

FIRST MACCABEES

I. CRISIS AND RESPONSE

1 From Alexander to Antiochus. ^{1*} After Alexander the Macedonian, Philip's son, who came from the land of Kittim,† had defeated Darius, king of the Persians and Medes, he became king in his place, having first ruled in Greece. ² He fought many battles, captured fortresses, and put the kings of the earth to death. ³ He advanced to the ends of the earth, gathering plunder from many nations; the earth fell silent before him, and his heart became proud and arrogant. ⁴ He collected a very strong army and won dominion over provinces, nations, and rulers, and they paid him tribute.

⁵ But after all this he took to his bed, realizing that he was going to die. ⁶ So he summoned his noblest officers, who had been brought up with him from his youth, and divided his kingdom among them while he was still alive. ⁷ Alexander had reigned twelve years† when he died.

⁸ So his officers took over his kingdom, each in his own territory, ⁹ and after his death they all put on diadems,† and so did their sons after them for many years, multiplying evils on the earth.

¹⁰ There sprang from these a sinful offshoot, Antiochus Epiphanes, son of King Antiochus, once a hostage at Rome. He became king in the one hundred and thirty-seventh year† of the kingdom of the Greeks.

† **1:1** *Land of Kittim:* Greece. The name referred originally to inhabitants of Kiti, capital of the isle of Cyprus, then to any Cyriots (Is 23:1; Jer 2:10), later to Greeks in general, and finally even to Romans. See note on Dn 11:30. *Darius:* Darius III, Codoman (336–331 B.C.).

1:7 *Twelve years:* 336–323 B.C. The division of the empire was not fully settled until 305 B.C.

1:9 *Diadems:* decorated bands of white cloth worn around the head, symbolizing kingship. The Ptolemies, based in Egypt, controlled Judea until 198 B.C., when they were replaced by the Seleucids, based in Syria.

1:10 *The one hundred and thirty-seventh year:* Antiochus IV seized the throne in September, 175 B.C. Dates are given in this book according to the beginning of the Seleucid era, which however was reckoned in two different ways. Antiochians considered this date to be October, 312 B.C. (Syrian calendar), while Babylonians and Jewish priests accepted April, 311 B.C. as the commencement of the era (Temple calendar). The author of 1 Maccabees dates political events by the Syrian calendar but religious events by the Temple calendar. Accordingly, the civil New Year occurred variously in September or October, the religious New Year in March or April.

Lawless Jews. ^{11*} In those days there appeared in Israel transgressors of the law who seduced many, saying: "Let us go and make a covenant with the Gentiles all around us; since we separated from them, many evils have come upon us." ¹² The proposal was agreeable; ¹³ some from among the people promptly went to the king, and he authorized them to introduce the ordinances of the Gentiles. ¹⁴ Thereupon they built a gymnasium† in Jerusalem according to the Gentile custom. ¹⁵ They disguised their circumcision and abandoned the holy covenant; they allied themselves with the Gentiles and sold themselves to wrongdoing.

Antiochus in Egypt. ^{16*} When his kingdom seemed secure, Antiochus undertook to become king of the land of Egypt and to rule over both kingdoms. ¹⁷ He invaded Egypt with a strong force, with chariots, elephants† and cavalry, and with a large fleet, ¹⁸ to make war on Ptolemy,† king of Egypt. Ptolemy was frightened at his presence and fled, and many were wounded and fell dead. ¹⁹ The fortified cities in the land of Egypt were captured, and Antiochus plundered the land of Egypt.

Robbery of the Temple. ^{20*} After Antiochus had defeated Egypt in the one hundred and forty-third year,† he returned and went up against Israel and against Jerusalem with a strong force. ²¹ He insolently entered the sanctuary† and took away the golden altar, the lampstand for the light with all its utensils, ²² the offering table, the cups and bowls, the golden censers, and the curtain. The cornice and the golden ornament on the facade of

1:14 *Gymnasium:* symbol and center of Greek athletic and intellectual life, it was the chief instrument of Hellenistic culture. Jewish youth were attracted by sports and encouraged to join youth clubs. They received training in military skills and in the duties of citizens. Many were won over to paganism, and some even sought surgical correction of their circumcision (since physical exercise was carried out in nudity).

1:17 *Elephants:* an important part of Seleucid armament (cf. 6:34–37).

1:18 Ptolemy VI Philometer, a nephew of Antiochus.

1:20 *Defeated Egypt in the one hundred and forty-third year.* 169 B.C. No mention is made in 1 Maccabees of the second expedition to Egypt a year later, described in 2 Mc 5:1, 11; Dn 11:25, 29 records both.

1:21 *Entered the sanctuary:* to pay his soldiers, Antiochus seized the sacred vessels and the money deposited at the Temple (see 2 Mc 3:10–11).

1:1–10 Dn 8:20–22; 11:3–4, 21

1:11–15 2 Mc 4:12–17

1:16–19 2 Mc 5:1–10; Dn 11:25–30.

1:20–24 2 Mc 5:11–21.

the temple—he stripped it all off. ²³And he took away the silver and gold and the precious vessels; he also took all the hidden treasures he could find. ²⁴Taking all this, he went back to his own country. He shed much blood and spoke with great arrogance.

²⁵ And there was great mourning throughout all Israel, and the rulers and the elders groaned. ²⁶Young women and men languished, and the beauty of the women faded. ²⁷Every bridegroom took up lamentation, while the bride sitting in her chamber mourned, ²⁸And the land quaked on account of its inhabitants, and all the house of Jacob was clothed with shame.

Attack and Occupation. ^{29*} Two years later, the king sent the Mysian commander† to the cities of Judah, and he came to Jerusalem with a strong force. ³⁰He spoke to them deceitfully in peaceful terms, and they believed him. Then he attacked the city suddenly, in a great onslaught, and destroyed many of the people in Israel. ³¹He plundered the city and set fire to it, demolished its houses and its surrounding walls. ³²And they took captive the women and children, and seized the animals. ³³Then they built up the City of David with a high, strong wall and strong towers, and it became their citadel.† ³⁴There they installed a sinful race, transgressors of the law, who fortified themselves inside it. ³⁵They stored up weapons and provisions, depositing there the plunder they had collected from Jerusalem, and they became a great snare.

³⁶ The citadel became an ambush against the sanctuary, and a wicked adversary to Israel at all times. ³⁷They shed innocent blood around the sanctuary; they defiled the sanctuary.

