

## ***Introduction to the Apocrypha – 1 Maccabees Session Six – “Surrender of the Citadel”***



Archaeologists among the stones at Horbat Ha-Gardi, which may hold the ruins of the Tomb of the Maccabees. 2015 (Image credit: Israel Antiquities Authority)  
(This may, however, be an early Christian site)

### ***Protestant Churches and the Apocrypha; Chronology; Contact with Sparta; The First Book of Maccabees (11:41 – 13:53)***

### ***Protestant Churches and the Apocrypha***

At the time of the Reformation, Protestant thinkers came to the conclusion fairly early that they would need to determine which books were authoritative for the establishment of doctrine and which were not. For instance, disputes over the doctrine of purgatory and of the usefulness of prayers and masses for the dead involved the authority of 2 Maccabees, which contains what was held to be scriptural warrant for them (12:43 – 45). The first extensive Protestant discussion of the canon was Andreas Bodenstein's treatise *De Canonicis Scripturis Libellus* (1520). Bodenstein (or Carlstadt, after his place of birth) distinguished the books of the Hebrew Bible from the books of the Apocrypha, classifying the Apocrypha into two divisions. Concerning *Wisdom*, *Ecclesiasticus (Sirach)*, *Judith*, *Tobit*, and 1 and 2 *Maccabees*, he says, "These are Apocrypha, that is, outside the Hebrew canon; yet they are holy writings". He continues:

*What they contain is not to be despised at once; still it is not right that Christians should relieve, much less slake, their thirst with them ... Before all things, the best books must be read, that is those that are canonical beyond all controversy; afterwards, if one has the time, it is allowed to peruse the*

*controverted books, provided that you have the set purpose of comparing and collating the non-canonical books with those which are truly canonical.*

The second group, 1 and 2 Esdras, Baruch, Prayer of Manasseh, and the Additions to Daniel, he declared without worth.

The first Bible in a modern vernacular language to segregate the apocryphal books from the others was the Dutch Bible published by Jacob van Liesveldt in 1526 at Antwerp. After Malachi there follows a section embodying the Apocrypha titled "The books which are not in the canon, that is to say, which one does not find among the Jews in the Hebrew."

*– from the New Oxford Annotated Apocrypha – New Revised Standard Version*

## **Chronology**

970 – 931 b.c.e.	Reign of Solomon	Assyrian Dominance
722	Fall of Samaria (Israel – the Northern Kingdom)	
612	Babylonians conquer Nineveh	Egypt in Ascendancy Assyria in decline
605	Battle of Carchemish – Babylon/Media/Persia defeat Assyria and Egypt	
597	Babylon attacks Judah – Jehoiakim dies during siege Jeconiah captured and exiled	
587 – 586	Jerusalem under siege – city and Temple destroyed Many more Jews taken to Exile in Babylon	
539	Cyrus the Great (Persia) defeats Babylon	
538	Some Jews allowed to return to Jerusalem	
520 – 515	Second temple is built under supervision of Haggi & Zechariah	
450	Ezra first reads from the Torah at the Watergate	
334	Alexander the Great (Conquered the Persian Empire – 334)	
323	Death of Alexander – Empire is ultimately divided four ways: Cassander – Lysimachus – Seleucus – Ptolemy (310)	
	The Ptolemies (Egypt) dominate Judah - Jerusalem	
198 b.c.e.	The Seleucids defeat the Ptolemies & control of Israel (Antiochus III)	

