

# THE FOURTH BOOK OF MACCABEES

## INTRODUCTION

### § 1. SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE BOOK.

THE Fourth Book of Maccabees is couched in the form of a discourse or treatise, taking for its subject the power of *ὁ εὐσεβὴς λογισμός*, the Inspired Reason, to control the passions. It has been suggested by Freudenthal that the work may be a specimen of synagogue preaching, and Ewald appears to agree with him in this, but other commentators reply that in the Diaspora the regular synagogue practice was always to take a passage from the Bible as a text for the sermon. Now Fourth Maccabees has no text, and the rules of Jewish services are seldom departed from, so it is probable that this work was given as a lecture rather than a sermon. But the best authorities doubt whether we know enough about Judæo-Hellenistic practice nearly two thousand years ago to justify a positive conclusion about the matter. At all events the author of this work, be it lecture or sermon, is unquestionably an orthodox Jew, and his object is to fire the hearts of his co-religionists with such an enthusiastic devotion to their faith that they will be ready to face the last extremity of suffering in its behalf. A student of Greek philosophy himself, speaking to people who were evidently familiar with its terminology, he enlists the Stoic virtues in the cause of Jewish orthodoxy. Adopting the Stoic definition of the four cardinal virtues, judgement and justice, and courage and temperance, he insists that these are best attained by men being born and brought up under the Law of Moses. He leaves on one side the discussion of the methods by which Greek philosophy proposed to attain virtue. He has naturally no inspired anticipation of the Christian doctrine of God's grace whereby sinners may be led into the way of truth; for we shall find reason to think that he wrote before any such thing as a Christian document had even come into existence. But he not only adopts the Stoic virtues, he also takes the Stoic view of sin, that to offend in one point is to be guilty of all, when he makes his protomartyr, Eleazar, say, 'Think it not then a small sin for us to eat the unclean thing; for the transgression of the Law, be it in small things or in great, is equally heinous.' Yet his acceptance of the Stoic position is not indiscriminating, as, although he uses their philosophical definition of the virtues, he refrains from specifically adopting their classification of the primary passions under the four heads of delight, grief, pain, and fear. The Stoics held that the passions were not grounded in nature but were due to wrong thinking, and could and should be extirpated. The author, on the contrary, holds that the passions were implanted in man by God and are not to be extirpated but controlled. 'Reason', he says, 'is not the extirpator of the passions, but their antagonist.' And this power of Reason he illustrates, not, as his Stoic friends would have done, from Greek sources, but from the Jews' own Bible story, from the lives of Joseph and Jacob, of Moses and David. Then he passes to the subject of the terrible tyrant of Syria, Antiochus, whom some styled Epiphanes, The Brilliant, and some Epimanes, The Madman, and describes his odious oppressions: and so comes presently to the martyrs, Eleazar, and the Seven Brethren, and the Mother. He relates their defiance of the tyrant and enlarges on their sufferings with an even greater wealth of dreadful detail than the writer of Second Maccabees, whether the additions are due to his own invention or are drawn from a common original, the lost work of Jason of Cyrene. He recounts insistently the martyrs' triumphant victory over their sufferings, won by the aid of their Reason, their unconquerable fidelity to the Law of Moses, and their assured hope of a blessed immortality in the company of the patriarchs. That immortality is their reward in heaven, while they enjoy on earth the honour of being held the saviours of their country, which noble title he would inscribe as their epitaph. His impassioned eulogy is intended to rouse the patriotic and religious feelings of his audience to the highest pitch and harden them to the point of following so glorious an example. If I were asked to suggest the most probable reason why this book was written I should incline to the opinion that it was in consequence of the deification of the Roman Emperors. It is true that that deification (which involved nothing particularly startling to the pagan world) was not taken very seriously by Augustus and Tiberius, and in consequence did not become a really crucial question with the Jews until the accession of Caligula, whom we might well call the Second Brilliant Madman. Mad he was and did verily take himself for a god and demand to be



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worshipped as such, and then all the horrors of the persecution of Epiphanes were repeated in Egypt on the bodies of the wretched Jews, the defiling and torture of their persons, the plunder of their holy things, and the erection of statues of the deified Emperor in their desecrated Synagogues. But though this persecution did not take place till A.D. 38-39, the future instrument through which Caligula's madness was to work, namely the base passions of the dregs of the Egyptian, and especially the Alexandrian, populace, had become plainly visible long before. Every far-sighted man, such as the author of this book must have been, could not but recognize, even during the more clement days of Augustus and Tiberius, that as soon as ever Jews were required to offer public sacrifice at the imperial altars an impossible test would be imposed. Every true Jew knew that he must refuse, and it was not hard to foresee what would happen then, when once the passions of the vilest mob in the world were let loose. To meet and endure the coming persecution the sons of Israel would need all their courage, and how better could the Jewish-Hellenic philosopher steel the hearts of his brethren than by holding up to them the self-abnegating virtues of Stoicism and the sublime heroism of the Maccabean martyrs?

### § 2. TITLE.

The oldest form of title is simply *Μακκαβαίων δ'*, under which it is found in three of the great uncial MSS., the Alexandrinus, the Sinaiticus, and the Venetus. But the book having been attributed to the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, it also appears among his works with a title derived from the subject-matter, *περὶ αὐτοκράτορος λογισμοῦ*, On the Supremacy of Reason, and it is thus cited by Eusebius and Jerome. Another form of this title is *περὶ σώφρονος λόγου*, which appears in some editions of Josephus; and the former of the two is generally rendered in the Latin versions by *de imperatrice ratione*, or else by *de dominatu* or *de imperio rationis*. Lastly, there is a third form of title, *Ἰωσήπου εἰς τοὺς Μακκαβαίους βιβλίον*, or *εἰς τοὺς Μακκαβαίους λόγος*.

### §§ 3-4. THE MSS. AND THE ANCIENT VERSIONS.

The book is found, as already mentioned, in three great uncials, A, *Σ*, and V, but is unfortunately absent from the Codex Vaticanus. It was early translated into Syriac, and in 1895 Dr. Barnes brought out through the Cambridge Press a Syriac text prepared by the late Professor R. L. Bensly from a collation of nine MSS., of which he gives a description. The Syriac version was faithful enough to be of value for textual criticism, and Bensly found that as a rule it supports *Σ* rather than A. Dr. Barnes, who edited Bensly's notes, gives a list of some two hundred passages where the readings in the Syriac and the Greek MSS. are compared. As regards other ancient versions, 'Nothing is known', says Dr. Torrey, writing in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, 'of any old Latin version of Fourth Maccabees, or even of the sources used by Erasmus in making his Latin "paraphrase" which differs so widely from the Greek text.' The book is not in the Vulgate, and accordingly is absent from the Apocrypha of the Roman Bible and from our own.

### § 5. DATE.

The date of the original text is uncertain, but the author could never have spoken as he does of the Temple service had he been writing after the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Also, if the date of the book had been as late as the close of the first century A.D., its orthodox Judaism would probably have interfered with its acceptance among Christians, an acceptance which nevertheless it obtained. And if it was addressed, as it probably was, to an Alexandrian audience we must look at least thirty years further back than A.D. 70, for the author could not have spoken as he does to Alexandrian Jews after the occurrence of the Caligulan persecution, which took place in A.D. 38-39. This last date then becomes the inferior limit. Perhaps the superior limit may be taken as 63 B.C., when the High Priesthood passed from the Hasmonean House. For the author is at pains to explain that in the days of King Seleucus IV (175 B.C.) the High Priest, Onias, held that office for life, a tenure which ceased after the fall of the Hasmonean dynasty (Grimm). The date then probably falls between B.C. 63 and A.D. 38 or, roughly speaking, within two generations before or one generation after the Christian era.

### § 6. INTEGRITY.

The book is of the nature of a sermon, whether actually delivered in a synagogue or not, and as a moral discourse it is thoroughly homogeneous. It opens with the philosophical discussion of the supremacy of Reason, and then illustrates the subject with a series of examples drawn from the constancy of the nine martyrs under their tortures. The point sought to be proved is repeated with an insistence that becomes rather tedious to modern ears, a matter in which, perhaps, we are less



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tolerant than the ancients. The details, too, of the successive tortures are elaborated in a way that shocks modern taste. We must consider, however, that very few among us to-day have either seen torture inflicted with our own eyes or dreaded to feel it in our own persons. We only know of it by reading of such horrors in other parts of the globe or in the history of the past. The author of *Fourth Maccabees* was addressing an audience to whom the sight of tortured men was as much a matter of course as the butcher's shambles to us, and accordingly his treatment of this part of the subject is quite in keeping with his time and place. Though a Jew, and a highly orthodox Jew, he is completely master of the Greek language, which he writes with ease; his vocabulary is large, and he handles the idioms with variety and flexibility; his style is so ornate and copious that I am tempted to call it over-decorated. There is no sign of the Midrash method of treatment in his work, no reciting of scattered texts with disconnected expositions attached thereto. He keeps his main point before him, in good Greek form, illustrating it freely and well not only from the story of the martyrs but also from the heroes of old. The nearest he comes to writing in a Hebrew style is at the end, where he puts into the mouth of the Mother what may be described as a roll-call of Old Testament worthies. But as a Jew speaking to Jews nothing could be more natural or more effective than this Hebraic finale. Accordingly I see no reason why we should look in this last chapter for traces of another hand, though certain commentators have thought that the book originally ended at xviii. 2 with the words 'O Israelites, children born of the seed of Abraham, obey this Law, and be righteous in all ways, recognizing that Inspired Reason is lord over the passions'. It is true that this close makes a neat Euclidean Q.E.D. to the demonstration of his proposition as enunciated at the beginning, namely that the Inspired Reason is supreme ruler over the passions. But considered as a peroration, from the rhetorical point of view, it is nothing less than an absolute bathos after the striking passage just before where he gives the epitaph that he would like to write for the martyrs. The main argument for the conjectural placing of the original conclusion at this point is that the Mother's account of her early life, which occupies fourteen verses immediately after it, is of the nature of a digression. So it is, but the reason is not far to seek. The author, through the main part of the book, has dealt chiefly with men and the manly virtues, courage in particular. He gives the heroine of his story, the Mother, due praise for this virtue, but he also desires to insert in his work a fit encomium on the domestic virtues which as a Jew he considers to be most important for the women of his race. Courage he has already praised; now he lays stress on the woman's more commonplace duty of stopping at home and attending to the house, of her father first and later of her husband. Above all, she must be very careful to run no risk of contamination by any deceiver, be he man or be he devil, inside or outside the house. So he makes the Mother say with pride in this last chapter, 'I kept guard over the rib that was builded into Eve.' Like Eve she was to be a helpmeet for man, but she was not, like Eve, to dally with the false beguiling serpent. Clearly the writer was determined to get in his point about female virtue, and he does it. Of course it is a digression even here, but if we look back to where he has the Mother in the front of the scene during the previous chapters there is no place where these verses would not have been ten times more out of keeping. He had far too much literary skill to spoil his effect by putting the passage in the wrong place, and he reserved this piece about her early days till he could use it as a relief to the tension of the tortures, and so lead up to the final roll-call of the heroes. He throws a true and honourable light on the religious influence of the Jewess in her home when he depicts her as recalling to her sons' minds the words of their dead father and his manner of holding up the great men of old to their admiration. His setting of the passage in her mouth is far more effective than if the author himself called the roll in his own person. For myself I am inclined to distrust those confident critics who on the evidence of style say dogmatically 'the author wrote this, the author did not write that'. Even the great Bentley himself, a critic whose shield (were he alive) few knights of the pen would dare to touch by way of challenge, succeeded in persuading himself that Milton never closed the last book of *Paradise Lost* with such a distich as:

'They hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,  
Through Eden took their solitary way.'