³⁸ Because of them the inhabitants of Jerusalem fled away, she became the abode of strangers. She became a stranger to her own offspring, and her children forsook her. ^{39*} Her sanctuary became desolate as a wilderness; her feasts were turned into mourning, Her sabbaths to shame, her honor to contempt. ⁴⁰ As her glory had been, so great was her dishonor: her exaltation was turned into mourning.

Religious Persecution. ^{41*} Then the king wrote to his whole kingdom that all should be one people, ⁴²and abandon their particular customs. All the Gentiles conformed to the command of the king, ⁴³and many Israelites delighted in his religion; they sacrificed to idols and profaned the sabbath.

⁴⁴The king sent letters by messenger to Jerusalem and to the cities of Judah, ordering them to follow customs foreign to their land; ⁴⁵to prohibit burnt offerings, sacrifices, and libations in the sanctuary, to profane the sabbaths and feast days, ⁴⁶to desecrate the sanctuary and the sacred ministers, ⁴⁷to build pagan altars and temples and shrines, to sacrifice swine and unclean animals, ⁴⁸to leave their sons uncircumcised, and to defile themselves with every kind of impurity and abomination; ⁴⁹so that they might forget the law and change all its ordinances. ⁵⁰Whoever refused to act according to the command of the king was to be put to death.*

⁵¹In words such as these he wrote to his whole kingdom. He appointed inspectors over all the people, and he ordered the cities of Judah to offer sacrifices, each city in turn. ⁵²Many of the people, those who abandoned the law, joined them and committed evil in the land. ⁵³They drove Israel into hiding, wherever places of refuge could be found.

⁵⁴On the fifteenth day of the month Kislev, in the year one hundred and forty-five,†

^{1:29} Mysian commander: in 2 Mc 5:24 he is identified as "Apollonius, commander of the Mysians" (mercenaries from Asia Minor). The Greek text of 1 Mc 1:29 ("chief collector of tribute") reflects a misreading of the Hebrew original.

^{1:33} Citadel: literally, *akra* means fortress. This was a garrison for foreign troops and renegade Jews that was established near the Temple area and fell to Simon only in 141 B.C. (13:49–50).

^{1:54} Fifteenth day of the month Kislev, in the year one hundred and forty-five: December 6, 167 B.C. Desolating abomination: in the original Hebrew, a contemptuous pun on the title "Lord of heaven" given to the god to whom an image or perhaps

^{1:29–40} 2 Mc 5:24–26.

^{1:39–40} Am 8:10; Tb 2:6.

^{1:41–64} 2 Mc 6:1–11

^{1:50} 1 Mc 2:29–38; 2 Mc

6:18–7:42.

the king erected the desolating abomination upon the altar of burnt offerings, and in the surrounding cities of Judah they built pagan altars.* ⁵⁵They also burned incense at the doors of houses and in the streets. ⁵⁶Any scrolls of the law† that they found they tore up and burned. ⁵⁷Whoever was found with a scroll of the covenant, and whoever observed the law, was condemned to death by royal decree. ⁵⁸So they used their power against Israel, against those who were caught, each month, in the cities. ⁵⁹On the twenty-fifth day of each month they sacrificed on the pagan altar that was over the altar of burnt offerings. ⁶⁰In keeping with the decree, they put to death women who had their children circumcised, ⁶¹and they hung their babies from their necks; their families also and those who had circumcised them were killed.

⁶²But many in Israel were determined and resolved in their hearts not to eat anything unclean; ⁶³they preferred to die rather than to be defiled with food or to profane the holy covenant; and they did die. ⁶⁴And very great wrath came upon Israel.

2 Mattathias and His Sons. ¹In those days Mattathias, son of John, son of Simeon, a priest of the family of Joarib,* left Jerusalem and settled in Modein.† ²He had five sons: John, who was called Gaddi; ³Simon, who was called Thassi; ⁴Judas, who was called Maccabeus; ⁵Eleazar, who was called Avaran; and Jonathan, who was called Apphus. ⁶When he saw the sacrileges that were being committed in Judah and in Jerusalem, ⁷he said:

"Woe is me! Why was I born
to see the ruin of my people,
the ruin of the holy city—
To dwell there
as it was given into the hands of
enemies,
the sanctuary into the hands of
strangers?
⁸ Her temple has become like a man
disgraced,
⁹ her glorious vessels carried off as spoils,

Her infants murdered in her streets,
her youths by the sword of the
enemy.*

- ¹⁰ What nation has not taken its share of
her realm,
and laid its hand on her spoils?
¹¹ All her adornment has been taken away.
Once free, she has become a slave.
¹² We see our sanctuary laid waste,
our beauty, our glory.
The Gentiles have defiled them!
¹³ Why are we still alive?"

¹⁴Then Mattathias and his sons tore their garments, put on sackcloth, and mourned bitterly.

Pagan Worship Refused and Resisted. ¹⁵The officers of the king in charge of enforcing the apostasy came to the city of Modein to make them sacrifice. ¹⁶Many of Israel joined them, but Mattathias and his sons drew together. ¹⁷Then the officers of the king addressed Mattathias: "You are a leader, an honorable and great man in this city, supported by sons and kindred. ¹⁸Come now, be the first to obey the king's command, as all the Gentiles and Judeans and those who are left in Jerusalem have done. Then you and your sons shall be numbered among the King's Friends,† and you and your sons shall be honored with silver and gold and many gifts."

¹⁹But Mattathias answered in a loud voice: "Although all the Gentiles in the king's realm obey him, so that they forsake the religion of their ancestors and consent to the king's orders, ²⁰yet I and my sons and my kindred will keep to the covenant of our ancestors. ²¹Heaven forbid that we should forsake the law and the commandments. ²²We will not obey the words of the king by departing from our religion in the slightest degree."

²³As he finished saying these words, a certain Jew came forward in the sight of all to offer sacrifice on the altar in Modein according to the king's order. ²⁴When Mattathias saw him, he was filled with zeal; his heart was moved and his just fury was aroused; he

† an altar was erected upon the altar of burnt offerings in the Temple of Jerusalem; cf. Dn 9:27; 11:31.

1:56 *Scrolls of the law*: one or more of the first five books of the Old Testament, the traditional law of Israel.

2:1 *Modein*: a village about twenty miles northwest of Jerusalem, the family's ancestral home (see 2:70; 9:19).

2:18 *The King's Friends*: a regular order of nobility at Hellenistic courts (see 10:65; 11:27).

* 1:54 Dn 9:27; 11:31, Mk 13:14.