- 175 Antiochus IV Epiphanes becomes Seleucid ruler; Jason is the Jewish high priest
- 172 Menelaus as Jewish high priest
- 169 Antiochus IV's first Egyptian campaign; plunder of the Jerusalem temple
- 168 Antiochus IV's second Egyptian campaign; founding of the Jerusalem citadel
- 167 Desecration of the temple; persecution of Judeans
- 165 Death of Mattathias; Judas leads the revolt
- 164 Rededication of the temple; death of Antiochus IV
- 162 Alcimus as Jewish high priest
- 161 Judas' victory over Nicanor; alliance with Rome; death of Judas; accession of Jonathan
- 159 Death of Alcimus
- 152 Jonathan as Jewish high priest
- 142 Death of Jonathan; accession of Simon
- 141 Conquest of the citadel
- 134 Death of Simon; accession of John Hyrcanus
- 104 Death of John Hyrcanus
- 104 – 37 Succession of Hasmonean priests (Aristobulus I, Alexander Jannaeus, Salome Alexandra, Hyrcanus II, Aristobulus II, Antigonus)
- \*\*63 Pompey conquers Jerusalem for Rome 63 b.c.e.**
- 37 – 4 Herod (the Great) appointed king of Judah by the Roman Senate in 40 b.c.e. With an army, Herod captured Jerusalem in 37 and sent Antigonus to Marc Antony for execution.  
*\*This ended the line of Hasmonean (Maccabean) rulers in Judea. Herod was the son of Antipater the Idumaean, an advisor to Hyrcanus II. Antipater was perhaps the real power in Judea between 63 and 40 under control of the Romans.*
- 31 Octavius (Augustus) defeats Marc Antony and Cleopatra at the battle of Actium. Augustus was emperor from 31 b.c.e. – 14 c.e.
- 4 b.c.e. Birth of Jesus
- 70 c.e. Rome destroys Jerusalem including the Temple

## *Contact with Sparta*

References to Sparta seem to have been yoked to the material about Rome. In 12:1 – 4, verse 2 is a clear editorial addition signaling the letter from Jonathan to Sparta in vv. 15 – 18. This letter refers to an earlier letter sent by King Arius of Sparta to the Jewish high-priest Onias, which is then appended (12:19 – 23). A similar linkage appears in 14:16 – 24. In 14:16, an added phrase indicates that Jonathan's death was heard in Sparta as well as Rome. After a note of Rome's reaction, the author gives us a copy of the Spartan letter on the occasion before returning to Roman affairs (v. 24). For some reason, the author wanted to stress that Jonathan and Simon had good relations with Sparta as well as with Rome. In 146 BCE Rome had defeated the Achaean League and destroyed Corinth, leaving Sparta as the main presence in the Peloponnese, but powerless enough for the future. The suggestion that Jonathan courted Sparta for the sake of her influence with Rome is most unlikely. It is possible that Jonathan wanted to show that the Jews had no quarrel with the Hellenistic world as such, now that the battle for independence had been virtually won; but, if so, whom was Jonathan trying to impress, and why choose Sparta?

The Spartans were famous in the ancient world for their militarism, and for their laws, and perhaps for these reasons the Jewish author was anxious to associate the Jewish state, founded on the law and on the military successes of Judas, Jonathan, Simon, and John Hyrcanus, with such a famous exemplar. In the late first century CE Josephus saw Moses as the Israelite equivalent of Lycurgus at Sparta.

The Spartan correspondence must surely belong to the genre of diplomatic fiction. Jonathan's letter (12:5 – 18) is patently inappropriate and insincere, and the letter he appends, from King Arius I to High Priest Onias (12:19 – 23), highly improbable. We will take the latter first (because the former depends on it). Arius may be Arius I, 309 – 265 BCE, in which case Onias is Onias I, high priest c. 300 BCE, or possibly his successor Onias II. Arius I could have known of the ancestral Spartan link with Egypt through Danaus from the fifth-century BCE historian Herodotus; he could also have known from Hecataeus of Abdera (c. 300 BCE) that at a time of pestilence the Egyptians had once ejected aliens, including both Danaus and the Jews, from Egypt. Whether Arius could have deduced from this the kinship of the Spartans and Jews, and where he might have found reference to Abraham, are uncertain. However, there seems little reason why Arius I, c. 300 BCE, should have wished to contact the obscure region of Judah under Ptolemaic control; if the letter were authentic, Josephus's identification of the addressee as the high-priest Onias III (murdered c. 172 BCE) would be more plausible, but there was no contemporary Spartan king called Arius. The proposal of reciprocal property rights (v. 23) is reminiscent of I Kings 22:4; 2 Kings 3:7 and most unlikely between Sparta and Judea.

