

## SECOND BOOK OF THE MACCABEES – 8:18 – Motto for celebration of Hannakah

- 1) – Not a sequel to First Book of the Maccabees. (See intro.) Contains concepts current among Alexandrian (Greek-speaking) Jews, which were significant in the early development of **Christian** thought: 12:43,45; 15:11-16; 7:11-37. Probably written in Greek about a century after First Maccabees. Primarily details events of 175-160 from the religious point of view.
- 2) 1:7 – This was Demetrius II, about the time of Jonathan's capture and murder.
- 3) 1:10 – Demetrius II has just died and Antiochus VIII is on a powerless throne. Aristobulus was a learned Jewish scholar.
- 4) 2:19 – Jason of Cyrene set out in five books the story of Judas Maccabaeus. Cyrene was 500 miles west of the Nile, taken by Alexander in 331 BC and made part of Egypt. It was a major Jewish center.
- 5) 3:1 – This was Onias III, the last of the legitimate high priests, stretching in an unbroken line from Zadok under Solomon. Onias I held office from 300-280, at the time when Ptolemy I took Jerusalem. Onias II became high priest in 250, followed by Simon II (see Ecclesiasticus 50:1), then by Onias III in 196 BC.
- 6) 3:4 – There were now two lines of Zadokite officials in Jerusalem -- a religious and a civil line. Onias III was of the religious line, Simon of the civil line. They were second cousins.
- 7) 4:3 – Heliodorus murdered Seleucus IV, hoping to be king, but Antiochus returned from captivity in Rome and became Antiochus IV Epiphanes.
- 8) 4:9 – A very lucrative concession at a time when the aristocratic youth of Judea paid much to participate in the Greek way of life.
- 9) 4:12 – A broad-brimmed felt hat worn by Greek adolescents.
- 10) 7:1 – The mother was named Shamuni by the Syrian church, Solomonis by the Eastern Orthodox. The sons were Abion, Antonius, Gourias, Eleazar, Eusebonas, Alvin, Maracellus. Relics of the family are "preserved" in the Church of St. Peter ad Vincula in Rome, and at Cologne in a convent dedicated to the Maccabees. Depicted by Longfellow in "Judas Maccabaeus," by Anton Rubenstein in the opera "The Maccabees," and by Handel in the oratorio "Judas Maccabaeus" (which has as its hero a Lion of Judah, contains "See the conquering hero comes," and "Zion now her head shall raise," Handel's last great chorus.)
- 11) 7:6 – See Deut 32:36 for this quote, and all of Chap 32 for the entire poem-song.
- 12) 7:36 – This vs. with 9, 33, and 36 hint at the earliest beliefs in immortality and resurrection and punishment.
- 13) 8:18 – In the celebration of Hanukkah, the military significance of the event and this verse is used as the slogan or motto.