

Josephus' Adaptation of 1 Maccabees

1 Macc 2:69-3:22

Then he blessed them, and he was united with his fathers.⁷⁰ He died in the year one hundred and forty-six,

and was buried in the tombs of his fathers in Modein, and all Israel mourned him greatly.

3:1 Then his son Judas, who was called Maccabeus, took his place.

² All his brothers and all who had joined his father supported him, and they carried on Israel's war joyfully.

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 planned battles and protected the camp with his sword.

⁴ In his actions he was like a lion, like a young lion roaring for prey.

⁵ He pursued the wicked, hunting them out, and those who troubled his people he destroyed by fire.

⁶ The lawbreakers were cowed by fear of him, and all evildoers were dismayed. By his hand redemption was happily achieved,

⁷ and he afflicted many kings; He made Jacob glad by his deeds, and his memory is blessed forever.

⁸ He went about the cities of Judah destroying the impious there. He turned away wrath from Israel

⁹ and was renowned to the ends of the earth; he gathered together those who were perishing.

¹⁰ Then Apollonius gathered the Gentiles, together with a large army from Samaria, to fight against Israel.

¹¹ When Judas learned of it, he went out to meet him and defeated and killed him. Many fell wounded, and the rest fled.

¹² Their possessions were seized and the sword of Apollonius was taken by Judas, who fought with it the rest of his life.

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 12:285-291

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

Whereupon his son Judas took upon him the administration of public affairs, in the hundred forty and sixth year;

²⁸⁶ and thus, by the ready assistance of his brethren, and of others,

Judas cast their enemies out of the country,

and put those of their own country to death who had transgressed its laws, and purified the land of all the pollutions that were in it.

²⁸⁷ When Apollonius, the general of the Samaritan forces, heard this, he took his army, and made haste to go against Judas, who met him, and joined battle with him, and beat him, and slew many of his men, and among them Apollonius himself their general, whose sword being that which he happened then to wear, he seized upon, and kept for himself;

but he wounded more than he slew, and took a great deal of prey from the enemy's camp, and went his way;

¹³ But Seron, commander of the Syrian army, heard that Judas had gathered many about him, an assembly of faithful men ready for war.

¹⁴ So he said, "I will make a name for myself and win glory in the kingdom by defeating Judas and his followers, who have despised the king's command."

¹⁵ And again a large company of renegades advanced with him to help him take revenge on the Israelites.

¹⁶ When he reached the ascent of Beth-horon, Judas went out to meet him with a few men.

¹⁷ But when they saw the army coming against them, they said to Judas: "How can we, few as we are, fight such a mighty host as this? Besides, we are weak today from fasting."

¹⁸ But Judas said: "It is easy for many to be overcome 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 himself will crush them before us; so do not be afraid of them."

1 Macc 4:35-47

4:35 When Lysias saw his ranks beginning to give way, and the increased boldness of Judas, whose men were ready either to live or to die bravely, he withdrew to Antioch and began to recruit mercenaries so as to return to Judea with greater numbers.

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."

²⁸⁸ but when Seron, who was general of the army of Coelesyria, heard that many had joined themselves to Judas, and that he had about him an army sufficient for fighting, and for making war, he determined to make an expedition against him, thinking it became him to endeavour to punish those who transgressed the king's injunctions.

²⁸⁹ He then got together an army, as large as he was able, and joined to it the renegade and wicked Jews, and came against Judas.

He came as far as Bethhoron, a village of Judea, and there pitched his camp;

²⁹⁰ upon which Judas met him, and when he intended to give him battle, he saw that his soldiers were reluctant to fight, because their number was small, and because they lacked food, for they were fasting, he encouraged them, and said to them, that victory and conquest of enemies are not derived from the multitude in armies, but in the exercise of piety toward God;

²⁹¹ and that they had the plainest instances in their forefathers, who, by their righteousness and exerting themselves on behalf of their own laws, and their own children, had frequently conquered many ten thousands; for innocence is the strongest army.

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 12:315-318

12:315 Nay, indeed, Lysias observing the great spirit of the Jews, how they were prepared to die rather than lose their liberty, and being afraid of their desperate way of fighting, as if it were real strength, he took the rest of the army back with him, and returned to Antioch, where he enlisted foreigners into the service, and prepared to attack Judea with a greater army.

³¹⁶ When therefore, the generals of Antiochus' armies had been beaten so often, Judas assembled the people together, and told them, that after

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 forest or on some mountain, and the priests' chambers demolished.

³⁹ Then they tore their clothes and made great lamentation; they sprinkled their heads with ashes

⁴⁰ and fell with their faces to the ground. 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 Abomination to an unclean place.

⁴⁴ They deliberated what ought to be done with the altar of holocausts that had been desecrated.

⁴⁵ The happy thought came to them 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 hill, until a prophet should come and decide what to do with them.

⁴⁷ Then they took uncut stones, according to the law, and built a new altar like the former one.

1 Macc 9:27

9:27 There had not been such great distress in Israel since the time prophets ceased to appear among the people.

Translations: New American Bible and Whiston

these many victories which God had given them, they ought to go up to Jerusalem, and purify the temple, and offer the appointed sacrifices.

³¹⁷ But as soon as he, with the whole multitude, was come to Jerusalem, and found the temple deserted, and its gates burnt down, and plants growing in the temple of their own accord, on account of its desertion,

he and those who were with him began to lament,

and were quite confounded at the sight of the temple;

³¹⁸ so he chose out some of his soldiers, and gave them order to fight against those guards that were in the citadel, until he should have purified the temple.

When, therefore, he had carefully purged it, and had brought in new vessels, the lampstand, the table [of showbread], and the altar [of incense], which were made of gold, he hung up the veils at the gates, and added doors to them.

He also took down the altar [of burnt offering],

and built a new one of stones that he gathered together, and not of such as were hewn with iron tools.

Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 13:5

And when this calamity of the Jews was become so great, as they had never had experience of the like since their return out of Babylon...