This letter, in spite of some scholarly attempts to authenticate it, is a diplomatic invention, used in support of Jonathan's letter of 12:5 – 18. This letter is also highly

suspect, not only because it is patently insincere (vs. 11 – 12), but because in vs. 13 – 14 the author, writing shortly after a major upheaval in Greece, focuses only on Jewish sufferings and reveals a totally undiplomatic lack of concern for Sparta's troubles. The reference to the sending of Numenius and Antipater to Rome, 'and also to you' (vs. 16 – 17), betrays a similar lack of diplomacy, and arouses again the suspicion that the author is basing his Spartan material on the far more authentic record of diplomacy with Rome. The final letter in this series, the Spartan response in 14:20 – 23, is again set into the account of Simon's diplomacy with Rome. The reference to the visit of Numenius and Antipater creates serious difficulties for the chronology, and depends on the earlier reference in 12:16. These two letters were almost certainly composed by the author of 1 Maccabees and linked to the material about Rome, and they have added to the confusion of the narrative.

These findings, however, do not rule out the possibility of diplomatic contact between Sparta and Judaea; we know that nearly three decades earlier the high-priest Jason had fled to Sparta and according to 1 Macc. 15:23 the Romans sent a letter of support for the Jews to the Spartans in Simon's time. This brings us back to the letter attributed to Arius, quoted also in slightly extended form – and so perhaps not from 1 Maccabees – by Josephus, and it seems most likely that this letter, though inauthentic in the sense that it was attributed to rather than written by Arius I, was available for use by the author of 1 Maccabees. It was not unusual for cities of the Hellenistic world to claim interrelationships on legendary or historical grounds. Josephus may be right to date this letter to the period of Onias III; the letter could even have been useful to Jason. The name Arius was given as the best-known Spartan king of Hellenistic times. This suggests that the letter was invented from the Jewish side. It is one more piece of evidence for the increasing Jewish interest in association with the wider Hellenistic world in the early decades of the second century BCE.

– *edited from 1 Maccabees* by John R. Bartlett, Bloomsbury Publishing, Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield, England, 1998

### First Book of Maccabees 11:41 – 13:53

<sup>41</sup> Now Jonathan sent to King Demetrius the request that he remove the troops of the citadel from Jerusalem, and the troops in the strongholds; for they kept fighting against Israel. <sup>42</sup> And Demetrius sent this message back to Jonathan: "Not only will I do these things for you and your nation, but I will confer great honor on you and your nation, if I find an opportunity. <sup>43</sup> Now then you will do well to send me men who will help me, for all my troops have revolted." <sup>44</sup> So Jonathan sent three thousand stalwart men to him at Antioch, and when they came to the king, the king rejoiced at their arrival.

<sup>45</sup> Then the people of the city assembled within the city, to the number of a hundred and twenty thousand, and they wanted to kill the king. <sup>46</sup> But the king fled into the palace. Then the people of the city seized the main streets of the city and began to fight. <sup>47</sup> So the king called the Jews to his aid, and they all rallied around him and then spread out through the city; and they killed on that day about one hundred thousand. <sup>48</sup> They set fire to the city and seized a large amount of spoil on that day, and saved the king. <sup>49</sup> When the people of the city saw that the Jews had gained control of the city as they pleased, their courage failed and they cried out to the king with this entreaty: <sup>50</sup> "Grant us peace, and make the Jews stop fighting against us and our city." <sup>51</sup> And they threw down their arms and made peace. So the Jews gained glory in the sight of the king and of all the people in his kingdom, and they returned to Jerusalem with a large amount of spoil.

<sup>52</sup> So King Demetrius sat on the throne of his kingdom, and the land was quiet before him. <sup>53</sup> But he broke his word about all that he had promised; he became estranged from Jonathan and did not repay the favors that Jonathan had done him, but treated him very harshly.