No, these lines had been corrupted by the 'editor' whom Bentley's own imagination invented to account for the faults he discovered in Milton. And this is what he offered as a substitute:

'Then, hand in hand, with social steps their way  
Through Eden took with heavenly comfort cheer'd.'

Where Bentley could so stumble which of us shall stand upright? The style of *Fourth Maccabees* shows no more variation than naturally follows on the changes from one branch of the subject to another. All through the author writes the vigorous, free, idiomatic Greek of one to whom it was a native language, so that we might say of him, as of the Jew whom Aristotle is represented as meeting in Asia, that he was 'Ελληνικὸς οὐ τῇ διαλέκτῳ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τῇ ψυχῇ. He likes to coin



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new words of the right Greek stamp. For instance, in the first sentence of his treatise he states that the question he will discuss is whether Inspired Reason is really *αὐτοδέσποτος τῶν παθῶν*, autocratic over the passions, where the word *αὐτοδέσποτος* is apparently a *ἅπαξ λεγόμενον* of his own minting. Later on he uses in the same sense the much commoner word *αὐτοκράτωρ*, and we can even find his very phrase *αὐτοκράτωρ λογισμός* in Thucydides, though the historian uses it in quite another sense, to mean 'an arbitrary decision'. The author of Fourth Maccabees chooses *αὐτοδέσποτος* not in order to avoid confusion with Thucydides' phrase but to strike the key-note of originality and intensity: he would have you note from the outset that he is an undoubted autocrat of language. So Ruskin in the first sentence of *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* uses the rare Miltonic 'resplendence' where another man would have chosen some more ordinary term. But Ruskin meant his work to be resplendent, and strikes the note of brilliancy at once. Not a few more of these vigorous compounds does the author coin: *ἐθνὸπληθος* = 'the nation-mass', *ἐπταμήτωρ* = 'the mother of seven children', *κοσμοπληθής* = 'world-whelming', *κοσμοφορῶν* = 'world-freighted', *μαλακοψυχὲν* = 'to be weak-spirited', *παθοκρατεῖσθαι* = 'to be mastered by the passions'. These words are neither obscure nor far-fetched; their meaning is obvious enough, but they are fresh. We have but to turn over a few pages of Carlyle's *French Revolution* at haphazard to find parallels; Danton is 'the Minister of Moloch-Justice', the while 'France is dancing its desert-waltz'; 'Louis Capet was only called Inviolable by a figure of rhetoric; but at bottom was perfectly violable, triable'; or again, when the King's sentence is being settled, constitution-monger Sieyes votes '*La mort sans phrase*, Death without phrases, and fares onward and downward. Most spectral, pandemonial'. A good word 'pandemonial' (which I have not found in Dr. Murray's dictionary) for horrors whether of the French Revolution or of torture under the Brilliant Madman. Some of the author's new coinage passed into circulation; he speaks of Eleazar's Reason as a pilot, *πηδαλιουχῶν*, 'rudder-handling' or 'rudder-ruling' the ship of godliness, where the common expression would have been *οὐακίζων*, 'steering'; and we find this new word of his, *πηδαλιουχέιν*, used by later writers, not of handling the helm of a real ship, but in the very same metaphorical sense we have here. We may note the author's love of double-barrelled prepositional compounds, as where he speaks of parents as *ἐναποσφραγίζοντες*, stamping their seal on the child; and of prepositions used intensively in composition, as in *ἐπιπρωλογούμενος*, another of his coinages, to express the skinflint's extra-gleaning of his grapes. Indeed his love of the ornate is such that he will invent a three-barrelled prepositional compound, if the fancy strikes him; as when, in the case of the torture of the first of the seven brethren, in order to describe the horrid ingenuity of the torturers, he says, *τὸν τροχὸν προσεπικατέτεινον*, 'they extra-overstrained against him the wheel', or as the Syriac version has it, 'they made the wheel more cruel by artifice against him.' I find no cause to suspect that this book is not the work of a single hand.

### § 7. AUTHORSHIP.

The authorship of Fourth Maccabees must be considered doubtful. It was attributed to Flavius Josephus by Eusebius, the learned bishop of Caesarea, who lived more than two centuries later than Josephus, or between A.D. 270 and 340. The words of Eusebius are (*Hist. Eccl.* iii. 10, see page 76 in E. Burton's Oxford Ed., 1856): *πεπόνηται δὲ καὶ ἄλλο οὐκ ἄγενης σπουδασμα τῷ ἀνδρὶ περὶ αὐτοκράτορος λογισμοῦ, ὃ τινας Μακκαβαϊκὸν ἐνέγραψαν, τῷ τοῦ ἀγῶνας τῶν ἐν τοῖς οὐτῶ καλουμένοις Μακκαβαϊκοῖς συγγράμμασιν ὑπὲρ τῆς εἰς τὸ θεῖον εὐσεβείας ἀνδρισμένων Ἑβραίων περιέχειν.* 'The man (Josephus) has also produced another work of a lofty character on the Supremacy of Reason, to which some have given the title of Maccabean, because it includes the struggles of the Hebrews who in the books known as Maccabean strove valiantly for the sake of righteousness before God.' Jerome, writing in A.D. 492, follows Eusebius in naming Josephus as the author, and in consequence of this attribution, which was generally accepted in ancient times, we find the book frequently printed among Josephus's works. Internal evidence, however, points strongly the other way. For example, the statement made in Fourth Maccabees xvii. 24, that Antiochus publicly held up the example of the martyrs to his men to inspire them with courage, 'so that he conquered all his enemies and laid waste their cities,' is a singular one to have been made by Josephus, who himself has chronicled the notorious failure of Antiochus before Elymais and discusses the question whether that failure was not the immediate cause of his death. Again, Josephus (*Ant.* xii. 4) correctly states that Antiochus Epiphanes was the brother of Seleucus IV. But in Fourth Maccabees iv. 15 the writer makes the blunder of calling him his son. Also the writer says in Fourth Maccabees xiv. 7, 'we now shudder when we hear of the sufferings of those youths,' thus presupposing that his hearers enjoy peace and safety. Such words would be hardly natural in the mouth of Josephus, who was actually present at the fall of Jerusalem and wrote the history of the fatal Jewish War. It is also worth noting that Josephus in his historical works uses the Greek equivalents of Biblical names,



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whereas the author of Fourth Maccabees uses the Hebrew indeclinable forms except in the cases of *Ἱεροσόλυμα* and *Ἐλεάζαρος*. Indeed the whole form and style of Fourth Maccabees are so unlike any of Josephus's other works that, if he did write it, he must have done so when very young, and then have completely changed his style later. He would seem to have changed his views also, for the ideal purpose of Fourth Maccabees is to glorify the heroes who sacrifice everything for the sake of religion. But the personal ideals of Josephus were of a very different nature, for we learn from his own pen that his heroism took quite another shape. After fighting against Rome on behalf of his country till victory declared for Rome, he then surrendered and fought against his brethren; he took the Roman name of Flavius in compliment to the Flavian Caesar, and married a Gentile wife, contrary to Moses' Law, to oblige Vespasian. As every single one of these acts would have been anathema to the author of Fourth Maccabees, we may fairly conclude that the writer was not Flavius Josephus. It has indeed been suggested, by Ewald among others, that the ascription may have arisen from the author's actual name having been Josephus, and that he thus became confused later on with the more famous historian, which of course is possible but does seem somewhat futile. Whatever his name was, it is more likely that he lived in Alexandria than in Palestine. The implication, noticed above, that he and his hearers are living in the enjoyment of peace and safety suits Jerusalem less well than Alexandria, at least for any period prior to the Caligulan persecution. And not only is the writer's style but his sentiment more Alexandrian than Palestinian. He shows indeed a proper orthodox horror of the Hellenizing Jason's action in setting up a gymnasium on the Holy Mount, but so far from condemning the Greek games in themselves, he does not shrink from comparing the struggle between the martyrs and the tyrant to an athletic contest. Indeed, he elaborates the likeness; the competitors are Antiochus and the martyrs; the spectators are the whole world; and the prize of victory is immortality. He shows a similar tolerance towards Greek art, when he suggests that 'if it were allowable for us' the art of painting would best bring before the mind the idea of the martyrdoms. Surely some Niobe or Medea or other heroine of Greek tragedy was familiar to the sight of his hearers and of himself when he said this; and when he added 'as might some artist' (if that be the correct reading) he was alluding to some painter whom they all knew. In cosmopolitan Alexandria such an allusion could hardly hurt his reputation for orthodoxy, but it would have been a hazardous thing to publish such a phrase in Jerusalem, where the very sight of Pilate's eagles raised a fury that was only quenched in blood. Moreover, the main object of his discourse, which is to show how Greek philosophy can help an orthodox Jew to keep the Law, is one more likely to be addressed to Jews living in the great Greek city of Alexandria than to those at the sacred centre of Judaism itself. The general conclusion is that the author was not Flavius Josephus, and that there is evidence to show that he was a Jew, living in Egypt, most probably in Alexandria, within a few years of the Christian era.