2:11 Chr 9:10; 24:7.
2:9 Lam 2:11, 21.

sprang forward and killed him upon the altar. ²⁵At the same time, he also killed the messenger of the king who was forcing them to sacrifice, and he tore down the altar. ²⁶Thus he showed his zeal for the law, just as Phinehas did with Zimri, son of Salu.*

²⁷Then Mattathias cried out in the city, "Let everyone who is zealous for the law and who stands by the covenant follow me!" ²⁸Then he and his sons fled to the mountains, leaving behind in the city all their possessions.*

²⁹At that time many who sought righteousness and justice went out into the wilderness to settle there, ³⁰they and their children, their wives and their animals, because misfortunes pressed so hard on them. ³¹It was reported to the officers and soldiers of the king who were in the City of David, in Jerusalem, that those who had flouted the king's order had gone out to secret refuges in the wilderness. ³²* Many hurried out after them, and having caught up with them, camped opposite and prepared to attack them on the sabbath. ³³The pursuers said to them, "Enough of this! Come out and obey the king's command, and you will live." ³⁴But they replied, "We will not come out, nor will we obey the king's command to profane the sabbath." ³⁵Then the enemy attacked them at once. ³⁶But they did not retaliate; they neither threw stones, nor blocked up their secret refuges. ³⁷They said, "Let us all die in innocence; heaven and earth are our witnesses that you destroy us unjustly." ³⁸So the officers and soldiers attacked them on the sabbath, and they died with their wives, their children and their animals, to the number of a thousand persons.

³⁹When Mattathias and his friends heard of it, they mourned deeply for them. ⁴⁰They said to one another, "If we all do as our kindred have done, and do not fight against the Gentiles for our lives and our laws, they will soon destroy us from the earth." ⁴¹So on that day they came to this decision: "Let us fight against anyone who attacks us on the sabbath, so that we may not all die as our kindred died in their secret refuges."

⁴²Then they were joined by a group of Hasideans,† mighty warriors of Israel, all of them devoted to the law. ⁴³And all those who were fleeing from the persecutions joined them and supported them. ⁴⁴They gathered an army and struck down sinners in their wrath and the lawless in their anger, and the survivors fled to the Gentiles for safety. ⁴⁵Mattathias and his friends went about and tore down the pagan altars; ⁴⁶they also forcibly circumcised any uncircumcised boys whom they found in the territory of Israel. ⁴⁷They put to flight the arrogant, and the work prospered in their hands. ⁴⁸They saved the law from the hands of the Gentiles and of the kings and did not let the sinner triumph.

Farewell of Mattathias. ⁴⁹When the time came for Mattathias to die, he said to his sons: "Arrogance and scorn have now grown strong; it is a time of disaster and violent wrath. ⁵⁰Therefore, my children, be zealous for the law and give your lives for the covenant of our ancestors.

- ⁵¹ "Remember the deeds that our ancestors did in their times,
and you shall win great honor and an everlasting name.
⁵² Was not Abraham found faithful in trial,
and it was credited to him as righteousness?*" ⁵³ Joseph, when in distress, kept the commandment,
and he became master of Egypt.*
⁵⁴ Phinehas our ancestor, for his burning zeal,
received the covenant of an everlasting priesthood.*
⁵⁵ Joshua, for executing his commission,
became a judge in Israel.*
⁵⁶ Caleb, for bearing witness before the assembly,
received an inheritance in the land.*
⁵⁷ David, for his loyalty,
received as a heritage a throne of eternal kingship.*

²:29 *The wilderness*: the sparsely inhabited mountain country southward from Jerusalem and west of the Dead Sea, in the region where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found.

²:42 *Hasideans*: in Hebrew *hasidim*, "pious ones," a militant religious group devoted to the strict observance of the law. They first supported the Maccabean movement, but subsequently opposed it, regarding it as too political (see 7:12–18).

²:26 Nm 25:6–15; Ps 106:28–31, Sir 45:23–24; 1 Mc 2:54.

²:28 2 Mc 5:27

²:32–38 2 Mc 6:11
²:52 Gn 15:6; 22:1–18.

²:53 Gn 39:7–10; 41:39–43.

²:54 Nm 25:6–15.

²:55 Jos 1, 2, 5.

²:56 Nm 13:30; 14:6–9, 24; Jos 14:14.

²:57 2 Sm 2:4; 7:16.

58 Elijah, for his burning zeal for the law,
was taken up to heaven.*
59 Hananiah, Azariah and Mishaël, for
their faith,
were saved from the fire.*
60 Daniel, for his innocence,
was delivered from the mouths of
lions.*
61 And so, consider this from generation to
generation,
that none who hope in Heaven shall
fail in strength.
62 Do not fear the words of sinners,
for their glory ends in corruption and
worms.*
63 Today exalted, tomorrow not to be found,
they have returned to dust,
their schemes have perished.
64 Children! be courageous and strong in
keeping the law,
for by it you shall be honored.

⁶⁵ "Here is your brother Simeon who I know
is a wise counselor; listen to him always, and
he will be a father to you. ⁶⁶And Judas Mac-
cabeus, a mighty warrior from his youth, shall
be the leader of your army and wage the war
against the nations. ⁶⁷Gather about you all
who observe the law, and avenge your people.
⁶⁸Pay back the Gentiles what they deserve, and
observe the precepts of the law."

⁶⁹Then he blessed them, and he was gath-
ered to his ancestors. ⁷⁰He died in the year one
hundred and forty-six,† and was buried in the
tombs of his ancestors in Modein, and all Is-
rael mourned him greatly.

II. LEADERSHIP OF JUDAS MACCABEUS

3 Judas and His Early Victories. ¹Then his
son Judas, who was called Maccabeus,
took his place. ²All his brothers and all who
had joined his father supported him, and they
gladly carried on Israel's war.

³ He spread abroad the glory of his
people,

and put on his breastplate like a giant.
He armed himself with weapons of war,
he fought battles and protected the
camp with his sword.

⁴ In his deeds he was like a lion,
like a young lion roaring for prey.
⁵ He pursued the lawless, hunting them
out,
and those who troubled his people he
destroyed by fire.
⁶ The lawless were cowed by fear of him,
and all evildoers were dismayed.
By his hand deliverance was happily
achieved,
⁷ and he afflicted many kings.
He gave joy to Jacob by his deeds,
and his memory is blessed forever.
⁸ He went about the cities of Judah
destroying the renegades there.
He turned away wrath from Israel,
⁹ was renowned to the ends of the
earth;
and gathered together those who were
perishing.