<sup>54</sup> After this Trypho returned, and with him the young boy Antiochus who began to reign and put on the crown. <sup>55</sup> All the troops that Demetrius had discharged gathered around him; they fought against Demetrius, and he fled and was routed. <sup>56</sup> Trypho captured the elephants and gained control of Antioch. <sup>57</sup> Then the young Antiochus wrote to Jonathan, saying, "I confirm you in the high priesthood and set you over the four districts and make you one of the king's Friends." <sup>58</sup> He also sent him gold plates and a table service, and granted him the right to drink from gold cups and dress in purple and wear a gold buckle. <sup>59</sup> He appointed Jonathan's brother Simon governor from the Ladder of Tyre to the borders of Egypt.

<sup>60</sup> Then Jonathan set out and traveled beyond the river and among the towns, and all the army of Syria gathered to him as allies. When he came to Askalon, the people of the city met him and paid him honor. <sup>61</sup> From there he went to Gaza, but the people of Gaza shut him out. So he besieged it and burned its suburbs with fire and plundered them. <sup>62</sup> Then the people of Gaza pleaded with Jonathan, and he made peace with them, and took the sons of their rulers as hostages and sent them to Jerusalem. And he passed through the country as far as Damascus.

<sup>63</sup> Then Jonathan heard that the officers of Demetrius had come to Kadesh in Galilee with a large army, intending to remove him from office. <sup>64</sup> He went to meet them, but left his brother Simon in the country. <sup>65</sup> Simon encamped before Beth-zur and fought against it for many days and hemmed it in. <sup>66</sup> Then they asked him to grant them terms of peace, and he did so. He removed them from there, took possession of the town, and set a garrison over it.

<sup>67</sup> Jonathan and his army encamped by the waters of Gennesaret. Early in the morning they marched to the plain of Hazor, <sup>68</sup> and there in the plain the army of the foreigners met him; they had set an ambush against him in the mountains, but they

themselves met him face to face. <sup>69</sup> Then the men in ambush emerged from their places and joined battle. <sup>70</sup> All the men with Jonathan fled; not one of them was left except Mattathias son of Absalom and Judas son of Chalphi, commanders of the forces of the army. <sup>71</sup> Jonathan tore his clothes, put dust on his head, and prayed. <sup>72</sup> Then he turned back to the battle against the enemy and routed them, and they fled. <sup>73</sup> When his men who were fleeing saw this, they returned to him and joined him in the pursuit as far as Kadesh, to their camp, and there they encamped. <sup>74</sup> As many as three thousand of the foreigners fell that day. And Jonathan returned to Jerusalem.

## Chapter 12

**12** Now when Jonathan saw that the time was favorable for him, he chose men and sent them to Rome to confirm and renew the friendship with them. <sup>2</sup> He also sent letters to the same effect to the Spartans and to other places. <sup>3</sup> So they went to Rome and entered the senate chamber and said, "The high priest Jonathan and the Jewish nation have sent us to renew the former friendship and alliance with them." <sup>4</sup> And the Romans gave them letters to the people in every place, asking them to provide for the envoys safe conduct to the land of Judah.

<sup>5</sup> This is a copy of the letter that Jonathan wrote to the Spartans: <sup>6</sup> "The high priest Jonathan, the senate of the nation, the priests, and the rest of the Jewish people to their brothers the Spartans, greetings. <sup>7</sup> Already in time past a letter was sent to the high priest Onias from Arius, who was king among you, stating that you are our brothers, as the appended copy shows. <sup>8</sup> Onias welcomed the envoy with honor, and received the letter, which contained a clear declaration of alliance and friendship. <sup>9</sup> Therefore, though we have no need of these things, since we have as encouragement the holy books that are in our hands, <sup>10</sup> we have undertaken to send to renew our family ties and friendship with you, so that we may not become estranged from you, for considerable time has passed since you sent your letter to us. <sup>11</sup> We therefore remember you constantly on every occasion, both at our festivals and on other appropriate days, at the sacrifices that we offer and in our prayers, as it is right and proper to remember brothers. <sup>12</sup> And we rejoice in your glory. <sup>13</sup> But as for ourselves, many trials and many wars have encircled us; the kings around us have waged war against us. <sup>14</sup> We were unwilling to annoy you and our other allies and friends with these wars, <sup>15</sup> for we have the help that comes from Heaven for our aid, and so we were delivered from our enemies, and our enemies were humbled. <sup>16</sup> We therefore have chosen Numenius son of Antiochus and Antipater son of Jason, and have sent them to Rome to renew our former friendship and alliance with them. <sup>17</sup> We have commanded them to go also to you and greet you and deliver to you this letter from us concerning the renewal of our family ties. <sup>18</sup> And now please send us a reply to this."

