

FEASTS (Moedim): Chanukah Eight: 8 Candles (Feast of Dedication).

Chanukah Eight: 8 Candles (Feast of Dedication); 1-Tevet.

Chanukah 8:

Numbers 7:54-to-end,8:1-4.

54 On the eighth day Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur, prince of the children of Manasseh
55 gave his offering: one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a meal offering;
56 one golden ladle of ten shekels, full of incense;
57 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering;
58 one male goat for a sin offering;
59 and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two head of cattle, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.
60 On the ninth day Abidan the son of Gideoni, prince of the children of Benjamin
61 gave his offering: one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a meal offering;
62 one golden ladle of ten shekels, full of incense;
63 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering;
64 one male goat for a sin offering;
65 and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two head of cattle, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Abidan the son of Gideoni.
66 On the tenth day Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai, prince of the children of Dan
67 gave his offering: one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a meal offering;
68 one golden ladle of ten shekels, full of incense;
69 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering;
70 one male goat for a sin offering;
71 and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two head of cattle, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.
72 On the eleventh day Pagiel the son of Ochran, prince of the children of Asher
73 gave his offering: one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a meal offering;
74 one golden ladle of ten shekels, full of incense;
75 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering;
76 one male goat for a sin offering;
77 and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two head of cattle, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Pagiel the son of Ochran.
78 On the twelfth day Ahira the son of Enan, prince of the children of Naphtali
79 gave his offering: one silver platter, the weight of which was one hundred thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary; both of them full of fine flour mixed with oil for a meal offering;
80 one golden spoon of ten shekels, full of incense;
81 one young bull, one ram, one male lamb a year old, for a burnt offering;
82 one male goat for a sin offering;
83 and for the sacrifice of peace offerings, two head of cattle, five rams, five male goats, and five male lambs a year old. This was the offering of Ahira the son of Enan.

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84 This was the dedication of the altar, on the day when it was anointed, by the princes of Israel: twelve silver platters, twelve silver bowls, twelve golden ladles;
85 each silver platter weighing one hundred thirty shekels, and each bowl seventy; all the silver of the vessels two thousand four hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary;
86 the twelve golden ladles, full of incense, weighing ten shekels apiece, after the shekel of the sanctuary; all the gold of the ladles weighed one hundred twenty shekels;
87 all the cattle for the burnt offering twelve bulls, the rams twelve, the male lambs a year old twelve, and their meal offering; and the male goats for a sin offering twelve;
88 and all the cattle for the sacrifice of peace offerings twenty-four bulls, the rams sixty, the male goats sixty, the male lambs a year old sixty. This was the dedication of the altar, after it was anointed.
89 When Moses went into the Tent of Meeting to speak with YHWH, he heard his voice speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the Testimony, from between the two cherubim: and he spoke to him.

1 . Arrangement of the Lamps. .

YHWH spoke to Moses, saying,

2 “Speak to Aaron, and tell him, ‘When you light the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the menorah.’”

3 Aaron did so. He lit its lamps to light the area in front of the menorah, as YHWH commanded Moses.

4 This was the workmanship of the menorah, beaten work of gold. From its base to its flowers, it was beaten work: according to the pattern which YHWH had shown Moses, so he made the menorah.

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(2 Maccabees 13:1-26 NAB-A) :

. Menelaus Is Put to Death. .

In the year one hundred and forty-nine, Judas and his men learned that Antiochus Eupator was invading Judea with a large force, and that with him was Lysias, his guardian, who was in charge of the government. They led a Greek army of one hundred and ten thousand foot soldiers, fifty-three hundred horsemen, twenty-two elephants, and three hundred chariots armed with scythes. Menelaus also joined them, and with great duplicity kept urging Antiochus on, not for the welfare of his country, but in the hope of being established in office. But the King of kings aroused the anger of Antiochus against the scoundrel. When the king was shown by Lysias that Menelaus was to blame for all the trouble, he ordered him to be taken to Beroea and executed there in the customary local method. There is at that place a tower seventy-five feet high, full of ashes, with a circular rim sloping down steeply on all sides toward the ashes. A man guilty of sacrilege or notorious for certain other crimes is brought up there and then hurled down to destruction. In such a manner was Menelaus, the transgressor of the Torah, fated to die; he was deprived even of decent burial. It was altogether just that he who had committed so many sins against the altar with its pure fire and ashes should meet his death in ashes.

. A Battle Near the City of Modein. .