¹⁰Then Apollonius† gathered together the
Gentiles, along with a large army from Sa-
maria, to fight against Israel. ¹¹When Judas
learned of it, he went out to meet him and
struck and killed him. Many fell wounded,
and the rest fled. ¹²They took their spoils,
and Judas took the sword of Apollonius and
fought with it the rest of his life.

¹³But Seron, commander of the Syrian army,
heard that Judas had mustered an assembly of
faithful men ready for war. ¹⁴So he said, "I will
make a name for myself and win honor in the
kingdom. I will wage war against Judas and
his followers, who have despised the king's
command." ¹⁵And again a large company of
renegades advanced with him to help him take
revenge on the Israelites.

¹⁶When he reached the ascent of Beth-ho-
ron,† Judas went out to meet him with a few
men. ¹⁷But when they saw the army coming
against them, they said to Judas: "How can
we, few as we are, fight such a strong host as

† ^{2:70} In the year one hundred and forty-six: 166 B.C.

^{3:10} Apollonius: the Mysian commander mentioned in 1 Mc
1:29; 2 Mc 5:24.

^{3:16} Beth-horon: the famous pass leading up from the coastal
plain to the Judean hill country. Here Joshua won an important
battle (Jos 10:10–11), and in A.D. 66 a Roman force under Ces-
tius was trapped and massacred.

^{2:58} 1 Kgs 19:10, 14; 2 Kgs

^{2:11}
^{2:59} Dn 3:26.

^{2:60} Dn 6:23.

^{2:62} 2 Mc 9:5–13, 28.

this? Besides, we are weak since we have not eaten today." ¹⁸ But Judas said: "Many are easily hemmed in by a few; in the sight of Heaven there is no difference between deliverance by many or by few; ¹⁹ for victory in war does not depend upon the size of the army, but on strength that comes from Heaven.* ²⁰ With great presumption and lawlessness they come against us to destroy us and our wives and children and to despoil us; ²¹ but we are fighting for our lives and our laws. ²² He† will crush them before us; so do not fear them." ²³ When he finished speaking, he rushed suddenly upon Seron and his army, who were crushed before him. ²⁴ He pursued Seron down the descent of Beth-horon into the plain. About eight hundred† of their men fell, and the rest fled to the land of the Philistines. ²⁵ Then Judas and his brothers began to be feared, and dread fell upon the Gentiles about them. ²⁶ His fame reached the king, and the Gentiles talked about the battles of Judas.

The King's Strategy. ²⁷ When King Antiochus heard these reports, he was filled with rage; so he ordered that all the forces of his kingdom be gathered, a very strong army. ²⁸ He opened his treasury, gave his soldiers a year's pay, and commanded them to be prepared for anything. ²⁹ But then he saw that this exhausted the money in his treasury; moreover the tribute from the province was small because of the dissension and distress he had brought upon the land by abolishing the laws which had been in effect from of old. ³⁰ He feared that, as had happened once or twice, he would not have enough for his expenses and for the gifts that he was accustomed to give with a lavish hand—more so than all previous kings. ³¹ Greatly perplexed, he decided to go to Persia and levy tribute on those provinces, and so raise a large sum of money.

³² He left Lysias, a noble of royal descent, in charge of the king's affairs from the Euphrates River to the frontier of Egypt, ³³ and commissioned him to take care of his son Antiochus

until his return. ³⁴ He entrusted to him half of his forces, and the elephants, and gave him instructions concerning everything he wanted done. As for the inhabitants of Judea and Jerusalem, ³⁵ Lysias was to send an army against them to crush and destroy the power of Israel and the remnant of Jerusalem and efface their memory from the place. ³⁶ He was to settle foreigners in all their territory and distribute their land by lot. ³⁷† The king took the remaining half of the army and set out from Antioch, his capital, in the year one hundred and forty-seven; he crossed the Euphrates River and went through the provinces beyond.

Preparations for Battle. ³⁸* Lysias chose Ptolemy, son of Dorymenes, and Nicanor† and Gorgias, powerful men among the King's Friends, ³⁹ and with them he sent forty thousand foot soldiers and seven thousand cavalry to invade and ravage the land of Judah according to the king's orders. ⁴⁰ Setting out with their whole force, they came and pitched their camp near Emmaus† in the plain. ⁴¹ When the merchants of the region heard of their prowess, they came to the camp, bringing a huge sum of silver and gold, along with fetters, to buy the Israelites as slaves. A force from Edom and from Philistia joined with them.

⁴² Judas and his brothers saw that evils had multiplied and that armies were encamped within their territory. They learned of the orders which the king had given to destroy and utterly wipe out the people. ⁴³ So they said to one another, "Let us raise our people from their ruin and fight for them and for our sanctuary!"

⁴⁴ The assembly gathered together to prepare for battle and to pray and ask for mercy and compassion.

⁴⁵ Jerusalem was uninhabited, like a wilderness;
not one of her children came in or went out.

The sanctuary was trampled on,

failure; cf. chap. 6.

^{3:38} *Nicanor*: perhaps the leader of another attack against the Jews four years later; he was finally killed by Judas; cf. 7:26–46.

^{3:40} *Emmaus*: probably not the village mentioned in Lk 24:13 but a settlement about twenty miles west of Jerusalem at the edge of the hill country.

^{3:22} He: out of reverence for God, the author of 1 Maccabees prefers to use the pronoun and other expressions, such as "Heaven," instead of the divine name. Cf. v. 50.

^{3:24} *About eight hundred*: the figures given in this book for strength of armies and number of casualties are not always to be taken literally. In accordance with biblical usage, they indicate rather the importance of the battle described or the greatness of the victory.

^{3:37} This expedition, in the spring of 165 B.C., resulted in

and foreigners were in the citadel;
it was a habitation for Gentiles.
Joy had disappeared from Jacob,
and the flute and the harp were silent.

^{46†} Thus they assembled and went to Mizpah near Jerusalem, because formerly at Mizpah there was a place of prayer for Israel.* ⁴⁷ That day they fasted and wore sackcloth; they sprinkled ashes on their heads and tore their garments. ⁴⁸ They unrolled the scroll of the law, to learn about the things for which the Gentiles consulted the images of their idols.† ⁴⁹ They brought with them the priestly garments, the first fruits, and the tithes; and they brought forward the nazirites* who had completed the time of their vows. ⁵⁰ And they cried aloud to Heaven: "What shall we do with these, and where shall we take them?" ⁵¹ For your sanctuary has been trampled on and profaned, and your priests are in mourning and humbled. ⁵² Now the Gentiles are gathered together against us to destroy us. You know what they plot against us. ⁵³ How shall we be able to resist them unless you help us?" ⁵⁴ Then they blew the trumpets and cried out loudly.