### § 8. INFLUENCE.

The direct influence of this book on Jewish literature does not seem to have been great; there is, however, a mediaeval work, written in Biblical Hebrew, by Joseph ben Gorion, commonly known as Yosippon, which shows traces of Fourth Maccabees. Yosippon's work is a history of his people from the destruction of Babylon to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. He is sometimes called the 'Hebrew' Josephus to distinguish him from his namesake, the well-known historian of the Antiquities and the Jewish War, who wrote in Greek. Yosippon, indeed, in the text of his book now current, claims to be the great historian himself, but this is certainly false. It is now generally held that his writings have absolutely no historical value, and that, so far from being the real Flavius Josephus, he was a Jew of Southern Italy who lived as late as the ninth or tenth century. But his work became exceedingly popular among the Jews of the Middle Ages and it was translated into many languages and widely circulated. One modern authority, Trieber, would assign him a date as early as the fourth century, and thinks he had the original work of Jason of Cyrene before him, but this question is still debated. At any rate Yosippon recounts the story of the martyrdoms much as we have it in Fourth Maccabees, but with additions and variations of his own. The first martyr, Eleazar, is represented as having formerly been the guest of Ptolemy in Egypt, where he acted as one of the LXX, and as having won at Jerusalem the favour of Philippus, by which name is intended the general to whom Antiochus entrusted the business of persecuting the Jews. This Philip takes Eleazar apart and begs him to eat, before all the people, some of the meat of a Jewish sacrifice, but to do so in such a way that he may be supposed to be eating meat sacrificed to the king's image. For the rest of the story of Eleazar the author does little more than expand Maccabees. He then brings the Mother, whom he calls Hannah, with her seven sons, before Antiochus himself, 'who had not gone far from Jerusalem'; and their several martyrdoms follow. I note a few points differing from Maccabees. While the first martyr is suffering the others quote the Song of Moses, 'The Lord will judge his people and have mercy on his servants,' &c. The fifth brother tells the king that it is vain



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for him to hope to establish the worship of his own image by their torture. The Mother makes a long speech to the youngest son, who promises her that 'he will keep the Law which Moses our teacher, may he rest in peace! gave to the Holy People of Israel'. And the boy calls Antiochus an insane dotard of seventy, and tells him 'it had been better for thee never to have been born from the impure womb of the foolish mother who bore thee, thou fatuous fool that hast brought woe upon thyself'. There is no mention either of the seventh son or the Mother casting themselves into the fire; but Hannah begins her dying speech, 'My heart has rejoiced in the Lord and my horn is exalted in my God.' After the martyrdoms Antiochus goes off to Macedonia (?) and the Maccabean rising follows. As we might expect, the Stoic philosophy of Fourth Maccabees finds no place here.

Neither can I discover any trace of this Stoicism surviving in the Chanukah services which to this day commemorate the Maccabean purification. If one may imitate St. Paul's simile of the wild olive tree, Stoicism was a graft that thrived but ill when set in the stem of the 'good' olive of Judaism. The Chanukah festival lasts for eight days, beginning on the famous twenty-fifth of Chisleu (December), when it was instituted by Judas Maccabaeus, his brothers, and the elders, to be celebrated annually in memory of the dedication of the restored altar on the occasion of the purification of the Sanctuary at Jerusalem. The popular name, according to Josephus (the true Josephus, not Yosippon), was *φῶτα*, 'Lights', because it was and is still celebrated by a grand general illumination. The eight-day continuance of it is said to come from the story that the priests found one single cruse of holy oil that had remained unpolluted all through the desecration under Antiochus, and by a miracle this was made to last for eight days until the priests could prepare new oil for the lamps of the holy candlestick.

In later times the Pharisaic party haggled over the legitimacy of the claims of the family of Mattathias to the hereditary High-priesthood which was assumed by the Maccabees in 153 B.C. Strict Jews held that the Maccabees, though they had proved themselves national heroes, were in a sense irregular as occupants of the sacred office. As an explanation of this it is stated by Morris J. Raphall, Rabbi-preacher of the Greene Street synagogue, New York, who published in 1854 a *Post-Biblical History of the Jews*, that the Chasidim condemned Judas Maccabaeus because he allied himself with the Parthians and sent an embassy to Rome. He quotes from a Midrash Chanukah, which he describes as an ancient Codex in the City Library of Leipzig, these words as personally directed against Judas by the leader of the Chasidim: 'Cursed be the man who placeth his dependence on flesh while from the Lord his heart departeth.' But Rabbi Raphall thinks that Mattathias was probably regarded as High-Priest, or Cohen-Gadol, by his own followers, and describes him as a priest of the order of Joarib, the first of the twenty-four appointed by David by lot, and descended from the elder branch of the family of Aaron. The father of Mattathias was Johanan, and his father Asmoneus. In the service for Chanukah, in the official Jewish prayer-book, there is a special prayer set out in the morning service for the day which runs thus: 'In the days of the Hasmonean, Mattathias, son of Johanan the High-Priest, and his sons, when the iniquitous power of Greece rose up against thy people Israel, to make them forgetful of thy Law and to force them to transgress the statutes of thy will, then didst thou in thine abundant mercy rise up for them in the time of their trouble . . . and for thy people Israel thou didst work a great deliverance and redemption as at this day. And thereupon thy children came into the oracle of thy house, cleansed thy temple, purified thy Sanctuary, kindled light in thy holy courts, and appointed these eight days of Chanukah in order to give thanks and praises unto thy great name.' But I can find nothing that specially recalls Fourth Maccabees in the whole service.

If the Jews themselves have somewhat neglected the book, the Christian Fathers have not done so. The Maccabees are lauded by the Western as well as by the Eastern Church; they are commemorated in panegyrics by St. Augustine and Leo the Great, and they find a place in the calendars of Carthage as well as in those of the Syrians and Arabians. But the Eastern Church naturally glorified them first, and I can find no better specimen of the influence of Fourth Maccabees on Christian literature than the oration of Gregory Nazianzen on the Martyrs. 'What of the Maccabees?' he begins, 'for to-day (Aug. 1) is their anniversary; though by many they be not honoured because their ἀθλησις, their "contest", was not after Christ, yet are they worthy to be honoured by all, in that their endurance was in behalf of the Law of their fathers. And what would men who were martyred before Christ's passion have achieved if they had been persecuted after Christ and had His death on our behalf to imitate? For would not they who without His great example showed such virtue have appeared nobler still in hazarding themselves after that example? Mystical and ineffable is the saying, and one very persuasive to me and to all that love God, that none of those who were made perfect<sup>1</sup> before Christ reached that point outside of the Christian

<sup>1</sup> Compare Heb. xi. 40.



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faith.' We are reminded of that noble benediction 'abi in pacem anima naturaliter Christiana'. It has been finely said that if Judaism as a religion had perished under Antiochus, the seed-bed of Christianity would have been lacking; and thus the blood of the Maccabean martyrs, who saved Judaism, ultimately became the seed of the Church. Therefore as not only Christendom but also Islam derive their monotheism from a Jewish source, it may well be that the world to-day owes the very existence of monotheism both in the East and in the West to the Maccabees.

This then is the key-note of Gregory's paean in their honour, delivered in the latter half of the fourth century, and he strikes the note again further on where he repeats that 'the Maccabees are not to be despised because they were before the Cross, but they are to be praised and held in honour for having lived according to the Cross'. His oration is really a paraphrase of Fourth Maccabees, to which he clearly alludes in the following sentence: 'For who they were and whence, these men, and from what fount of education and training they advanced to such a pitch of virtue and glory that they are honoured by these yearly feasts and celebrations, and beyond these visible things have enshrined themselves in the hearts of all men, all this those who love labour and learning will find made clear in the book, which philosophizes about the Reason being supreme over the passions and holding the balance between two, that is to say, between virtue and vice.' A great sentence in more senses than one. Gregory, then, describes Eleazar as the first-fruits of those who suffered before Christ, as Stephen was the first-fruits of those after him. He takes not a few phrases straight from Eleazar's mouth, as where the martyr prays that he and his fellow martyrs may be accepted as a purification for the whole people; but when Gregory makes Eleazar speak of the youths as his sons, he clearly must do so in a spiritual sense, for in Fourth Maccabees it is very distinctly stated that Eleazar was not their father, and what they owed him was not their birth but their teaching; and Gregory knows his original perfectly. Gregory, however, likes playing such variations on his theme. Thus he makes the youths boldly demand the torture for themselves, their only fear being lest any should be denied the crown of martyrdom; but when he comes to describe the sufferings of the Mother, the Christian introduces a touch unknown to the Jewish writer. Like him he dwells at length on her agony over her sons' agonies, but the Christian recognizes there a true foretype of the Mother of Sorrows at the crucifixion of Christ, and he gives her the palm for courage and devotion. Like the author of Fourth Maccabees he delights in his own eloquence. If, as some think, two chapters of Second Maccabees have been expanded into the Fourth, Gregory in his turn now expands the Fourth by introducing numerous variations of his own, as where he makes the youths whet one another's spirits, *ὡς σὺν ὄδοντες ἀλλήλους θήξαντες*, 'like boar's tusks whetting each other.' He takes the Maccabean author's simile of the mother-bird fluttering round her young ones, threatened by the snake, and applying it more directly to the Mother represents her as gathering up their broken bodies and—a curious touch this—adoring their relics; *προσεκύνει τὰ λείψανα* he says; unless indeed we simply render *προσεκύνει* 'she kissed them'. He fills her mouth with phrases clearly befitting the Mother of God. 'Yet a little while,' she proclaims, 'and blessed shall I be among women.' When she has done speaking he makes her run to the pyre as to her bride-bed, *ὡς ἐπὶ νυμφῶνα τὴν πυρκαϊάν δραμοῦσα*, not waiting for her executioners 'in order that no impure person should touch her pure and honourable body'. Gregory makes the tyrant rejoice within himself that she had not borne more sons, for then he must have come off even more defeated and worse disgraced. Antiochus plays the part of the devil in this drama, and the fate of the Hebrew race is *ὡς ἐπὶ ξυροῦ*, on a razor's edge, and the martyrs are the conquerors. 'So,' says Gregory to his flock, 'imitate these noble sufferers and do battle bravely with our daily Antiochus,' *πρὸς τὸν καθ' ἡμέραν Ἀντίοχον γενναίως ἀνδρίζομενοι*; and so dismisses them with his blessing in the name of Christ, 'to whom be the glory for ever. Amen.'

