

The Maccabean Revolt & the Death of Antiochus - "History" in the Hellenistic Period

מרד החשמונאים ומיתת אנטיוכוס - 'היסטוריה' במשך תקופת ההלניסטית



Timeline

Battle of Panium (Banias) / Seleucids take control of Israel / Antiochus III grants special privileges to Jerusalem based on its traditionally religious character	200 BCE
Antiochus IV Epiphanes ascends the throne	175 BCE
Onias' brother, Jason, usurps priesthood from Onias	ca. 175 BCE?
Menelaus (of Benjamin!) usurps priesthood from Jason	Between 173 – 168 BCE?
Jason's attempted putsch / Antiochus suppresses unrest and institutes anti-Jewish decrees	168/167 BCE
Judas Maccabeus rebels and wins series of victories	167 – 164 BCE
Antiochus IV Dies / Temple Rededicated (Chanukkah)	164 BCE

1) Jews & Gentiles – II Maccabees (Diaspora, mid 2nd century BCE)

2 Macc 3:1-3	1 While the holy city was inhabited in unbroken peace and the laws were strictly observed because of the piety of the high priest Onias and his hatred of wickedness, 2 it came about that the kings themselves honored the place and glorified the temple with the finest presents, 3 even to the extent that King Seleucus of Asia defrayed from his own revenues all the expenses connected with the service of the sacrifices.
2 Macc 5:-6, 11	5 When a false rumor arose that Antiochus was dead, Jason took no fewer than a thousand men and suddenly made an assault on the city. When the troops on the wall had been forced back and at last the city was being taken, Menelaus took refuge in the citadel. 6 But Jason kept relentlessly slaughtering his compatriots, not realizing that success at the cost of one's kindred is the greatest misfortune, but imagining that he was setting up trophies of victory over enemies and not over compatriots... 11 When news of what had happened reached the king, he took it to mean that Judea was in revolt. So, raging inwardly, he left Egypt and took the city by storm.

2) Jews & Gentiles – I Maccabees (Israel, late 2nd century – early 1st century BCE)

1 Macc 1:1-10	1 After Alexander son of Philip, the Macedonian, who came from the land of Kittim, had defeated King Darius of the Persians and the Medes, he succeeded him as king. (He had previously become king of Greece.) 2 He fought many battles, conquered strongholds, and put to death the kings of the
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	<p>earth. 3 He advanced to the ends of the earth, and plundered many nations. When the earth became quiet before him, he was exalted, and his heart was lifted up. 4 He gathered a very strong army and ruled over countries, nations, and princes, and they became tributary to him. 5 After this he fell sick and perceived that he was dying. 6 So he summoned his most honored officers, who had been brought up with him from youth, and divided his kingdom among them while he was still alive. 7 And after Alexander had reigned twelve years, he died. 8 Then his officers began to rule, each in his own place. 9 They all put on crowns after his death, and so did their descendants after them for many years; and they caused many evils on the earth. 10 From them came forth a sinful root, Antiochus Epiphanes, son of King Antiochus; he had been a hostage in Rome. He began to reign in the one hundred thirty-seventh year of the kingdom of the Greeks.</p>
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3) Death of Antiochus – Polybius, *Histories* 31.9.1-4 (146 BCE?)

	<p>1 In Syria King Antiochus, wishing to provide himself with money, decided to make an expedition against the sanctuary of Artemis in Elymaïs. 2 On reaching the spot he was foiled in his hopes, as the barbarian tribes who dwelt in the neighbourhood would not permit the outrage, 3 and on his retreat he died at Tabae in Persia, smitten with madness, as some people say, 4 owing to certain manifestations of divine displeasure when he was attempting this outrage on the above sanctuary.</p>
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4) Death of Antiochus – II Maccabees

II Macc 9:5-10	<p>5 But the all-seeing Lord, the God of Israel, struck him with an incurable and invisible blow. <i>As soon as he stopped speaking he was seized with a pain in his bowels</i>, for which there was no relief, and with sharp internal tortures— 6 and that very justly, for he had tortured the bowels of others with many and strange inflictions. 7 Yet he did not in any way stop his insolence, but was even more filled with arrogance, breathing fire in his rage against the Jews, and giving orders to drive even faster. <i>And so it came about that he fell out of his chariot as it was rushing along, and the fall was so hard as to torture every limb of his body.</i> 8 Thus he who only a little while before had thought in his superhuman arrogance that he could command the waves of the sea, and <i>had imagined that he could weigh the high mountains in a balance</i>, was brought down to earth and carried in a litter, making the power of God manifest to all. 9 And so the ungodly man's body swarmed with worms, and while he was still living in anguish and pain, his flesh rotted away, and because of the stench the whole army felt revulsion at his decay. 10 Because of his intolerable stench no one was able to carry the man who a little while before had thought that he could touch the stars of heaven.</p>
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5) Sin of Antiochus – II Maccabees 5:21

	<p>21 So Antiochus carried off eighteen hundred talents from the temple, and hurried away to Antioch, <i>thinking in his arrogance that he could sail on the land and walk on the sea</i>, because his mind was elated.</p>
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6) Arrogance of Xerxes, Herodotus 7:35

	<p>35 So when Xerxes heard of it he was full of wrath, <i>and straightway gave orders that the Hellespont should receive three hundred lashes, and that a pair of fetters should be cast into it.</i> Nay, I have even heard it said that he bade the branders take their irons and therewith brand the Hellespont. It is certain that he commanded those who scourged the waters to utter, as they lashed them, these barbarian and wicked words: "Thou bitter water, thy lord lays on thee this punishment because thou hast wronged him without a cause, having suffered no evil at his hands. Verily King Xerxes will cross thee, whether thou wilt or no. Well dost thou deserve that no man</p>
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should honour thee with sacrifice; for thou art of a truth a treacherous and unsavoury river." While the sea was thus punished by his orders, he likewise commanded that the overseers of the work should lose their heads.

7) God as True King – Isaiah 40:12

מִי-מִדֹּד בְּשֹׁנְלוֹ מַיִם, וְשָׁמַיִם בַּזֶּרֶת תִּכֵּן, וְכֹל בְּשִׁלְשׁ, עֵפֶר הָאָרֶץ; וְשָׁקַל בַּפֶּלֶס הָרִים, וְגִבְעוֹת בַּמֶּאֱזֹגִים	Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, <i>and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?</i>
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