⁵⁵ After this Judas appointed officers for the people, over thousands, over hundreds, over fifties, and over tens. ⁵⁶ He proclaimed that those who were building houses, or were just married, or were planting vineyards, and those who were afraid, could each return home, according to the law.* ⁵⁷ Then the army moved off, and they camped to the south of Emmaus. ⁵⁸ Judas said: "Arm yourselves and be brave; in the morning be ready to fight these Gentiles who have assembled against us to destroy us and our sanctuary. ⁵⁹ It is better for us to die in battle than to witness the evils befalling our nation and our sanctuary. ⁶⁰ Whatever is willed in heaven will be done."

4 Victory over Gorgias. ¹ Now Gorgias took five thousand infantry and a thousand picked cavalry, and this detachment set out at

night ² in order to fall upon the camp of the Jews in a surprise attack. Some from the citadel were his guides. ³ Judas heard of it and himself set out with his soldiers to attack the king's army at Emmaus ⁴ while these forces were still scattered away from the camp. ⁵ During the night Gorgias came into the camp of Judas, and found no one there; so he sought them in the mountains, saying, "They are fleeing from us."

⁶ But at daybreak Judas appeared in the plain with three thousand men; furthermore they lacked the helmets and swords they wanted. ⁷ They saw the army of the Gentiles,† strong, breastplated, and flanked with cavalry, and made up of experienced soldiers. ^{8*} Judas said to the men with him: "Do not fear their numbers or dread their attack. ⁹ Remember how our ancestors were saved in the Red Sea, when Pharaoh pursued them with an army." ¹⁰ So now let us cry to Heaven in the hope that he will favor us, remember the covenant with our ancestors, and destroy this army before us today. ¹¹ All the Gentiles shall know that there is One who redeems and delivers Israel."

¹² When the foreigners looked up and saw them marching toward them, ¹³ they came out of their camp for battle. The men with Judas blew the trumpet, and ¹⁴ joined the battle. They crushed the Gentiles, who fled toward the plain. ¹⁵ Their whole rear guard fell by the sword, and they were pursued as far as Gazara† and the plains of Idumaea, to Azotus and Jamnia. About three thousand of their men fell.

¹⁶ When Judas and the army returned from the pursuit, ¹⁷ he said to the people: "Do not be greedy for plunder; for there is a fight ahead of us, ¹⁸ and Gorgias and his army are near us on the mountain. But now stand firm against our enemies and fight them. Afterward you can freely take the plunder."

¹⁹ As Judas was finishing this speech, a detachment† appeared, looking down from the mountain. ²⁰ They saw that their army had

† **3:46** Mizpah...a place of prayer for Israel: a holy place of great antiquity eight miles north and slightly west of Jerusalem. It was here that Samuel began to judge the Israelites (1 Sm 7:5-11; 10:17).

3:48 To learn...idols: favorable omens for the coming battle. A contrast is intended between the idol worship of the pagans and the consultation of the word of God by the Jews; cf. 2 Mc 8:23.

3:49 Nazirites: see note on Nm 6:2-21.

4:7 Army of the Gentiles: the main force; cf. 3:39-40; 4:1-2.

4:15 Gazara: Gezer of the Hebrew Bible, five miles north-west of Emmaus; Azotus, Hebrew Ashdod, lay to the southwest and Jamnia, Hebrew Jabneel (Jos 15:11) or Jabneh (2 Chr 26:6) to the west of Gazara.

4:19 A detachment: i.e., Gorgias' force; cf. vv. 1-5.

3:46 Jgs 20:1; 1 Sm 7:5-9;
10:17

3:49 Nm 6:1-21

3:56 Dt 20:5-8.
4:8-11 Dt 20:3-4; Jgs 7:2-3
4:9 Ex 14:21-31.

been put to flight and their camp was burning. The smoke they saw revealed what had happened.²¹ When they realized this, they completely lost heart; and when they also saw the army of Judas in the plain ready to attack, they all fled to the land of the foreigners.[†]

²² Then Judas went back to plunder the camp, and they took much gold and silver, cloth dyed blue and marine purple, and great treasure.²⁴ As they returned, they were singing hymns and glorifying Heaven, "who is good, whose mercy endures forever."^{*} ²⁵ Thus Israel experienced a great deliverance that day.

Victory over Lysias. ^{26*} But those of the foreigners who had escaped went and told Lysias all that had occurred.²⁷ When he heard it he was disturbed and discouraged, because things had not turned out in Israel as he intended and as the king had ordered.

²⁸ So the following year he gathered together sixty thousand picked men and five thousand cavalry, to fight them.²⁹ They came into Idumea and camped at Beth-zur,[†] and Judas met them with ten thousand men.³⁰ Seeing that the army was strong, he prayed thus:

"Blessed are you, Savior of Israel, who crushed the attack of the mighty one by the hand of your servant David and delivered the foreign camp into the hand of Jonathan, the son of Saul, and his armor-bearer."³¹ Give this army into the hands of your people Israel; make them ashamed of their troops and their cavalry.³² Strike them with cowardice, weaken the boldness of their strength, and let them tremble at their own destruction.³³ Strike them down by the sword of those who love you, that all who know your name may sing your praise."

³⁴ Then they engaged in battle, and about five thousand of Lysias' army fell in hand-to-hand fighting.^{35†} When Lysias saw the tide of the battle turning, and the increased boldness of Judas, whose men were ready either to live or to die nobly, he withdrew to Antioch and

began to recruit mercenaries so as to return to Judea with greater numbers.*

Purification and Rededication of the Temple.

^{36*} Then Judas and his brothers said, "Now that our enemies have been crushed, let us go up to purify the sanctuary[†] and rededicate it."³⁷ So the whole army assembled, and went up to Mount Zion.³⁸ They found the sanctuary desolate, the altar desecrated, the gates burnt, weeds growing in the courts as in a thicket or on some mountain, and the priests' chambers demolished.*³⁹ Then they tore their garments and made great lamentation; they sprinkled their heads with ashes⁴⁰ and prostrated themselves. And when the signal was given with trumpets, they cried out to Heaven.