Commenting on this oration, Nicetas declares that Gregory opens by maintaining that the Maccabees were truly pre-Christian martyrs 'because some averred that these martyrs suffered not for Christ but in defence of the Law and of abstinence from swine's flesh', and quotes other Fathers in defence of Gregory's position. Further on there is a highly exalted passage where Gregory makes the youths say to Antiochus, 'Our country is the heavenly Jerusalem which no Antiochus can besiege, and our kinship is the spirit with which we are inspired by having been born unto virtue.' Gregory's word for 'the spirit with which we are inspired' is *ἐμπνευσις*, and Nicetas finely illustrates this from the passage in Genesis where God breathes into man's nostrils the breath of life.

In a strain of equal exaltation Gregory's great contemporary, Chrysostom, the golden-mouthed, begins his panegyric on the Holy Maccabees and their Mother. 'How bright and joyous is our city, and sunnier this day than all the year! Not that to-day the sun pours his beams more splendid than of wont upon the earth, but that the light of the holy martyrs flashes brighter than lightning over all our city.' He follows the author of Fourth Maccabees in choosing to compare the martyrs' struggle to the athletic contests of the games, and the martyr's crown to that of the victor



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in the contest. He appeals to Christ in the character of one who 'produces the games', as the phrase went. τί ποτε τοῦτο ἄρα, δέσποτα; 'What in the world is this, Master? Bringest thou feeble age into the contests on the arena? Who ever heard of a woman being entered for a contest at such an age? None ever heard of it.' And Christ answers that it is not bodily strength on which they rely, but that He lends His strength to His athletes. Further on Chrysostom sets forth eloquently the force of maternal devotion, quite in the vein of Fourth Maccabees but with instances of his own. 'Often,' he says, 'a mother seeing her child burning with fever—πάντα ἂν ἐλοιτο παθεῖν—would choose to take all the pain to herself so as to transfer the fire of the distemper from the child's body to hers.' It is interesting to observe how Chrysostom can always find something new to say. Fourth Maccabees has a beautiful simile of birds defending their young. He alters it by introducing the idea of their love of offspring being turned into a snare for themselves. 'Many wild animals hard to catch are thus taken, when, disregarding their own safety in their affection for their young, they fall into the hands of the hunters.' He is very ingenious in these variations, and doubtless intended them to remind those among his hearers who, in Gregory's words, loved labour and learning, of a book so well worth knowing, and he contrives to freshen their interest by novel applications. Finally, in his stirring close he, like Gregory, lends his powerful support to the claim that these were true martyrs before Christ. 'Who is there, man or woman, old or young, who would not contend for the martyr's crown, when a woman did so—πρὸ τῆς χάριτος ἀγωνισαμένη—contending before the days of grace?' And, lastly, we find him using a phrase that seems to me a probable allusion to Fourth Maccabees xvii. 7, where the author suggests the art of painting as well fitted to commemorate the martyrdoms. 'You should all,' says Chrysostom to his hearers, 'engrave their contests and their struggles on your hearts as it were on a tablet, τοὺς ἀγῶνας καὶ τὰ παλαίσματα ὥσπερ ἐπὶ πίνακός τινος τῆς καρδίας ὑμῶν ἀπογράψαντες. This may primarily refer to St. Paul's 'not on tables of stone but on fleshly tables of the heart', but it also seems distinctly to point to the conjectural reading ὥσπερ ἐπὶ πίνακός τινος in the passage in Maccabees. In this connexion we have to consider that the early Church by no means favoured the representation of the agonies of martyrdom by the graphic arts. On the contrary, the Church then desired to see the martyrs depicted only as blessed and glorified. The physical details of their cruel sufferings were not a popular subject until the Dark Ages, and it is quite possible that Chrysostom may be deprecating here the outward representation of such sufferings when he tells his hearers to engrave them on their hearts.

There is yet another speech of his, lauding the Maccabean martyrs, in which he selects the last and youngest of the sons for his special panegyric. Here, too, he introduces quaint touches of his own, as that the tyrant was looking at the braziers, but the youth was looking at the hell into which the tyrant was going to cast himself. Also that the youth leapt into the braziers 'as they had been fountains of cool waters, reckoning them a divine font and baptism'. Then the preacher once more lauds the Mother, recounting her many sorrows, and borrowing from Fourth Maccabees the comparison of her to the Three Children in the burning fiery furnace, which he embellishes thus: 'The fuel of their furnace was naphtha and pitch, tow and brushwood; the fuel of hers was nature and birth-pangs and maternal love and the sweet voice of her children.' The words φύσις καὶ ὀδίνες καὶ φιλοστοργία καὶ παίδων συμφωνία seem to flow from his mouth as fresh as if he had just prepared himself by reading over the story. He borrows direct the simile of the brave Eleazar, like a beetling sea-cliff standing fast against the tempest of the passions, and applies it to the Mother, who, like a sea-cliff taking the assaults of the waves, remains unmoved while they spend themselves in spume. And lastly, 'She saw in the flames not a form of torment but a nuptial torch, γαμήλιον λαμπάδα,' a fancy which he shares with Gregory.

There is yet a third discourse on the subject by Chrysostom, but space forbids me to enlarge further. The orations are all well worth looking at. They may be found in T. B. Prunaeus's *Gregory Nazianzen*, Paris, 1609, page 397, and in Fronto Ducaeus's *John Chrysostom*, Paris, 1609, pages 581 and 622 ff., as well as in later editions.

To come down to more modern times, I can find nothing so interesting as the book of Erasmus on the Maccabean martyrs. He felt a personal interest in the matter, for in the early sixteenth century which saw the beginnings of the Reformation a man who had the courage of his opinions had also a right good chance of martyrdom. It was in 1517 that Luther nailed his denunciation of Indulgences to the doors of the church at Wittenberg, and in that same year Erasmus seems to have compiled his little work for the benefit of his friend Elias Marcaeus, 'moderator of the most honourable college of the Maccabeans' at Cologne. Martyrdom was a thing of which the great leader of the humanists had a very real dread. 'We have not all strength for martyrdom, and I fear if trouble comes I shall do like Peter,' he wrote in 1521, and he had reason to quake when his works were actually submitted to the Spanish Inquisition six years later. Martyrdoms have a cruel interest for a man who dreads the torture, and it is no wonder that he made a book for his friends at Cologne



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out of all that antiquity had said about their martyr-saints. The earliest edition of his work that I can hear of was printed by E. Cervicornus at Cologne, Feb. 1, 1524, fol., with the title—'Opera Iosephi interprete Ruffino presbytero. De insigni machabaeorum martyrio, castigatus ab Erasmo: nunquam ante praedictis additus,' &c., &c. The book was several times reprinted in the sixteenth century, e.g. at Basle, 1524, 1534, and 1540, and the Bodleian has a copy of another edition from the Cologne press, which is undated but was probably printed in 1534 or later, and has the title really preferred by Erasmus, 'περὶ αὐτοκράτορος λογισμοῦ, de imperatrice ratione.' In his prefatory letter Erasmus says that he has worked from a Latin text, not having a Greek MS. at hand (the Greek text appears not to have been printed till 1526); and that, conjecturing the Greek original from the Latin, he has changed some things, but not very much. He shows his literary art in the way in which he compliments both the college and the city of Cologne, alluding elegantly to the eleven thousand virgins martyred there, and so proceeds to his translation. After the translation he gives selections from antiquity, including the following from Jerome: 'The seven Maccabean brothers were born of one mother, by name Maccabea; they kept the Law of their own tradition; they did not eat the flesh of swine. For this cause they by the most cruel king Antiochus were crowned with the glory of martyrdom, in Antioch, together with their pious mother, and there they remain buried with great veneration.'

'So far St. Jerome,' says Erasmus; 'but', he continues, 'it is certain that the relics of these Maccabean brothers were by the blessed Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine, brought to Byzantium, and thence by the president Eustorgius to Mediolanum (Milan), and lastly by the act of Reginold bishop of Cologne transferred from Mediolanum to Cologne in the year 1164, where now they are held in great veneration in the college of the glorious name of the Maccabeans themselves.' Their removal to Cologne in 1164 was celebrated by a special feast, 'which', observes Erasmus, 'is now marked off by our very reverend father and lord in Christ, Hermann de Hassia, archbishop of Cologne, in the year 1506, as having been transferred to the feast of St. Cuthbert, archbishop and confessor.' However, to return to his translation of Fourth Maccabees, or rather to his paraphrase, for such it is. He completely rewrites the argument about Reason and the passions, nor do I find any allusion to the Stoic classification of the passions, though he agrees with the author of Fourth Maccabees that Reason does not extirpate passion but checks it, and he quotes the cases there cited of Joseph, Moses, Jacob, and David. In David's case he has a curious variant. David would not quench his thirst with the water which ran by his tent because he had sworn not to drink till the enemy's camp was taken, thinking thus to stimulate the valour of his troops. When we come to the Hellenizing campaign of Antiochus and the tyrant's persecutions, Erasmus follows his author more closely, but I note various changes. Jason builds baths, not a gymnasium, near the temple. The women who circumcise their sons fling themselves off the rocks voluntarily, 'quippe quae vitantes longiora tormenta celerem halitum ingestae mortis optarent.' When Antiochus counsels Eleazar to eat the swine's flesh, he says, 'It is a mark of superstition and cowardice to make a law for oneself and call one's choice Reason'; and Eleazar replies, 'Our law condemns your philosophy, wherein the less a man understands the more he thinks he understands.' Erasmus was thinking of some theologians more distinguished for bigotry than learning when he wrote these words. Nor is he at any pains to keep a Jewish atmosphere: on the contrary, he puts into the mouth of Eleazar, when he is asking God to accept him as an atonement, such a characteristically Christian phrase as 'Receive me for them all, and give them all to me'.

The martyrdom of Eleazar appears to take place in Jerusalem, but the seven brethren and the Mother are brought to Antioch, 'atrociter de eorum castello Sufandro.' The Mother is called Solomona. The eldest son is Maccabeus, the others are Aber, Machir, Judas, Ahas, Areth, Jacob. Erasmus describes their tortures at length, and the curious may compare his long Latin list of devilish engines with the Greek. When he comes to xii. 7 he transfers thither the speech of the Mother which the author had reserved for a later place, and in the same connexion he largely expands both the tortures and the speeches of the seventh son. Finally he describes the Mother as herself being stripped, scourged, and grievously tormented by Antiochus, until at last she is brought to the brazier, 'ac oratione protensis surrectisque manibus pro gravidis matribus fusa coelibem effudit spiritum'. There he introduces a very mediaeval touch, as also when he shows Antiochus terror-stricken at the very moment of her death by a flash of lightning. Again, later on, he makes the tyrant become so impressed by the martyrs' courage that he enlists whole legions of Hebrew soldiers in his service and wins battles with them. Yet death is not to be staved off; for he shows the king at last dying miserably of a disgusting disease, as told in the Second but not in the Fourth Book of Maccabees.