<sup>19</sup> This is a copy of the letter that they sent to Onias: <sup>20</sup> "King Arius of the Spartans, to the high priest Onias, greetings. <sup>21</sup> It has been found in writing concerning the

Spartans and the Jews that they are brothers and are of the family of Abraham. <sup>22</sup> And now that we have learned this, please write us concerning your welfare; <sup>23</sup> we on our part write to you that your livestock and your property belong to us, and ours belong to you. We therefore command that our envoys report to you accordingly.”

<sup>24</sup> Now Jonathan heard that the commanders of Demetrius had returned, with a larger force than before, to wage war against him. <sup>25</sup> So he marched away from Jerusalem and met them in the region of Hamath, for he gave them no opportunity to invade his own country. <sup>26</sup> He sent spies to their camp, and they returned and reported to him that the enemy were being drawn up in formation to attack the Jews by night. <sup>27</sup> So when the sun had set, Jonathan commanded his troops to be alert and to keep their arms at hand so as to be ready all night for battle, and he stationed outposts around the camp. <sup>28</sup> When the enemy heard that Jonathan and his troops were prepared for battle, they were afraid and were terrified at heart; so they kindled fires in their camp and withdrew. <sup>29</sup> But Jonathan and his troops did not know it until morning, for they saw the fires burning. <sup>30</sup> Then Jonathan pursued them, but he did not overtake them, for they had crossed the Eleutherus river. <sup>31</sup> So Jonathan turned aside against the Arabs who are called Zabadeans, and he crushed them and plundered them. <sup>32</sup> Then he broke camp and went to Damascus, and and marched through all that region.

<sup>33</sup> Simon also went out and marched through the country as far as Askalon and the neighboring strongholds. He turned aside to Joppa and took it by surprise, <sup>34</sup> for he had heard that they were ready to hand over the stronghold to those whom Demetrius had sent. And he stationed a garrison there to guard it.

<sup>35</sup> When Jonathan returned he convened the elders of the people and planned with them to build strongholds in Judea, <sup>36</sup> to build the walls of Jerusalem still higher, and to erect a high barrier between the citadel and the city to separate it from the city, in order to isolate it so that its garrison could neither buy nor sell. <sup>37</sup> So they gathered together to rebuild the city; part of the wall on the valley to the east had fallen, and he repaired the section called Chaphenatha. <sup>38</sup> Simon also built Adida in the Shephelah; he fortified it and installed gates with bolts.

<sup>39</sup> Then Trypho attempted to become king in Asia and put on the crown, and to raise his hand against King Antiochus. <sup>40</sup> He feared that Jonathan might not permit him to do so, but might make war on him, so he kept seeking to seize and kill him, and he marched out and came to Beth-shan. <sup>41</sup> Jonathan went out to meet him with forty thousand picked warriors, and he came to Beth-shan. <sup>42</sup> When Trypho saw that he had come with a large army, he was afraid to raise his hand against him. <sup>43</sup> So he received him with honor and commended him to all his Friends, and he gave him gifts and commanded his Friends and his troops to obey him as they would himself. <sup>44</sup> Then he said to Jonathan, “Why have you put all these people to so much trouble when we are not at war? <sup>45</sup> Dismiss them now to their homes and choose for yourself a few men to stay with you, and come with me to Ptolemais. I will hand it

over to you as well as the other strongholds and the remaining troops and all the officials, and will turn around and go home. For that is why I am here.”