⁴¹ Judas appointed men to attack those in the citadel, while he purified the sanctuary.⁴² He chose blameless priests, devoted to the law;⁴³ these purified the sanctuary and carried away the stones of the defilement to an unclean place.⁴⁴ They deliberated what ought to be done with the altar for burnt offerings that had been desecrated.*⁴⁵ They decided it best to tear it down, lest it be a lasting shame to them that the Gentiles had defiled it; so they tore down the altar.⁴⁶ They stored the stones in a suitable place on the temple mount, until the coming of a prophet who could determine what to do with them.*⁴⁷ Then they took uncut stones, according to the law, and built a new altar like the former one.*⁴⁸ They also repaired the sanctuary and the interior of the temple and consecrated the courts.⁴⁹ They made new sacred vessels and brought the lampstand, the altar of incense, and the table into the temple.*⁵⁰ Then they burned incense on the altar and lighted the lamps on the lampstand, and these illuminated the temple.⁵¹ They also put loaves on the table and hung up the curtains. Thus they finished all the work they had undertaken.

⁵² They rose early on the morning of the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, that is,

^{4:22} The land of the foreigners: i.e., territory controlled by the Syrians. The Greek term used here is the same as that used throughout 1-2 Samuel in Greek for Philistine territory and intends to compare Maccabean victories to those of Saul and David.

^{4:29} Beth-zur: an important frontier city (between Judea and Idumea) in the mountain area, fifteen miles south of Jerusalem.

^{4:35} According to 2 Mc 11:13-15, peace negotiations followed between Lysias and Judas.

^{4:36} The sanctuary: the whole Temple area with its walls,

courts and outbuildings, to be distinguished from the Temple proper, the oblong edifice with porch, main room and inner shrine.

* ^{4:24} Ps 118:1-4, 29; 136.

^{4:26-35} 2 Mc 11:1-15.

^{4:30} 1 Sm 17:48-58.

^{4:35} 1 Mc 6:28-31.

^{4:36-61} 2 Mc 10:1-8.

^{4:38} Ps 74:2-7

^{4:44} 1 Kgs 8:64.

^{4:46} 1 Mc 14:41; Dt 18:15.

^{4:47} Ex 20:25.

^{4:49} Ex 25:23-39; 30:1-6.

the month of Kislev, in the year one hundred and forty-eight,[†] ⁵³and offered sacrifice according to the law on the new altar for burnt offerings that they had made.* ⁵⁴On the anniversary of the day on which the Gentiles had desecrated it, on that very day it was rededicated with songs, harps, lyres, and cymbals. ⁵⁵All the people prostrated themselves and adored and praised Heaven, who had given them success.

⁵⁶For eight days they celebrated the dedication of the altar and joyfully offered burnt offerings and sacrifices of deliverance and praise. ⁵⁷They ornamented the facade of the temple with gold crowns and shields; they repaired the gates and the priests' chambers and furnished them with doors. ⁵⁸There was great joy among the people now that the disgrace brought by the Gentiles was removed. ⁵⁹Then Judas and his brothers and the entire assembly of Israel decreed that every year for eight days, from the twenty-fifth day of the month Kislev,* the days of the dedication[†] of the altar should be observed with joy and gladness on the anniversary.

⁶⁰At that time they built high walls and strong towers around Mount Zion, to prevent the Gentiles from coming and trampling it as they had done before. ⁶¹Judas also placed a garrison there to protect it, and likewise fortified Beth-zur, that the people might have a stronghold facing Idumea.

5 Victories over Hostile Neighbors.[†]

^{1*}When the nations round about heard that the altar had been rebuilt and the sanctuary restored as before, they were enraged. ²So they decided to destroy the descendants of Jacob who were among them, and they began to kill and eradicate the people. ^{3*}Then Judas attacked the Edomites[†] at Akrabattene in Idumea, because they were blockading Israel;

he dealt them a heavy blow, humbled and despoiled them. ⁴He also remembered the malice of the Baeonites,[†] who had become a snare and a stumbling block to the people by ambushing them along the roads. ⁵He forced them to take refuge in towers, which he besieged; he put them under the ban and burned down their towers along with all who were in them. ^{6†*}Then he crossed over to the Ammonites, where he found a strong army and a large body of people with Timothy as their leader. ⁷He fought many battles with them, routed them, and struck them down. ⁸After seizing Jazer and its villages, he returned to Judea.

Liberation of Jews in Galilee and Gilead. ⁹The Gentiles in Gilead assembled to destroy the Israelites who were in their territory; these then fled to the stronghold of Dathema.[†] ¹⁰They sent a letter to Judas and his brothers saying: "The Gentiles around us have assembled against us to destroy us, ¹¹and they are preparing to come and seize this stronghold to which we have fled. Timothy is the leader of their army. ¹²Come at once to rescue us from them, for many of us have fallen. ¹³All our kindred who were in the territory of the Tobiads[†] have been killed; the Gentiles have captured their wives, their children and their goods, and they have slain there about a thousand men."*

¹⁴While they were reading this letter, suddenly other messengers, with garments torn, arrived from Galilee to deliver a similar message: ¹⁵that "the inhabitants of Ptolemais,[†] Tyre, and Sidon, and the whole of Gentile Galilee have joined forces to destroy us." ¹⁶When Judas and the people heard this, a great assembly convened to consider what they should do for their kindred who were in distress and being attacked by enemies.

¹⁷Judas said to his brother Simon: "Choose

[†] **4:52** Twenty-fifth day of the ninth month...in the year one hundred and forty-eight; December 14, 164 B.C.

4:59 Days of the dedication: institution of the feast of Hanukkah, also called the feast of Dedication (Jn 10:22). Josephus calls it the feast of Lights (Ant. 12:325).

5:1 The events of this chapter occurred within the year 163 B.C.

5:3 Edomites: lit., "sons of Esau"; here a pejorative term for the Idumeans. Cf. also 5:65. Akrabattene: either a district southwest of the Dead Sea or on the eastern border of Judea and Samaria.

5:4 Baeonites: 2 Mc 10:15–23 calls them simply Idumeans.

5:6–8 This summary anticipates the order of events and would fit better between vv. 36 and 37. It corresponds to 2 Mc 12:17–23. The action was probably a reprisal for the massacre

referred to in 1 Mc 5:13. Timothy may have been a local ruler, or the Seleucid governor of Transjordan. Jazer: a town on the road from the Jordan to Amman.

5:9 Dathema: the exact location is uncertain; it was east of the Jordan (in Gilead) and a night's journey from Bozrah (v. 29).

5:13 Tobiads: a prominent Jewish family that settled east of the Jordan.

5:15 Ptolemais: Hebrew Acco (Jgs 1:31), modern Acre, on the coast north of Haifa.

4:53 Ex 30:10; Ez

43:18–27

4:59 Jn 10:22.

5:1–21 1 Mc 13:6.

5:3–52 Mc 10:15–23.