It will be seen that Erasmus gave himself a perfectly free hand. A century and a half later Combeffin fell upon him with severity for it. The French scholar calls him such unkind names as



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'ineptus Paraphrastes (veriusque temerator) Erasmus'. He says that Erasmus put the kingdom of heaven for τὰ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἄλλα, and eternal fire for eternal death,—'est hoc παραχαράττειν non παραφράζειν,' 'this is to adulterate a monument of antiquity. If a monk had taken such liberties with the work of Josephus and the words of the Maccabees, how the man would have laughed at him.' Then he ridicules Erasmus for giving to the martyrs names drawn either from some apocryphal writings or invented out of his own head. And again Combefin calls an expression of the Paraphrastes 'inanis mihi verborum pompa et phalerae', and casts scorn upon him for expending so many rhetorical exaggerations over the tortured Mother, to which the critic would prefer the simplicity of the Greek account. I do not know if it was *odium theologicum* or *odium scholasticum* which prompted this assault, but if Erasmus could have awaked from his long century's sleep we might have had a literary quarrel, the echoes of which would be ringing yet in our ears. The French scholar would have had a backer on this side of the Channel in Dr. Wm. Cave of Oxford, who wrote that he would like to know why Erasmus put a quantity of stuff into his work of which there is no trace in the Greek. 'Others may solve the question,' says Cave, 'Quin id pro ingenii sui pruritu fecerit Erasmus dubitari nequit.'

But if one could picture such a ghostly battle of the books as taking place, I am not sure that Erasmus might not find on his side the shade of another Oxford scholar, John Lloyd, who translated Fourth Maccabees just two years after the defeat of the Great Armada, and decidedly did not love Rome. He does indeed criticize Erasmus's work, though he avoids, intentionally it may be, the mention of his name, but he keeps the vials of his wrath for certain Roman theologians, who endeavoured to make out that Fourth Maccabees was to be received as canonical, on evidence which they claimed to be that of Josephus, and cited Gregory in support of their thesis. Whom our Lloyd laughs to scorn, winding up with 'O dignos Romana meretrice mangones!'

Tantaene animis scholasticis irae?

Lloyd's text, based on the Strassburg edition of 1526, like those of Hudson and all the other printed texts I have seen (except Swete's), has the reading ὡς περ ἐπὶ τινος πίνακος in xvii. 7 where the MSS. give ὡς περ τινός or ὡς ἐπὶ τινός, and this conjectural emendation of πίνακος is reproduced in the Latin of Erasmus and others. The conjecture, though unsupported, is natural enough, as the author of Fourth Maccabees undoubtedly is referring here to a picture. Erasmus, however, tacks on to it quite a new idea, and turns this suggested figure of the martyred Mother from an ideal work of art into a sort of charm or amulet: 'if a sculptor were to put this piteous figure on a tomb or set it up on a house, he would be free from every dreadful plague and would surely enjoy eternal bliss.' The idea of the picture appears to have commended itself to the printer of a later edition of the book, for the Bodleian copy has fourteen rude woodcuts of the martyrdoms where no dreadful detail is spared. In their crude horror they remind one of the grim ghastliness of the Macabre pictures, so popular in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, whose very name shows how the word Maccabean ultimately came to indicate death in its most detested forms. And this survives to-day in the argot of Paris, where the body of a murdered victim is still mockingly termed a 'macabé'.

### § 9. THEOLOGY.

When Paul was brought before the Jewish Council at Jerusalem, in order to divide his opponents he exclaimed: 'I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.' And we read that the two parties in the Council proceeded to fall out on the instant, 'for the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both.' This account exhibits very clearly the strongly contrasted beliefs of the two great parties among the Jews, as they existed (or were believed to exist) in Palestine about the middle of the first century A. D. In Alexandria, however, there was a third form of belief, approaching that of the Pharisees indeed, but with a difference; and this third form is the standpoint of the author of Fourth Maccabees. Briefly stated it is this. At death men meet with the reward or punishment due for their deeds. The righteous are received into bliss (see x. 15; xiii. 17; xvii. 4, 18; xviii. 23). The wicked are punished with eternal torture (see ix. 8, 32; x. 11, 15; xii. 19; xiii. 15; xviii. 5, 22. Apparently there is no resurrection of the body. Also, like the Pharisees, the author believes in angels (see iv. 10, and perhaps vii. 11), and in devils (see xviii. 8). For Jewish views of immortality see Oesterley and Box, *Synagogue Religion and Worship*, p. 224, and R. H. Charles, *Eschatology, Hebrew, &c., passim*. How the Alexandrian school came to adopt the doctrine of the immortality of the soul but not of the resurrection of the body is too large a subject to enter upon here, but it is usually attributed to their having come under the influence of the philosophy of Plato and the neo-Pythagoreans. That the author was saturated with Greek philosophy is proved by his systematic adoption of its terminology, including the fourfold classi-



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fication of the cardinal virtues which the Stoics copied from Plato. In his general thesis on the Supremacy of Reason, he follows exactly the Platonic classification of φρόνησις, judgement or self-control, ἀνδρεία, courage, δικαιοσύνη, justice, and σωφροσύνη, temperance. But when he comes to tell of the martyr facing the tortures he adds something new. 'You scoff at our philosophy,' says Eleazar to the king, 'but the Law teaches us temperance, and courage, and justice,'—so far the author goes with Plato; then comes the new word—'and εὐσέβεια, righteousness, so that with due reverence we worship only the God who is.' This is the key-note of his whole book. The Stoic ideal is right, and the Stoic path to it may be well enough, but the driving force is to be sought elsewhere, namely in the Law of Moses. It is the same thought that he puts into the mouth of the first to suffer of the seven Brethren. 'Through all the torments I will show you . . . that the Sons of the Hebrews alone are unconquerable,' the secret of the youth's courage being that he has been trained in the Law of Moses. Similarly Philo, who accepted the Platonic idea of the soul as a divine emanation, chose the Stoic ethics for the groundwork of his system, and made Greek philosophy 'a means of defending and justifying Jewish religious truths. These he regarded as fixed and determinate, and philosophy was merely an aid to truth and a means of arriving at it' (*Jewish Encyclopaedia*, art. Philo). No better description could be given of the position of the author of Fourth Maccabees. But the position was one that the Pharisaic party, which was ultimately successful, could never bring themselves to accept, and the school of Philo and of our author, after exerting considerable authority for a time, died away in the end.

Of direct Christian influence on the book there is naturally no trace, but I. Abrahams, writing in the *Jewish Encyclopaedia*, thinks that as it stands there may possibly be some Christian interpolation in such passages as vii. 14, xiii. 17, and xvi. 25, which declare that the patriarchs are not dead, but live unto God. In the second of these, where we read, 'Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob shall receive us,' Swete's text omits the phrase εἰς τοὺς κόλπους αὐτῶν, which is not in the uncials and appears only in MSS. of secondary importance; these particular words may perhaps be a later insertion made by some one familiar with the New Testament who wished to allude to Luke xvi. 23, but it is difficult to see why the general statement that the Jewish patriarchs live with God should be due to a Christian hand. Christian phraseology, however, does certainly find a remarkable echo, or rather anticipation, in the prayer of Eleazar, vi. 28, 'Be merciful unto thy people, and let our punishment be a satisfaction in their behalf. Make my blood their purification, and take my soul to ransom their souls.' This idea is repeated in xvii. 21, 22, where the author says that the martyrs 'became a ransom for our nation's sin; and through the blood of these righteous men and the propitiation of their death, the divine providence delivered Israel that before was evil entreated'. The phrases fall with a familiar sound on our ears, but nevertheless the idea of an atonement is not more distinctively Christian than it is Jewish. The whole Jewish system of sacrifices was based on the idea of the death of an animal being substituted for that of a man as an atonement for sin. Under the ancient law the scape-goat upon whom the lot for the Lord fell, in the service for the Day of Atonement, was sacrificed, and his blood was taken within the Holy Place, while the one for Azazel was turned out in the wilderness. The substitution of the goat for the people in the greatest ceremony of the year was thoroughly typical of the sacrificial principle. In later times the idea of the propitiatory sacrifice was extended from earth to heaven. In the Testament of Levi (*circa* 107 B.C.) we have 'In [the sixth heaven] are the archangels, who minister and make propitiation to the Lord for all the sins of the righteous; offering to the Lord a sweet-smelling savour, a reasonable and a bloodless offering'. Charles's note on this (*Test. Twelve Patr. Levi*, iii. 5) gives the explanation that since the earthly altar and tabernacle of Exodus and Numbers were made after heavenly patterns the idea of a sacrificial service in heaven must long have been familiar to Jews. Michael 'the merciful and longsuffering' is one of these archangels who pray and offer sacrifice for Israel. So we see that there is nothing specifically Christian in the suggestion of the sufferings of the righteous making atonement for the people.

To go back to ancient times, the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter (though not an atonement) is by no means the only instance in the history of Judaism showing that the idea that a human being might be accepted as a sacrifice was quite conceivable. Did not Moses thus offer himself (Exod. xxxii. 32) when he found the people worshipping the golden calf, and prayed to the Lord, 'Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book'? David also, when Israel was smitten because of his having numbered the people, cried to the Lord, 'It is I that have sinned and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O Lord God, be upon me and on my father's house; but not on thy people that they should be plagued' (see 2 Sam. xxiv. 17). Indeed the whole Jewish theory of national religion was based on redemption by substitution. The first-born son of every family was due to Yahveh and had to be redeemed, just as every first-born of any unclean animal, such as an ass, had to be



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redeemed by the substitution of a calf or a lamb. The author recurs again as he approaches his peroration to this thought of the martyrs' deaths being an atonement, in xvii. 21-22, where he says, 'they having as it were become a ransom for our nation's sin (apostasy); and through the blood of these righteous men and the propitiation of their death, the divine providence delivered Israel that before was evil entreated.' As for the pagan world, we find the idea everywhere: to take a single instance, I may quote the self-sacrifice of Curtius's leap into the chasm to appease the gods of Rome. In the New Testament, of course, we have numerous parallels; to take one only, we read in Hebrews ix. 28, 'So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.'

It is not only in the idea of atonement that we find thoughts familiar to Christians suggested in Fourth Maccabees. The word 'faith' also occurs, in a distinctively religious sense. For example, in xvi. 22 the Mother, after having spoken of Abraham and Isaac and Daniel and the Three Children, says to her sons, 'And ye also, having the same faith unto God, be not troubled.' Here πίστις must mean religious faith, and in the very next verse the Mother speaks of the young men as 'knowing religion'. In xv. 24 the author speaks of the Mother's own faith: 'she willingly surrendered them through faith in God'; and again in xvii. 2 he describes her as giving 'an example of the nobleness of faith'. In this religious sense πίστις belongs not to Stoic, nor even to Greek thought, but to that devotional side of the Hebrew mind which was to be more fully expressed in Christianity. Here, however, as Maldwyn Hughes says (*Ethics of Jewish Apocr. Lit.* p. 112), 'It is rather trust in an external Providence than an inner dependence arising from an inward relationship. Faith is not a renewing and life-giving power, but confidence in the providential order.'

On the ethical question the author of Fourth Maccabees relies absolutely on the Mosaic Law. The Inspired Reason, i.e. the Reason guided by the Law, is autocratic over the passions, while depending on the Law for knowledge as to what to do and what to avoid. The author does not want the passions extirpated; he upholds the Stoic virtues, though not the Stoic ἀπαθεία; but he wants the passions to be brought under rigid control, and he shows how this has been and can be done by many examples from the Old Testament, giving as instances Joseph, David, and the rest. He does accept the Stoic doctrine about sin, that all sins are alike in being breaches of the law, when he makes Eleazar say (v. 20), 'for the transgression of the Law, be it in small things or in great, is equally heinous; for in either case equally the Law is despised.' He never doubts that the Law is supreme (v. 16): 'We, O Antiochus, having accepted the Divine Law as the Law of our country, do not believe that any stronger necessity is laid upon us than that of our obedience to the Law.' He is a Jew to the core, and his conclusion is peremptory; for him the Law is the last word.

I will close this section with another quotation from Maldwyn Hughes (*op. cit.*, p. 111): 'The great purpose of the book is to stimulate faithfulness to the Law, and to show that the Greek ideal of virtue can be realized only by Judaism. The writer's heroes are not the Maccabean patriots, to whom he makes no reference, but the martyrs of Maccabean times. His silence as to the former is a significant hint that he did not sympathize with the political ideals which expressed themselves in active resistance to the Gentile powers, but that he preferred the Quietistic method of vindicating the Law, by absolute and unswerving faithfulness to it, at whatever pain and cost. The emergence of political ideals had resulted in the secularization of Judaism.'

### § 10. BIBLIOGRAPHY.

So far as I can learn the text of Fourth Maccabees was first printed in 1526 in the Greek Bible published at Strassburg by Vuolphius (Wolfgang) Cephalaeus, of which there is a good copy in the Bodleian Library. In this edition it appears as Ἰωσήπου εἰς τοὺς Μακκαβαίους βιβλίον. Professor Torrey, whose bibliographical account of the book in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* is the fullest I have seen and to whom I am indebted for some of the following information, quotes Freudenthal's statement that this text was based on a very poor MS. Once it was in type, however, it found general acceptance and was frequently reprinted in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, not only in Greek Bibles but also in various editions of Josephus; of the latter we may name the Basle text of 1544, and that of John Lloyd (Luidus), Oxford, 1590. Lloyd says that he collated the Strassburg text with an ancient MS. at New College. This text was also used for the Greek Bible printed at Frankfort in 1597, with the same title of the Book of Josippus on the Maccabees, and it was likewise used by Hudson, Oxford, 1720, and by others who followed him, e.g. Dindorf, 1845-7, and Bekker, 1856, the latter work being a decided advance on its precursors. In 1709, however, a different text, based on the Codex Alexandrinus in the British Museum and edited by J. E. Grabe, was printed at Oxford, and after his death it was printed there again in 1719. It was also used by Apel, *Apocr. V. T.*, 1837. Still later another text, based on Codex A, was edited by F. Field, Oxford, 1859, in beautiful type. Dr. Field, who was of Trinity College, Cambridge, a Tyrrhitt's Hebrew scholar, and one of the O.T. Revisers, pillories the anonymous editor of a certain text which appeared at Oxford in 1817. The culprit had thought to get a neat transcript of the original MS. by rejecting every small-type reading in Grabe and putting back the marginal one. Whereby he not only restored many obvious errors in the Codex, but also repeated, in his ignorance, whatever misprints occurred in Grabe's text; these numbered six in the first chapter alone, 'cetera per totum libellum innumera!' says Dr. Field with crushing severity. Since then the book has appeared in Bagster's *Apocrypha, Greek and English*, 1882, and in



## INTRODUCTION

Fritzsche's *Libri Apocr. V. T.*, in which the commentary is excellent but the text differs considerably from that in Swete's *LXX*, Cambridge, 1894-9, which gives Codex A with variants of N and V. The present translation is made from Swete's text, the cases where different readings are used being noted at the foot of the page. There is a florid paraphrase in English by that prolific seventeenth-century writer Sir Roger L'Estrange, and there are modern English translations in Cotton, *Five Books of the Maccabees*, 1832, in Bagster's *Apocrypha* already mentioned, and in Churton's *Uncanonical and Apocryphal Scriptures*, 1884. The ancient Syriac version of which I have spoken was published in 1895 by the Cambridge Press from the text of R. L. Bensly; and there is a modern Hebrew translation in Fraenkel, *Kethubim acharonim, sive Hagiographa posteriora*, Leipzig, 1830. Of Latin translations there are several. Erasmus made a very free paraphrase, as already described in § 8, in the early sixteenth century, which was reprinted by Peter de la Roviére at Geneva in 1611 with the Greek text. The Bodleian Library has two copies of this edition, in one of which there is a marginal collation of the New College MS. of Fourth Maccabees. This copy is catalogued *C. 9. 5. Art.*, and has opposite the title a marginal note written 'Ἰωσήφου περὶ σώφρονος λογισμοῦ. MS. in Collegio Novo', while the printed title has 'a Des. Erasmo Rot. in sermonem Latinum παραφραστικῶς translatus'. Lloyd in 1590 brought out at Oxford an edition of the Greek text (in wretched print alas!) collated with the New College MS. and accompanied by a Latin version that seems to be well done; this last may be said also of the Latin version by Fr. Combefin, Paris, 1672, whose work is praised by W. Cave in his *Scriptores Eccl.*, Oxford, 1688-1740, where he attacks Erasmus so severely. The best German translation is that of Deissmann in Kautzsch's *Apocr. u. Pseudepigr.*, Leipzig, 1899, and there are good German commentaries by Grimm, *Handbuch zu den Apocryphen*, 1857, by Freudenthal, *Die Fl. Josephus beigelegte Schrift über die Herrschaft der Vernunft*, 1869, by Fritzsche in *Libri apocr. V. T.*, 1871, and by Deissmann (in Kautzsch) as mentioned above. The two last named have been those chiefly used in preparing the present translation. Other German works that may be consulted, according to Professor Torrey, are Zöckler's *Apocryphen*, 396-402; Gfrörer, *Philo und die alexandrinische Theosophie*, 2. 172-200 (1831); Dähne, *Die jüdisch-alexandrinische Religionsphilosophie*, 2. 190-9 (1834); Ewald, *GVI* (3), 4, 632 ff.; Grätz, *MGWJ* (1877), pp. 454 ff.; Zeller, *Die Philosophie der Griechen* (3), 3. 2 (1881), pp. 275-7. Also in English translations we have Schürer's *Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, iii. 244 ff., and Ewald's *History of Israel*, 5. 484 ff. For the ethical and theological side of the book I know nothing so good as Maldwyn Hughes, *Ethics of Jewish Apocr. Lit.* (date not given). Last but not least I would name Edwyn Bevan's *House of Seleucus*, 1902, as giving the best account of Antiochus Epiphanes and his attempts forcibly to Hellenize the Jews, and the reader may wisely consult his *Jerusalem under the High Priests*.

Appended is a comparison of the historical statements of 2 and 4 Macc. abridged from Bensly.

2 MACC. iii. 1-vii. 41.	4 MACC. iii. 20-xvii. 1.
1. Deep peace. iii. 1.	1. Do. iii. 20.
2. Seleucus, king of Asia, acts as patron of the Temple. iii. 3.	2. Do. iii. 20.
3. Simon at variance with Onias. iii. 4.	3. Do. iv. 1.
4. Tells Apollonius of the Temple treasures. iii. 6.	4. Do. iv. 3.
5. <i>Heliodorus</i> enters the Temple. iii. 14.	5. <i>Apollonius</i> , do. iv. 8.
6. Under the new king Antiochus, Jason buys the priesthood. iv. 7.	6. Do. iv. 17.
7. Jason builds a gymnasium. iv. 12.	7. Do. iv. 20.
8. Menelaus outbids Jason. iv. 24.	8. Not mentioned.
9. On report of Antiochus's death in Egypt Jason surprises Jerusalem. v. 5.	9. On report of Antiochus's death in Egypt the Jews rejoice. iv. 22.
10. Antiochus storms Jerusalem and massacres. v. 11.	10. Antiochus returns and lays the Jews waste. iv. 23.
11. King sends an Athenian to change the Jewish customs. vi. 1.	11. King decrees death to those who follow their fathers' religion. iv. 23.
12. Philip the Phrygian persecutes in Jerusalem. v. 22.	12. Antiochus himself orders the Hebrews to be brought before him. v. 2.
13. Eleazar, a scribe of ninety, is beaten to death. vi. 23-31.	13. Eleazar, priest and lawyer, an old man, is beaten and tortured to death with hot irons after a speech addressed to <i>Antiochus</i> . v. 16-vi. 30.
14-19. The brothers are variously tortured. vii.	14-19. Do. do. (different order). viii to xiv.
20. <i>Antiochus</i> touched with compassion for Brother VII promises him riches and friendship in exchange for obedience. vii. 24.	20. Do. xii. 2-6.
21. The Mother implores Brother VII to have compassion on her pains and care as a mother and to resist. vii. 27-29.	21. The Mother advises VII in Hebrew in words <i>not given at once</i> . xii. 7.
22. The Mother died last. vii. 41.	22. The Mother, certain guards say, flung herself into the frying-pan. xvii. 1.