<sup>46</sup> Jonathan trusted him and did as he said; he sent away the troops, and they returned to the land of Judah. <sup>47</sup> He kept with himself three thousand men, two thousand of whom he left in Galilee, while one thousand accompanied him. <sup>48</sup> But when Jonathan entered Ptolemais, the people of Ptolemais closed the gates and seized him, and they killed with the sword all who had entered with him.

<sup>49</sup> Then Trypho sent troops and cavalry into Galilee and the Great Plain to destroy all Jonathan’s soldiers. <sup>50</sup> But they realized that Jonathan had been seized and had perished along with his men, and they encouraged one another and kept marching in close formation, ready for battle. <sup>51</sup> When their pursuers saw that they would fight for their lives, they turned back. <sup>52</sup> So they all reached the land of Judah safely, and they mourned for Jonathan and his companions and were in great fear; and all Israel mourned deeply. <sup>53</sup> All the nations around them tried to destroy them, for they said, “They have no leader or helper. Now therefore let us make war on them and blot out the memory of them from humankind.”

### Chapter 13

**13** Simon heard that Trypho had assembled a large army to invade the land of Judah and destroy it, <sup>2</sup> and he saw that the people were trembling with fear. So he went up to Jerusalem, and gathering the people together <sup>3</sup> he encouraged them, saying to them, “You yourselves know what great things my brothers and I and the house of my father have done for the laws and the sanctuary; you know also the wars and the difficulties that my brothers and I have seen. <sup>4</sup> By reason of this all my brothers have perished for the sake of Israel, and I alone am left. <sup>5</sup> And now, far be it from me to spare my life in any time of distress, for I am not better than my brothers. <sup>6</sup> But I will avenge my nation and the sanctuary and your wives and children, for all the nations have gathered together out of hatred to destroy us.”

<sup>7</sup> The spirit of the people was rekindled when they heard these words, <sup>8</sup> and they answered in a loud voice, “You are our leader in place of Judas and your brother Jonathan. <sup>9</sup> Fight our battles, and all that you say to us we will do.” <sup>10</sup> So he assembled all the warriors and hurried to complete the walls of Jerusalem, and he fortified it on every side. <sup>11</sup> He sent Jonathan son of Absalom to Joppa, and with him a considerable army; he drove out its occupants and remained there.

<sup>12</sup> Then Trypho left Ptolemais with a large army to invade the land of Judah, and Jonathan was with him under guard. <sup>13</sup> Simon encamped in Adida, facing the plain. <sup>14</sup> Trypho learned that Simon had risen up in place of his brother Jonathan, and that he was about to join battle with him, so he sent envoys to him and said, <sup>15</sup> “It is for the money that your brother Jonathan owed the royal treasury, in connection with the offices he held, that we are detaining him. <sup>16</sup> Send now one

hundred talents of silver and two of his sons as hostages, so that when released he will not revolt against us, and we will release him.”

<sup>17</sup> Simon knew that they were speaking deceitfully to him, but he sent to get the money and the sons, so that he would not arouse great hostility among the people, who might say, <sup>18</sup> “It was because Simon did not send him the money and the sons, that Jonathan perished.” <sup>19</sup> So he sent the sons and the hundred talents, but Trypho broke his word and did not release Jonathan.

<sup>20</sup> After this Trypho came to invade the country and destroy it, and he circled around by the way to Adora. But Simon and his army kept marching along opposite him to every place he went. <sup>21</sup> Now the men in the citadel kept sending envoys to Trypho urging him to come to them by way of the wilderness and to send them food. <sup>22</sup> So Trypho got all his cavalry ready to go, but that night a very heavy snow fell, and he did not go because of the snow. He marched off and went into the land of Gilead. <sup>23</sup> When he approached Baskama, he killed Jonathan, and he was buried there. <sup>24</sup> Then Trypho turned and went back to his own land.