5:6–72 Mc 8:30–33.

5:132 Mc 12:17.

men for yourself, and go, rescue your kindred in Galilee; my brother Jonathan and I will go to Gilead."

¹⁸He left Joseph, son of Zechariah, and Azariah, leader of the people, with the rest of the army in Judea to guard it. ¹⁹He commanded them, "Take charge of these people, but do not join battle against the Gentiles until we return." ²⁰Three thousand men were allotted to Simon to go into Galilee, and eight thousand men to Judas, for Gilead.

²¹Simon went into Galilee and fought many battles with the Gentiles. They were crushed before him, ²²and he pursued them to the very gate of Ptolemais. About three thousand of the Gentiles fell, and he gathered their spoils. ²³He took with him the Jews who were in Galilee and in Arbatta,† with their wives and children and all that they had, and brought them to Judea with great rejoicing.

²⁴* Judas Maccabeus and his brother Jonathan crossed the Jordan and marched for three days through the wilderness. ²⁵There they met some Nabateans,† who received them peaceably and told them all that had happened to their kindred in Gilead: ²⁶"Many of them are shut up in Bozrah, in Bosor near Alema, in Chaspho, Maked, and Carnaim"—all of these are large, fortified cities— ²⁷"and some are shut up in other cities of Gilead. Tomorrow their enemies plan to attack the strongholds and to seize and destroy all these people in one day."

²⁸Thereupon Judas suddenly changed direction with his army, marched across the wilderness to Bozrah, and captured the city. He put every male to the sword, took all their spoils, and set fire to the city. ²⁹† He led his army from that place by night, and they marched toward the stronghold. ³⁰When morning came, they looked ahead and saw a countless multitude, with ladders and machines for capturing the stronghold, beginning to attack. ³¹When Judas perceived that the struggle had begun and that the noise of the battle was resounding to heaven with trumpet blasts and loud shouting, ³²he said to the men of his army, "Fight

for our kindred today." ³³He came up behind them with three columns blowing their trumpets and crying out in prayer. ³⁴When the army of Timothy realized that it was Maccabeus, they fled before him, and he inflicted on them a great defeat. About eight thousand of their men fell that day.

³⁵Then he turned toward Alema† and attacked and captured it; he killed every male, took spoils, and burned it down. ³⁶From there he moved on and took Chaspho, Maked, Bosor, and the other cities of Gilead.

³⁷* After these events Timothy assembled another army and camped opposite Raphon, on the other side of the wadi. ³⁸Judas sent men to spy on the camp, and they reported to him: "All the Gentiles around us have rallied to him, making a very large force; ³⁹they have also hired Arabians to help them, and have camped beyond the wadi, ready to attack you." So Judas went forward to meet them.

⁴⁰As Judas and his army were approaching the flowing wadi, Timothy said to the officers of his army: "If he crosses over to us first, we shall not be able to resist him; he will certainly defeat us.* ⁴¹But if he is hesitant and camps on the other side of the river, we will cross over to him and defeat him." ⁴²But when Judas reached the flowing wadi, he stationed the officers of the people beside it and gave them this order: "Do not allow anyone to encamp; all must go into battle." ⁴³He was the first to cross to the attack, with all the people behind him, and all the Gentiles were crushed before them. They threw away their arms and fled to the temple enclosure at Carnaim. ⁴⁴But Judas' troops captured the city and burnt the temple enclosure with all who were in it. So Carnaim was subdued, and Judas met with no more resistance.

Return to Jerusalem. ⁴⁵* Then Judas assembled all the Israelites, great and small, who were in Gilead, with their wives and children and their goods, a very large company, to go into the land of Judah. ⁴⁶When they reached Ephron,† a large and strongly fortified city along the

5:23 *Arbatta*: (or, *Narbatta*), probably south of Mount Carmel.

5:25 *Nabateans*: an Arab people who acquired wealth and power as caravan merchants in the final two centuries B.C. They established Petra as their capital and for a time controlled all of Transjordan, even as far as Damascus. It was from a Nabatean governor of Damascus that Paul escaped (2 Cor 11:32–33).

5:29 Cf. v. 9.

5:35 *Alema*: see v. 26; other manuscripts read *Maapha*,

which may be Mizpah of Gilead (Jgs 11:29).

5:46 *Ephron*: a city in Transjordan opposite Beth-shan (v. 52), about nine miles east of the Jordan River. Situated on a height, it dominated the valleys of the two tributaries of the Jordan.

5:24–36 2 Mc 12:10–16.

5:37–44 2 Mc 12:17–25.

5:40 1 Sm 14:9–10.

5:45–54 2 Mc 12:26–31

way, they found it impossible to go around it on either the right or the left; they would have to march right through it.* ⁴⁷But the people in the city shut them out and blocked up the gates with stones. ⁴⁸Then Judas sent them this peaceful message: "Let us cross your territory in order to reach our own; no one will harm you; we will only march through." But they would not open to him. ⁴⁹So Judas ordered a proclamation to be made in the camp that everyone should take up positions where they were. ⁵⁰When the men of the army took up their positions, he assaulted the city all that day and night, and it was delivered into his hand. ⁵¹He put every male to the sword, leveled the city, took spoils and passed through it over the slain.

⁵²Then they crossed the Jordan to the great plain in front of Beth-shan; ⁵³and Judas kept gathering the stragglers and encouraging the people the whole way, until he reached the land of Judah. ⁵⁴They ascended Mount Zion in joy and gladness and sacrificed burnt offerings, because not one of them had fallen; they had returned in safety.

Joseph and Azariah Defeated. ⁵⁵In those days when Judas and Jonathan were in the land of Gilead, and Simon his brother was in Galilee opposite Ptolemais, ⁵⁶Joseph, son of Zechariah, and Azariah, the leaders of the army, heard about the brave deeds and the fighting that they were doing. ⁵⁷They said, "Let us also make a name for ourselves by going out and fighting against the Gentiles around us." ⁵⁸They gave orders to those of their army who were with them, and marched against Jamnia.† ⁵⁹But Gorgias and his men came out of the city to meet them in battle. ⁶⁰Joseph and Azariah were routed and were pursued to the frontiers of Judea, and about two thousand Israelites fell that day. ⁶¹It was a great setback for the people, because they had not obeyed Judas and his brothers, thinking that they would do brave deeds. ⁶²But they were not of the family through whom Israel's deliverance was given.

Victories at Hebron and Azotus. ⁶³The valiant Judas and his brothers were greatly honored in

all Israel and among all the Gentiles, wherever their name was heard; ⁶⁴and people gathered about them and praised them.