## THE FOURTH BOOK OF MACCABEES

1. Philosophical in the highest degree is the question I propose to discuss, namely whether the Inspired Reason is supreme ruler over the passions; and to the philosophy of it I would seriously

1. 1. **Inspired Reason.** Philosophy is the power-house of the soul. It covers the motive-power by which our higher nature rules or tries to rule our worse self. Man's first want is meat and drink, and how to supply the want his first problem. The physical side of the problem solves itself; he either finds food, or he starves. But there is also a spiritual side to the problem, and to it Philosophy contains the answer—or answers. Will a man starve rather than sin, sin by stealing food from his brother man, or even by killing and eating him? The hungry wolf solves it one way; he will verily eat his brother wolf. But man, as soon as he rises above the wolf level, and developing a conscience becomes man, finds himself faced with this most serious problem. It may seem remote to us now living in comfort and protected by the police; but it is still quite close up with every exploring expedition, polar or tropical, that takes its chances in the unknown. Will the individual man, when tempted, yield to temptation or resist it? From the time of the flint-weaponed hunters down to the present day the question has been answered—both in the way of the man with a conscience, the higher man, and the way of the man with the heart of a wolf, the lower man. But what is the power that enables the higher type to abstain not only from cannibalism but also, as life grows more complex, from all kinds of wrong? The answer to that question is duty, the one short word that has a hundred names in a hundred lands. Where a man feels the call of duty and can also trust that his fellows feel it, religion, the essence of religion at any rate, the binding of soul to soul, exists, and there in truth is the beginning of human society. Where the call of duty is not felt, life becomes inhuman; we revert to the conditions of the wolf-pack. Fourth Maccabees is the attempt of an orthodox Jew, one well skilled in Greek philosophy, to show how men may rise above the wolf-pack level and be true to their duty even under the last extremity of torture. For even though a man may recognize his duty, yet through weakness of will he may fail to respond. The driving power, that which out of weakness makes him strong to respond, is the mainspring of the higher life, and that is why philosophy, which covers all man's attempts to find and to explain the source of the driving power, may be called the power-house of the soul.

The name which the author of the book here takes to express the working action of duty in the human mind is *λογισμός*. In its ordinary acceptance *λογισμός* was the word used for common arithmetic, but here it stands for the human reason, or rather the rational will, which according to Epicurus disposes of all the greatest and most important matters of life (Diog. Laert. 10. 44), and here may be suitably expressed as the personified Reason with a capital R. It was a conveniently definite term for the author of Fourth Maccabees to adopt, seeing that *λόγος* both in Greek and in Jewish philosophy had been already consecrated to a different use. *Λόγος* was the Word. According to Lactantius (*de Vera. Sap.* c. 9) 'Zeno rerum naturae dispositorem atque artificem universitatis λόγον praedicat, quem et fatum et necessitatem rerum et deum et animum Iovis nuncupat'. So in Ps. xxxiii. 6 we have 'By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made'. In hundreds of passages Jew and Greek alike declare the power of the Word, the *λόγος*, the 'memra'. To come down from the Psalmist and Zeno to the first century A.D., in Alexandria, the probable date and place of origin of Fourth Maccabees, we find the Jewish philosopher Philo actually taking over from the Stoics the doctrine that the *λόγος* is the power of God or the active Divine intelligence in general. With such powerful associations clinging to *λόγος* it was natural for the author to choose *λογισμός* for Reason, and the more so that the Stoics had already used it in that sense. There is extant an interesting little dialogue of Cleanthes, given by Pearson, *Fragm. Zeno and Cleanthes*, p. 306, in which the two speakers are *Λογισμός* and *Θυμός*.

*Λογισμός.* τί ποτ' ἐσθ' ὅτι βούλει, θυμέ; τοῦτό μοι φράσον.

*Θυμός.* ἔχειν, λογισμέ, πᾶν ὃ βούλομαι ποιεῖν.

*Λογισμός.* καὶ βασιλικόν γε; πλὴν ὅμως εἶπεν πάλιν.

*Θυμός.* ὅν ἢν ἐπιθυμῶ ταῦθ' ὅπως γενήσεται.

*Reason.* What on earth do you want, my good animal? Tell me that.

*Animal Nature.* I want, O Reason, to be able to do everything I want.

*Reason.* A royal appetite indeed; but would you say that again.

*Animal Nature.* I want whatever I desire to come to pass.

The contrast between our higher and our lower self could hardly be better put.

It has happened to some young men entering the study of philosophy to feel a sudden qualm lest they were being made fools of by a set of bookworms calling themselves philosophers, weaklings constitutionally unable to enter into the feelings of a healthy natural man. Such may take comfort in the recollection that the writer of this little dialogue, Cleanthes, who after Zeno was the great prophet of the Stoics, in his unconverted days had been a pugilist, and that no man ever stood up in the ring but had a working knowledge of our animal nature and the need of keeping one's head in spite of its promptings. But though the Stoic ex-pugilist well knew the need for the *λογισμός* to dominate the *θυμός* we must remember that the *λογισμός* of Fourth Maccabees is not precisely the same thing as the Reason of Greek philosophy, Epicurean or Stoic. For the *λογισμός* of the Jewish writer is qualified by the adjective *εὐσεβής*, a word which in the mouth of a Hellenistic Jew signifies a strict adherence to the Law of Moses, that is to say the Law of God. *εὐσεβής*, in short, was the technical word used in the Diaspora to describe the Chasidim, the 'pious' or 'godly' party among the Jews, rigorous precisians whose pride it was to follow the Law in all things. With us 'orthodox' has something of the same implication, though it applies in our own days to faith rather than to works. The 'Saints' of Cromwell 'doing the work of the Lord faithfully' perhaps come nearer the idea; and indeed their inspiration was largely drawn from the Old Testament. Thus the word *εὐσεβής* means directly inspired by God as He



2 entreat your earnest attention. For not only is the subject generally necessary as a branch of  
3 knowledge, but it includes the praise of the greatest of virtues, whereby I mean self-control. That  
4 is to say, if Reason is proved to control the passions adverse to temperance, gluttony and lust, it is  
also clearly shown to be lord over the passions, like malevolence, opposed to justice, and over those  
opposed to manliness, namely rage and pain and fear.

5 But, some may ask, if the Reason is master of the passions, why does it not control forgetfulness  
6 and ignorance? their object being to cast ridicule. The answer is that Reason is not master over  
defects inhering in the mind itself, but over the passions or moral defects that are adverse to justice  
and manliness and temperance and judgement; and its action in their case is not to extirpate the  
passions, but to enable us to resist them successfully.

7 I could bring before you many examples, drawn from various sources, where Reason has proved  
8 itself master over the passions, but the best instance by far that I can give is the noble conduct of  
9 those who died for the sake of virtue, Eleazar, and the Seven Brethren and the Mother. For these  
all by their contempt of pains, yea, even unto death, proved that Reason rises superior to the  
10 passions. I might enlarge here in praise of their virtues, they, the men with the Mother, dying on  
this day we celebrate for the love of moral beauty and goodness, but rather would I felicitate them  
11 on the honours they have attained. For the admiration felt for their courage and endurance, not  
only by the world at large but by their very executioners, made them the authors of the downfall  
of the tyranny under which our nation lay, they defeating the tyrant by their endurance, so that  
12 through them was their country purified. But I shall presently take opportunity to discuss this,  
after we have begun with the general theory, as I am in the habit of doing, and I will then proceed  
to their story, giving glory to the all-wise God.

13, 14 Our enquiry, then, is whether the Reason is supreme master over the passions. But we must  
define just what the Reason is and what passion is, and how many forms of passion there are, and  
15 whether the Reason is supreme over all of them. Reason I take to be the mind preferring with

is revealed to the soul of the 'righteous man' in the Book of Moses, and I therefore translate *εὐσεβὴς λογισμός* by 'The Inspired Reason', that is to say the Reason or Rational Will obeying the guidance of the Law. When so guided, the *λογισμός* becomes our higher self, and includes not only reason, but the moral sense and that noblest form of courage which consists in perfect self-sacrifice for the sake of our ideal. With regard to *εὐσεβής* I have only used 'Inspired' for it when thus connected with *λογισμός*. Elsewhere it is generally represented by 'righteous', which must be taken in the meaning it usually bears in the Old Testament of 'following the Law' in the Jewish sense. Similarly *εὐσεβείᾳ* is either 'righteousness' or 'religion', according to the context, with the same definitely limited connotation of orthodox Judaism.

2. the ... virtues. The author takes his classification of the four cardinal virtues from the Stoics, who got them from Plato. The four are *φρόνησις*, *δικαιοσύνη*, *ἀνδρεία*, *σωφροσύνη*, and the greatest of these is *φρόνησις*, a puzzling word to render adequately. Diogenes Laertius tells us that Apollophanes held *φρόνησις* to include the whole of virtue, and Plutarch says (*Sto. Rep.* vii. 2) that Zeno defined the cardinal virtues as follows: *φρόνησις*, he held, as a general term included the other three; in things demanding endurance or vigorous action, it was courage; in things demanding fairness, it was justice; in things demanding a choice, it was temperance. It is not easy to find English words that will correspond exactly to these terms, though courage and justice may pass, and so indeed may temperance, even if the idea it brings to our minds is somewhat limited by its modern use for abstinence from alcohol. But *φρόνησις*, which can sometimes be expressed by self-control, covers more than that. It is prudence, but that hardly expresses the active side of it enough; it is wisdom, but more in its practical than in its intellectual aspect; it is glorified common sense, but that, though expressive, hardly suggests a sufficiently lofty ideal. Judgement is nearer to it, judgement in the sense in which we have it in the collect where we ask to be given 'a right judgement in all things'. But the selected word for *φρόνησις* must be varied to suit the context.

3. the passions, *πάθη*. The word includes the emotions and affections as well as what we call the lower self. For the Stoic philosophers' division of the *πάθη* see i. 20.

5. ignorance. Zeno, according to Stobaeus, classed some vices as *ἄγνοιαί*, and there was a Stoic dogma, *πάντα ἄγνοεὶ ὁ φαῦλος*. The Stoics used the terms *σπουδαῖος* and *φαιδρος* to distinguish between two classes, the initiated and the uninitiated in philosophy; much as we might talk of saints and sinners, converted and unconverted, 'elect' and 'worldly'. I doubt, however, if the Stoic *ἄγνοιαί* were quite what is meant by *ἄγνοια* here. Deissmann thinks that this and the following verse have been bodily transposed here from ii. 24, iii. 1, where their connexion is clearer. But the mere fact that the sentences are repeated in almost the same words need hardly trouble us: the author of Fourth Maccabees does not mind repeating himself, as will be abundantly evident before the reader reaches the end of the book; and the author does get a sort of antithesis between the two passages. Here he shows us sceptics laughing at Stoicism (compare 'Coxcombs vanquish Berkeley by a grin'), but in iii. 1 it is he who laughs at the sceptics.