The king was advancing, his mind full of savage plans for inflicting on the Jews worse things than those they suffered in his father's time. When Judas learned of this, he urged the people to call upon YHWH night and day, to help them now, if ever, when they were about to be deprived of their Torah, their country, and their holy temple; and not to allow this nation, which had just begun to revive, to be subjected again to blasphemous Gentiles. When they had all joined in doing this, and had implored the merciful YHWH continuously with weeping and fasting and prostrations for three days, Judas encouraged them and told them to stand ready. After a private meeting with the elders, he decided that, before the king's army could invade Judea and take possession of the city, the Jews should march out and settle the matter with Elohim's help. Leaving the outcome to the Creator of the world, and exhorting his followers to fight nobly to death for the Torah, the temple, the city, the country, and the government, he pitched his camp near Modein. Giving his men the battle cry "Elohim's Victory," he made a night attack on the king's pavilion with a picked force of the bravest young men and killed about two thousand in the camp. They also slew the lead elephant and its rider. Finally they withdrew in triumph, having filled the camp with terror and confusion. Day was just breaking when this was accomplished with the help and protection of YHWH!

. Antiochus Makes a Treaty with the Jews. .

The king, having had a taste of the Jews' daring, tried to take their positions by a stratagem. So he marched against Beth-zur, a strong fortress of the Jews; but he was driven back, checked, and defeated. Judas then sent supplies to the men inside, but Rhodocus, of the Jewish army, betrayed military secrets to the enemy. He was found out, arrested, and imprisoned. The king made a second attempt by

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negotiating with the men of Beth-zur. After giving them his pledge and receiving theirs, he withdrew and attacked Judas and his men. But he was defeated. Next he heard that Philip, who was left in charge of the government in Antioch had rebelled. Dismayed, he parleyed with the Jews, submitted to their terms, and swore to observe their rights. Having come to this agreement, he offered a sacrifice, and honored the temple with a generous donation. He approved of Maccabeus and left him as military and civil governor of the territory from Ptolemais to the region of the Gerrenes. When he came to Ptolemais, the people of that city were angered by the peace treaty; in fact they were so indignant that they wanted to annul its provisions. But Lysias took the platform, defended the treaty as well as he could and won them over by persuasion. After calming them and gaining their good will, he returned to Antioch. That is how the king's attack and withdrawal went.

!! End of The Chapter.

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(2 Maccabees 14:1-46 NAB-A) :

. Alcimus Speaks against Judas. .

Three years later, Judas and his men learned that Demetrius, son of Seleucus, had sailed into the port of Tripolis with a powerful army and a fleet, and that he had occupied the country, after doing away with Antiochus and his guardian Lysias. A certain Alcimus, a former high priest, who had willfully incurred defilement at the time of the revolt, realized that there was no way for him to salvage his position and regain access to the holy altar. So he went to King Demetrius in the year one hundred and fifty-one and presented him with a gold crown and a palm branch, as well as some of the customary olive branches from the temple. On that occasion he kept quiet. But he found an opportunity to further his mad scheme when he was invited to the council by Demetrius and questioned about the dispositions and intentions of the Jews. He replied: "Those Jews called Hasideans, led by Judas Maccabeus, are warmongers, who stir up sedition and keep the kingdom from enjoying peace and quiet. For this reason, now that I am deprived of my ancestral dignity, that is to say, the high priesthood, I have come here-- first, out of my genuine concern for the king's interests, and secondly, out of consideration for my own countrymen, since our entire nation is suffering great affliction from the unreasonable conduct of the people just mentioned. When you have informed yourself in detail on these matters, O king, act in the interest of our country and its hard-pressed people with the same gracious consideration that you show toward all. As long as Judas is around, it is impossible for the state to enjoy peace." When he had said this, the other Friends who were hostile to Judas quickly added fuel to Demetrius' indignation. The king immediately chose Nicanor, who had been in command of the elephants, and appointed him governor of Judea. He sent him off with orders to put Judas to death, to disperse his followers, and to set up Alcimus as high priest of the great temple. The Gentiles from Judea, who would have banished Judas, came flocking to Nicanor, thinking that the misfortunes and calamities of the Jews would mean prosperity for themselves.

. Nicanor Makes Friends with Judas. .