⁶⁵* Then Judas and his brothers went out and attacked the Edomites in the land toward the south; he took Hebron and its villages, and he destroyed its strongholds and burned the towers around it. ⁶⁶He then set out for the land of the foreigners and passed through Marisa. ⁶⁷On that day some priests fell in battle who had gone out rashly to fight in their desire to do brave deeds. ⁶⁸Judas then turned toward Azotus in the land of the foreigners. He destroyed their altars and burned the carved images of their gods; and after plundering their cities he returned to the land of Judah.

6 ¹* As King Antiochus passed through the eastern provinces, he heard that in Persia there was a city, Elam,† famous for its wealth in silver and gold, ²and that its temple was very rich, containing gold helmets, breastplates, and weapons left there by the first king of the Greeks, Alexander, son of Philip, king of Macedon. ³He went therefore and tried to capture and loot the city. But he could not do so because his plan became known to the people of the city ⁴who rose up in battle against him. So he fled and in great dismay withdrew from there to return to Babylon.

⁵While he was in Persia, a messenger brought him news that the armies that had gone into the land of Judah had been routed; ⁶that Lysias had gone at first with a strong army and been driven back; that the people of Judah had grown strong by reason of the arms, wealth, and abundant spoils taken from the armies they had cut down; ⁷that they had pulled down the abomination which he had built upon the altar in Jerusalem; and that they had surrounded with high walls both the sanctuary, as it had been before, and his city of Beth-zur.*

⁸When the king heard this news, he was astonished and very much shaken. Sick with grief because his designs had failed, he took to his bed. ⁹There he remained many days, assailed by waves of grief, for he thought he was

† ^{5:58} *Jamnia*: Yavneh (see 10:69), the capital of the province of Azotus (Ashdod).

^{6:1} *Elam*: in fact, the mountainous region north of the Persian Gulf, rather than a city. The city may have been Persepolis. This section continues the story from 3:37 and pertains to events preceding those in 4:37–39.

* ^{5:46} Nm 20:17–21, 21:21–25.
^{5:65–68} 2 Mc 12:36–46.

^{6:1–13} 2 Mc 1:13–17;
9:1–29; Dn 11:40–45.
^{6:7} 1 Mc 1:54; 4:41–61.

going to die. ¹⁰So he called in all his Friends and said to them: "Sleep has departed from my eyes, and my heart sinks from anxiety. ¹¹I said to myself: 'Into what tribulation have I come, and in what floods of sorrow am I now! Yet I was kindly and beloved in my rule.' ¹²But I now recall the evils I did in Jerusalem, when I carried away all the vessels of silver and gold that were in it, and for no cause gave orders that the inhabitants of Judah be destroyed. ¹³I know that this is why these evils have overtaken me; and now I am dying, in bitter grief, in a foreign land."

¹⁴Then he summoned Philip, one of his Friends, and put him in charge of his whole kingdom. ¹⁵He gave him his diadem, his robe, and his signet ring, so that he might guide the king's son Antiochus and bring him up to be king. ¹⁶So King Antiochus died there in the one hundred and forty-ninth year.† ¹⁷When Lysias learned that the king was dead, he set up the king's son Antiochus,† whom he had reared as a child, to be king in his place; and he gave him the title Eupator.*

Siege of the Citadel. ¹⁸Those in the citadel were hemming Israel in around the sanctuary, continually trying to harm them and to strengthen the Gentiles.* ¹⁹And so Judas planned to destroy them, and assembled the people to besiege them. ²⁰So in the one hundred and fiftieth year† they assembled and besieged the citadel, for which purpose he constructed platforms and siege engines. ²¹But some of the besieged escaped, and some renegade Israelites joined them. ²²They went to the king and said: "How long will you fail to do justice and to avenge our kindred? ²³We agreed to serve your father and to follow his orders and obey his edicts. ²⁴And for this our own people have become our enemies; they have put to death as many of us as they could find and have seized our inheritances. ²⁵They have acted aggressively not only against us, but throughout their whole territory. ²⁶Look! Today they have besieged the citadel in Jerusalem

in order to capture it, and they have fortified the sanctuary and Beth-zur. ²⁷Unless you act quickly to prevent them, they will do even worse things than these, and you will not be able to stop them."

²⁸* When the king heard this he was enraged, and he called together all his Friends, the officers of his army, and the commanders of the cavalry. ²⁹Mercenary forces also came to him from other kingdoms and from the islands of the seas. ³⁰His army numbered a hundred thousand footsoldiers, twenty thousand cavalry, and thirty-two elephants trained for war. ³¹They passed through Idumea and camped before Beth-zur. For many days they attacked it; they constructed siege engines, but the besieged made a sortie and burned these, and they fought bravely.

Battle of Beth-zechariah. ³²Then Judas marched away from the citadel and moved his camp to Beth-zechariah,† opposite the king's camp. ³³The king, rising before dawn, moved his force hastily along the road to Beth-zechariah; and the troops prepared for battle and sounded the trumpet. ³⁴They made the elephants drunk on the juice of grapes and mulberries to get them ready to fight. ³⁵The beasts were distributed along the phalanxes, each elephant having assigned to it a thousand men in coats of mail, with bronze helmets on their heads, and five hundred picked cavalry. ³⁶These accompanied the beast wherever it was; wherever it moved, they moved too and never left it. ³⁷Each elephant was outfitted with a strong wooden tower, fastened to it by a harness; each tower held three soldiers who fought from it, besides the Indian driver. ³⁸The remaining cavalry were stationed on one or the other of the two flanks of the army, to harass the enemy and to be protected by the phalanxes. ³⁹When the sun shone on the gold and bronze shields, the mountains gleamed with their brightness and blazed like flaming torches. ⁴⁰Part of the king's army spread out along the heights, while some were on low

† **6:16** *The one hundred and forty-ninth year*: September 22, 164, to October 9, 163 B.C. A Babylonian list of the Seleucid kings indicates that Antiochus died in November or early December of 164, about the same time as the rededication of the Temple.

† **6:17** *The king's son Antiochus*: Antiochus V Eupator ("of a good father"), then about nine years old. He was in Antioch, still in the charge of Lysias, who proceeded to govern and wage wars in his name. Both were put to death two years later, when

Demetrius, brother of Antiochus IV, arrived to claim the kingship; cf. 7:1-3

† **6:20** *The one hundred and fiftieth year*: October, 163, to September, 162 B.C.

† **6:32** *Beth-zechariah*: south of Jerusalem, and six miles north of Beth-zur.