10. this day we celebrate, *τοῦτον τὸν καιρὸν*. Apparently the Chanukah festival, for which see § 7 *ad finem*. Even if this treatise is not a synagogue sermon (see § 1) it may very well have been given as a lecture on the anniversary of the martyrs. The words *ὅπερ εἶωθα ποιεῖν*, two verses lower down, clearly imply that the author is speaking to an audience that he had often addressed before.

11. their country purified. The spirit roused by the martyrs led to the rising headed by Judas Maccabaeus and his brethren, and so was the effectual cause of the Temple being purified and its service re-established. *καθαρισθῆναι* refers not only to the cleansing of the Jews from the national sin of apostasy, but to the cleansing of the Temple itself after Zeus Olympius had been worshipped there and swine offered upon the altar.

12. giving glory, *δόξαν διδοῦς*. Perhaps the one Hebraism in the whole book.



16 clear deliberation the life of wisdom. Wisdom I take to be the knowledge of things, divine and  
17 human, and of their causes. This I take to be the culture acquired under the Law, through which  
we learn with due reverence the things of God and for our worldly profit the things of man.

18 Now wisdom is manifested under the forms of judgement and justice, and courage, and temper-  
19 ance. But judgement or self-control is the one that dominates them all, for through it, in truth,  
20 Reason asserts its authority over the passions. But of the passions there are two comprehensive  
sources, namely, pleasure and pain, and either belongs essentially also to the soul as well as to the  
21 body. And with respect both to pleasure and pain there are many cases where the passions have  
22, 23 certain sequences. Thus while desire goes before pleasure, satisfaction follows after, and while fear  
24 goes before pain, after pain comes sorrow. Anger, again, if a man will retrace the course of his  
25 feelings, is a passion in which are blended both pleasure and pain. Under pleasure, also, comes  
26 that moral debasement which exhibits the widest variety of the passions. It manifests itself in  
27 the soul as ostentation, and covetousness, and vain-glory, and contentiousness, and backbiting,  
and in the body as eating of strange meat, and gluttony, and gormandizing in secret.  
28 Now pleasure and pain being as it were two trees, growing from body and soul, many offshoots of  
29 these passions sprout up; and each man's Reason as master-gardener, weeding and pruning and  
binding up, and turning on the water and directing it hither and thither, brings the thicket of  
30 dispositions and passions under domestication. For while Reason is the guide of the virtues it is  
master of the passions.

Observe, now, in the first place, that Reason becomes supreme over the passions in virtue of the  
31, 32 inhibitory action of temperance. Temperance, I take it, is the repression of the desires; but of the  
33 desires some are mental and some physical, and both kinds are clearly controlled by Reason; when  
we are tempted towards forbidden meats, how do we come to relinquish the pleasures to be derived  
from them? Is it not that Reason has power to repress the appetites? In my opinion it is so.  
34 Accordingly when we feel a desire to eat water-animals and birds and beasts and meats of every  
35 description forbidden to us under the Law, we abstain through the predominance of Reason. For  
the propensions of our appetites are checked and inhibited by the temperate mind, and all the  
movements of the body obey the bridle of Reason.

15. ὀρθὸν λόγον Ν V

σοφίας βιον Ν σοφον βιον V

35. φιμονται Ν V

15. **clear deliberation.** ὀρθὸς λόγος, which here I render by 'clear deliberation', is a regular philosophic term. Stobaeus (*Ecl.* ii. 192) gives as the Stoic dogma the statement that ὁ νόμος was σπουδαῖος, i. e. on the side of the 'elect', seeing that it is λόγος ὀρθός, 'right reason', enjoining what should be done and forbidding what should not be done; but here the Jew parts company. For him νόμος means neither the man-made law of any Greek state, nor the κοινὸς νόμος, the Universal Law of the philosophers; but the Law of Moses which is the Law of his God. The Jewish moralist may rejoice in the acute intellectual analysis of the Greek mind; but no Greek standard of religious duty for him! He will traffic willingly with the Greek for intellectual wares, but when it comes to the moral sense he will pray in another temple.

16. **the knowledge of things.** Plutarch in *Plac. Phil.* i. 1 has this, οἱ μὲν οὖν Στωικοὶ ἔφασαν τὴν μὲν σοφίαν εἶναι θεῶν τε καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων ἐπιστήμην, the exact phrase we have here with the exception of γνώσις for ἐπιστήμη.

20. **the passions.** With this analysis of the πάθη compare Stobaeus, *Eth.* ii. [166], where he explains the Stoic position:—πρῶτα δ' εἶναι τῷ γένει ταῦτα τὰ τέσσαρα, ἐπιθυμίαν φόβον λύπην ἡδονήν. ἐπιθυμίαν μὲν οὖν καὶ φόβον προηγέσθαι, τὴν μὲν πρὸς τὸ φαινόμενον ἀγαθόν, τὴν δὲ πρὸς τὸ φαινόμενον κακόν. ἐπιγίγνεσθαι δὲ τοῖς ἡδονῇ καὶ λύπῃ, ἡδονὴν μὲν ὅταν τυγχάνωμεν ὧν ἐπιθυμοῦμεν ἢ ἐκφύγομεν ἢ ἐφοβοῦμεθα, λύπην δὲ ὅταν ἀποτυγχάνωμεν ὧν ἐπιθυμοῦμεν ἢ περιέσωμεν οἷς ἐφοβοῦμεθα. Similarly Diogenes Laertius says (vii. 110) τῶν δὲ παθῶν τὰ ἀνωτάτω, καθά φησιν Ἐκάτων ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ περὶ παθῶν καὶ Ζήνων ἐν τῷ περὶ παθῶν, εἶναι γένη τέτταρα, λύπην, φόβον, ἐπιθυμίαν, ἡδονήν.

With regard to ἀκολουθίαι compare this passage from Huxley, which will be found in the peroration of his work on Hume and Berkeley, *Collected Essays*, vi. 318: 'Our sensations, our pleasures, our pains, and the relations of these, make up the sum total of the elements of positive unquestionable knowledge. We call a large section of these and their relations matter and motion; the rest we term mind and thinking; and experience shows that there is a certain constant order of succession between some of the former and some of the latter.' The words underlined exactly express ἀκολουθίαι. Our author makes the πάθη cover the whole range of the emotions and affections, and includes under this head our weaknesses and moral defects generally. Among us the word passion generally has a more limited connotation. Grimm says that the Stoic view was that the πάθη are bad in themselves and belong to the λόγος πονηρός, but that the author of Fourth Maccabees holds that the πάθη are part of human nature implanted by the Creator, and as such require to be controlled but not extirpated.

27. **gormandizing.** Compare with this Job xxxi. 17 εἰ δὲ καὶ τὸν ψωμόν μου ἔφαγον μόνος καὶ οὐχὶ ὄρφανῳ μετέδωκα. Aristophanes in the *Wasps*, 923, has the comic superlative μονοφαγίστατος—'the very greedydoggish chap of all.'

By the transposition of μ and ν the scribe in some MSS. has made the word into νομόφαγος, which should mean an eater of laws (swallower of formulae!) if it means anything—a nonsensical error which was corrected by Grabe only to be foolishly restored to the text of the 1817 edition by a certain careless man whom Dr. Field holds up to scorn.

29. **turning on the water.** ἐπάρδων is leading the water on from the *acequia madre* or main irrigating ditch; the work is well described in the *First Georgic*, 108 'Ecce supercilio clivosi tramitis undam Elicit', &c. μεταχέων is turning the water from one water-furrow to another so as to irrigate the separate squares or plots. I can find no authority for the meaning 'transplanting' which has been given to it, though it makes good enough sense.



2<sup>1</sup> And what is there to be surprised at if the natural desire of the soul to enjoy the fruition of beauty  
 2 is quenched? This, certainly, is why we praise the virtuous Joseph, because by his Reason, with a  
 3 mental effort, he checked the carnal impulse. For he, a young man at the age when physical desire  
 4 is strong, by his Reason quenched the impulse of his passions. And Reason is proved to subdue the  
 5 impulse not only of sexual desire, but of all sorts of covetings. For the Law says, 'Thou shalt not  
 6 covet thy neighbour's wife, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.' Verily, when the Law orders us  
 not to covet, it should, I think, confirm strongly the argument that the Reason is capable of  
 controlling covetous desires, even as it does the passions that militate against justice.

7 How else can a man, naturally gormandizing and greedy and drunken, be taught to change his  
 8 nature, if the Reason be not manifestly the master of the passions? Certainly, as soon as a man  
 orders his life according to the Law, if he is miserly he acts contrary to his nature, and lends money  
 9 to the needy without interest, and at the seventh-year periods cancels the debt. And if he is par-  
 simonious, he is overruled by the Law through the action of Reason, and refrains from gleaning his  
 stubbles or picking the last grapes from his vineyards.

And with regard to all the rest we can recognize that Reason is in the position of master over  
 10 the passions or affections. For the Law ranks above affection for parents, so that a man may not  
 11 for their sakes surrender his virtue, and it overrides love for a wife, so that if she transgress a man  
 12 should rebuke her, and it governs love for children, so that if they are naughty a man should punish  
 them, and it controls the claims of friendship, so that a man should reprove his friends if they do  
 13 evil. And do not think it a paradoxical thing when Reason through the Law is able to overcome  
 14 even hatred, so that a man refrains from cutting down the enemy's orchards, and protects the  
 property of the enemy from the spoilers, and gathers up their goods that have been scattered.

15 And the rule of Reason is likewise proved to extend through the more aggressive passions or  
 16 vices, ambition, vanity, ostentation, pride, and backbiting. For the temperate mind repels all these  
 17 debased passions, even as it does anger, for it conquers even this. Yea, Moses when he was angered  
 against Dathan and Abiram did not give free course to his wrath, but governed his anger by his  
 18 Reason. For the temperate mind is able, as I said, to win the victory over the passions, modifying  
 19 some, while crushing others absolutely. Why else did our wise father Jacob blame the houses of  
 Simeon and Levi for their unreasoning slaughter of the tribe of the Shechemites, saying, 'