked if there were a Sovereign in heaven who'd commanded to keep the Sabbath day.

4 When they declared, "There's the master, living himself as Sovereign in heaven, who told us observe the seventh day."

5 He replied, "I also am a sovereign on the earth, who commands you to take up weapons and execute the king's business." Nevertheless he didn't prevail to execute his cruel plan.

6 And Nikanor, in his utter boastfulness and arrogance,[146] had determined to set up a monument of complete victory over Yehudah and all those who were with him. 7 But Makabi (Maccabaeus) still trusted unceasingly, with all hope that he should obtain help from the master. 8 He exhorted his company not to be fearful at the assault of the heathen, but keeping in mind the help which in former times they'd often received from heaven, so now also to look for the victory which would come to them from the Almighty, 9 and encouraging them out of the law and the prophets, and reminding them of the conflicts that they'd won, he made them more eager. 10 And when he'd aroused their courage, he gave them orders, at the same time pointing out the faithlessness of the heathen and their breach of their oaths. 11 Arming each one of them, not so much with the sure defence of shields and spears as with the encouragement of good words, and moreover relating to them a dream worthy to be believed, he made them all extremely glad.

12 The vision of that dream was this: Honyo (Onias), he who'd been high priest, a leading citizen and good man, modest in bearing, yet gentle in manner and well-spoken, and trained from a child in all points of virtue, with outstretched hands invoking blessings on the whole body of the Yehudim (Jews). 13 Then he saw a man appear, of venerable age and exceeding glory, and the dignity around him was wonderful and most majestic. 14 Honyo replied, "This is the lover of the kindred, he who prays much for the people and the holy city: Yirmiyah (Jeremiah) God's prophet. 15 Yirmiyah stretched out his right hand and delivered to Yehudah a gold sword, and in giving it addressed him thus: 16 "Take this holy sword, a gift from God, with which you'll strike down the adversaries."

17 Being encouraged by Yehudah's (Judas') words, which were noble and effective, and able to incite to virtue and to stir the souls of the young to manly courage, they determined not to carry on a campaign, but nobly to bear down on the enemy, and fighting hand to hand with all courage bring the matter to a conclusion, because the city, the sanctuary, and the temple were in danger. 18 Because their fear for wives and children, and furthermore for family and relatives, was less important to them; but greatest and first was their fear for the consecrated sanctuary. 19 Also those who were shut up in the city were in no light distress, being troubled because of the encounter in the open country.

Nikanor is defeated and killed

20 When all were now waiting for the decision of the issue, and the enemy had already joined battle, and the army had been set in array, and the elephants[147] brought back to a convenient post,[148] and the cavalry deployed on the flanks, 21 Makabi (Maccabaeus), perceiving the presence of the troops,[149] and the various weapons with which they were equipped, and the savageness of the elephants,[150] holding up his hands to heaven called on the master who works wonders, knowing that success comes not by weapons, but that, according to how the master judges, he gains the victory for those who are worthy. 22 And calling on God, he said

146 **RV 15:6 · Note** Grk. carrying his neck high.

147 **RV 15:20 · Note** Grk. animals.

148 **RV 15:20 · Note** Or, stationed for convenient action

149 **RV 15:21 · Note** Grk. multitudes.

150 **RV 15:21 · Note** Grk. animals.

this: "You, Oh Sovereign master, sent your angel in the time of King Hizkiyah (Hezekiah) of Yehudah, and he killed of the army[151] of Sanheriv (Sennacherib) as many as one hundred and eighty-five thousand. 23 So now also, Oh Sovereign of the heavens, send a good angel before us to bring terror and trembling.
24 Through the greatness of your arm let them be stricken with dismay who with blasphemy have come here against your holy people." As he finished these words, 25 Nikanor and his company advanced with trumpets and victory songs; 26 but Yehudah and his company joined battle with the enemy with invocation and prayers. 27 Fighting with their hands and praying to God with their hearts, they killed no less than thirty-five thousand men, being made extremely glad by the manifestation of God.

28 When the engagement was over and they were returning again with joy, they recognised Nikanor lying dead in full armour. 29 Then there was shouting and noise, and they blessed the Sovereign master in the language of their ancestors. 30 He who in all things was in body and soul the foremost champion of his fellow-citizens, he who kept through life the good will of his youth towards his countrymen, ordered that Nikanor's head be cut off with his hand and arm, and that they be brought to Yerushalem (Jerusalem). 31 When he'd arrived there and had called his countrymen together and set the priests before the altar, he sent for those who were in the citadel. 32 Showing the head of the vile Nikanor and the hand of that profane man, which with proud brags he'd stretched out against the holy house of the Almighty, 33 and cutting out the tongue of the impious Nikanor, he said that he'd give it in pieces to the birds, and hang up these rewards of his folly near the sanctuary. 34 They all, looking up to heaven, blessed the master who'd manifested himself, saying, "Blessed is he who's preserved his own place undefiled!"
35 He hung Nikanor's head and shoulder from the citadel, a clear sign evident to all of the help of the master. 36 They all ordained with a common decree to in no way let this day pass undistinguished, but to mark with honour the thirteenth day of the twelfth month (it's called Adar in the Arami (Syrian) language), the day before the day of Mordekai.

The writer's closing words

37 This then having been the account of the attempt of Nikanor, and the city having from those times been held by the Ivrim (Hebrews), I also will here make an end of my book. 38 If I've written well and to the point in my story, this is what I myself desired; but if it's poorly done and mediocre, this is the best I could do. 39 Because as it's distasteful[152] to drink wine alone and likewise to drink water alone, while[153] the mingling of wine with water at once gives full pleasantness to the flavour; so also the fashioning of the language delights the ears of those who read the story.

Here is the end.

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151 RV 15:22 · Note Grk. camp.

152 RV 15:39 · Note Or, hurtful

153 RV 15:39 · Note Grk. but even as.