<sup>25</sup> Simon sent and took the bones of his brother Jonathan, and buried him in Modein, the city of his ancestors. <sup>26</sup> All Israel bewailed him with great lamentation, and mourned for him many days. <sup>27</sup> And Simon built a monument over the tomb of his father and his brothers; he made it high so that it might be seen, with polished stone at the front and back. <sup>28</sup> He also erected seven pyramids, opposite one another, for his father and mother and four brothers. <sup>29</sup> For the pyramids he devised an elaborate setting, erecting about them great columns, and on the columns he put suits of armor for a permanent memorial, and beside the suits of armor he carved ships, so that they could be seen by all who sail the sea. <sup>30</sup> This is the tomb that he built in Modein; it remains to this day.

<sup>31</sup> Trypho dealt treacherously with the young King Antiochus; he killed him <sup>32</sup> and became king in his place, putting on the crown of Asia; and he brought great calamity on the land. <sup>33</sup> But Simon built up the strongholds of Judea and walled them all around, with high towers and great walls and gates and bolts, and he stored food in the strongholds. <sup>34</sup> Simon also chose emissaries and sent them to King Demetrius with a request to grant relief to the country, for all that Trypho did was to plunder. <sup>35</sup> King Demetrius sent him a favorable reply to this request, and wrote him a letter as follows, <sup>36</sup> “King Demetrius to Simon, the high priest and friend of kings, and to the elders and nation of the Jews, greetings. <sup>37</sup> We have received the gold crown and the palm branch that you sent, and we are ready to make a general peace with you and to write to our officials to grant you release from tribute. <sup>38</sup> All the grants that we have made to you remain valid, and let the strongholds that you have built be your possession. <sup>39</sup> We pardon any errors and offenses committed to this day, and cancel the crown tax that you owe; and whatever other tax has been collected in Jerusalem shall be collected no longer. <sup>40</sup> And if any of you are qualified to be enrolled in our bodyguard let them be enrolled, and let there be peace between us.”

<sup>41</sup> In the one hundred seventieth year<sup>[g]</sup> the yoke of the Gentiles was removed from Israel, <sup>42</sup> and the people began to write in their documents and contracts, “In the first year of Simon the great high priest and commander and leader of the Jews.” <sup>43</sup> In those days Simon encamped against Gazara and surrounded it with troops. He made a siege engine, brought it up to the city, and battered and captured one tower. <sup>44</sup> The men in the siege engine leaped out into the city, and a great tumult arose in the city. <sup>45</sup> The men in the city, with their wives and children, went up on the wall with their clothes torn, and they cried out with a loud voice, asking Simon to make peace with them; <sup>46</sup> they said, “Do not treat us according to our wicked acts but according to your mercy.” <sup>47</sup> So Simon reached an agreement with them and stopped fighting against them. But he expelled them from the city and cleansed the houses in which the idols were located, and then entered it with hymns and praise. <sup>48</sup> He removed all uncleanness from it, and settled in it those who observed the law. He also strengthened its fortifications and built in it a house for himself.

<sup>49</sup> Those who were in the citadel at Jerusalem were prevented from going in and out to buy and sell in the country. So they were very hungry, and many of them perished from famine. <sup>50</sup> Then they cried to Simon to make peace with them, and he did so. But he expelled them from there and cleansed the citadel from its pollutions. <sup>51</sup> On the twenty-third day of the second month, in the one hundred seventy-first year, the Jews entered it with praise and palm branches, and with harps and cymbals and stringed instruments, and with hymns and songs, because a great enemy had been crushed and removed from Israel. <sup>52</sup> Simon decreed that every year they should celebrate this day with rejoicing. He strengthened the fortifications of the temple hill alongside the citadel, and he and his men lived there. <sup>53</sup> Simon saw that his son John had reached manhood, and so he made him commander of all the forces; and he lived at Gazara.

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*The New Oxford Annotated Apocrypha, New Revised Standard Version – Fully Revised Fourth Edition*, Michael D. Coogan, Editor, Amy-Jill Levine, Contributor, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 2010

*First and Second Maccabees* by Daniel J. Harrington, New Collegeville Bible Commentary, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MN 2012

*1 Maccabees* by John R. Bartlett, Bloomsbury Publishing, Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield, England, 1998