When the Jews heard of Nicanor's coming, and that the Gentiles were rallying to him, they sprinkled themselves with earth and prayed to him who established his people forever, and who always comes to the aid of his heritage. At their leader's command, they set out at once and came upon the enemy at the village of Adasa. Judas' brother Simon had engaged Nicanor, but because of the sudden appearance of the enemy suffered a slight repulse. However, when Nicanor heard of the valor of Judas and his men, and the great courage with which they fought for their country, he shrank from deciding the issue by bloodshed. So he sent Posidonius, Theodotus and Mattathias to arrange an agreement. After a long discussion of the terms, each leader communicated them to his troops; and when general agreement was expressed, they assented to the treaty. A day was set on which the leaders would meet by themselves. From each side a chariot came forward and thrones were set in place. Judas had posted armed men in readiness at suitable points for fear that the enemy might suddenly carry out some treacherous plan. But the conference was held in the proper way. Nicanor stayed on in Jerusalem, where he did nothing out of place. He got rid of the throngs of

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ordinary people who gathered around him; but he always kept Judas in his company, for he had a cordial affection for the man. He urged him to marry and have children; so Judas married, settled down, and shared the common life.

. Nicanor Turns against Judas. .

When Alcimus saw their friendship for each other, he took the treaty that had been made, went to Demetrius, and said that Nicanor was plotting against the state, and that he had appointed Judas, the conspirator against the kingdom, to be his successor. Stirred up by the villain's calumnies, the king became enraged. He wrote to Nicanor, stating that he was displeased with the treaty, and ordering him to send Maccabeus as a prisoner to Antioch without delay. When this message reached Nicanor he was dismayed, for he hated to break his agreement with a man who had done no wrong. However, there was no way of opposing the king, so he watched for an opportunity to carry out this order by a stratagem. But Maccabeus noticed that Nicanor was becoming cool in his dealings with him, and acting with unaccustomed rudeness when they met; he concluded that this coldness betokened no good. So he gathered together a large number of his men, and went into hiding from Nicanor. When Nicanor realized that he had been disgracefully outwitted by the man, he went to the great and holy temple, at a time when the priests were offering the customary sacrifices, and ordered them to surrender Judas. As they declared under oath that they did not know where the wanted man was, he raised his right hand toward the temple and swore this oath: "If you do not hand Judas over to me as prisoner, I will level this shrine of Elohim to the ground; I will tear down the altar, and erect here a splendid temple to Dionysus." With these words he went away. The priests stretched out their hands toward heaven, calling upon the unfailing defender of our nation in these words: "Master of all, though you are in need of nothing, you have approved of a temple for your dwelling place among us. Therefore, O holy One, Master of all holiness, preserve forever undefiled this house, which has been so recently purified."

. Razis Dies for His Country. .

A certain Razis, one of the elders of Jerusalem, was denounced to Nicanor as a patriot. A man highly regarded, he was called a father of the Jews because of his love for them. In the early days of the revolt, he had been convicted of Judaism, and had risked body and life in his ardent zeal for it. Nicanor, to show his detestation of the Jews, sent more than five hundred soldiers to arrest him. He thought that by arresting such a man he would deal the Jews a hard blow. But when these troops, on the point of capturing the tower, were forcing the outer gate and calling for fire to set the door ablaze, Razis, now caught on all sides, turned his sword against himself, preferring to die nobly rather than fall into the hands of vile men and suffer outrages unworthy of his noble birth. In the excitement of the struggle he failed to strike exactly. So while the troops rushed in through the doors, he gallantly ran up to the top of the wall and with manly courage threw himself down into the crowd. But as they quickly drew back and left an opening, he fell into the middle of the empty space. Still breathing, and inflamed with anger, he got up and ran through the crowd, with blood gushing from his frightful wounds. Then, standing on a steep rock, as he lost the last of his blood, he tore out his entrails and flung them with both hands into the crowd,

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calling upon YHWH of life and of spirit to give these back to him again. Such was the manner of his death.

!! End of The Chapter.

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(2 Maccabees 15:1-39 NAB-A) :

. Nicanor's Arrogance. .

When Nicanor learned that Judas and his companions were in the territory of Samaria, he decided to attack them in all safety on the day of rest. The Jews who were forced to follow him pleaded, "Do not massacre them in that way, like a savage barbarian, but show respect for the day which the All-seeing has exalted with holiness above all other days." At this the thrice-sinful wretch asked if there was a ruler in heaven who prescribed the keeping of the sabbath day. When they replied that there was indeed such a ruler in heaven, the living YHWH himself, who commanded the observance of the sabbath day, he said, "I, on my part, am ruler on earth, and my orders are that you take up arms and carry out the king's business." Nevertheless he did not succeed in carrying out his cruel plan.

. Judas Prepares the Jews for Battle. .

