
THE MACCABEAN REVOLT.

A. Antiochus Epiphanies continued to heap outrage upon the Jews, even after the desecration of the temple in 168 BC.

B. The Maccabean Revolt.

1. At Modin, a village north-west of Jerusalem, the Syrians tried to force an old priest by the name of Mattathias to offer a pagan sacrifice. The priest refused but another Jew volunteered to offer the sacrifice. Mattathias killed the Jew and the Syrian officer. Overnight, Mattathias became a national hero. He was of the family of Hasmon (or Asmoneus). Thus began the Hasmoneans.
2. Mattathias had five sons: John, Simon, Judas (surnamed Maccabaeus), Eleazer, Jonathan.
3. The family of Mattathias, joined by other zealots, carried on a guerilla warfare with the Syrians.
4. Soon after the death of Mattathias, leadership fell to Judas the Maccabee ("the hammer").
5. The Maccabees (followers of Judas) made their way to Jerusalem, entered the temple, removed evidence of pagan worship, erected a new altar to God, and ground to dust the statue of Zeus-Antiochus. They observed an eight day Feast of Dedication also called Hanukkah, or the Festival of Lights. The feast began on the 25th of Kislev (December), 165 BC, exactly three years after the desecration by Antiochus.
 - a. The Feast of Dedication was celebrated annually by the Jews.
 - b. Jesus was in Jerusalem during this feast at least once (Jn. 10:22).
6. Judas died on the battlefield in another battle with the Syrians in 161
7. The discovery of a burial cave at Modin thought to have been used by the Maccabees and/or their descendants was reported in November, 1995.

C. Successors to Judas.

1. Jonathan held a place of leadership from 161 to 142 BC when he was murdered by a Syrian general.

Simon succeeded his brother from 142 to 135 BC. During his leadership the Jews were granted immunity from taxes by the Syrians, and proclaimed their independence. Simon was made high priest. The High Priesthood was now hereditary in the Hasmonean line. "Here, then, we see the emergence of an independent Jewish state in which the civil head and the military leader were at the same time the High Priest" (Russell 31). Simon was slain by his son-in-law, Ptolemy, and his son, John Hyrcanus, became High Priest