In his utter boastfulness and arrogance Nicanor had determined to erect a public monument of victory over Judas and his men. But Maccabeus remained confident, fully convinced that he would receive help from YHWH! He urged his men not to fear the enemy, but mindful of the help they had received from Heaven in the past, to expect that now, too, victory would be given them by the Almighty. By encouraging them with words from the Torah and the prophets, and by reminding them of the battles they had already won, he filled them with fresh enthusiasm. Having stirred up their courage, he gave his orders and pointed out at the same time the perfidy of the Gentiles and their violation of oaths. When he had armed each of them, not so much with the safety of shield and spear as with the encouragement of noble words, he cheered them all by relating a dream, a kind of vision, worthy of belief. What he saw was this: Onias, the former high priest, a good and virtuous man, modest in appearance, gentle in manners, distinguished in speech, and trained from childhood in every virtuous practice, was praying with outstretched arms for the whole Jewish community. Then in the same way another man appeared, distinguished by his white hair and dignity, and with an air about him of extraordinary, majestic authority. Onias then said of him, "This is Elohim's prophet Jeremiah, who loves his brethren and fervently prays for his people and their holy city." Stretching out his right hand, Jeremiah presented a gold sword to Judas. As he gave it to him he said, "Accept this holy sword as a gift from Elohim; with it you shall crush your adversaries." Encouraged by Judas' noble words, which had power to instill valor and stir young hearts to courage, the Jews determined not to delay, but to charge gallantly and decide the issue by hand-to-hand combat with the utmost courage, since their city and its temple with the sacred vessels were in danger. They were not so much concerned about their wives and children or their brothers and kinsmen; their first and foremost fear was for the consecrated sanctuary. Those who remained in the city suffered a like agony, anxious as they were about the battle in the open country.

. The Defeat and Death of Nicanor. .

Everyone now awaited the decisive moment. The enemy were already drawing near with their troops drawn up in battle line, their elephants placed in strategic

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positions, and their cavalry stationed on the flanks. Maccabeus, contemplating the hosts before him, their elaborate equipment, and the fierceness of their elephants, stretched out his hands toward heaven and called upon YHWH who works miracles; for he knew that it is not through arms but through YHWH'S decision that victory is won by those who deserve it. He prayed to him thus: "You, O YHWH, sent your angel in the days of King Hezekiah of Judea, and he slew a hundred and eighty-five thousand men of Sennacherib's army. Sovereign of the heavens, send a good angel now to spread fear and dread before us. By the might of your arm may those be struck down who have blasphemously come against your holy people!" With this he ended his prayer. Nicanor and his men advanced to the sound of trumpets and battle songs. But Judas and his men met the army with supplication and prayers. Fighting with their hands and praying to Elohim with their hearts, they laid low at least thirty-five thousand, and rejoiced greatly over this manifestation of Elohim's power. When the battle was over and they were joyfully departing, they discovered Nicanor lying there in all his armor; so they raised tumultuous shouts in their native tongue in praise of the divine Sovereign. Then Judas, who was ever in body and soul the chief defender of his fellow citizens, and had maintained from youth his affection for his countrymen, ordered Nicanor's head and whole right arm to be cut off and taken to Jerusalem. When he arrived there, he assembled his countrymen, stationed the priests before the altar, and sent for those in the citadel. He showed them the vile Nicanor's head and the wretched blasphemer's arm that had been boastfully stretched out against the holy dwelling of the Almighty. He cut out the tongue of the godless Nicanor, saying he would feed it piecemeal to the birds and would hang up the other wages of his folly opposite the temple. At this, everyone looked toward heaven and praised YHWH who manifests his divine power, saying, "Blessed be he who has kept his own Place undefiled!" Judas hung up Nicanor's head on the wall of the citadel, a clear and evident proof to all of YHWH's help. By public vote it was unanimously decreed never to let this day pass unobserved, but to celebrate it on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, called Adar in Aramaic, the eve of Mordecai's Day. Since Nicanor's doings ended in this way, with the city remaining in possession of the Hebrews from that time on, I will bring my own story to an end here too.

. The Compiler's Epilogue. .

If it is well written and to the point, that is what I wanted; if it is poorly done and mediocre, that is the best I could do. Just as it is harmful to drink wine alone or water alone, whereas mixing wine with water makes a more pleasant drink that increases delight, so a skillfully composed story delights the ears of those who read the work. Let this, then, be the end.

!! . End of 2 Maccabees: Praise Yah! .

!! End of Today's FEAST and Related Scriptures! Praise Yah! (HNV-yet version, in the public domain.)

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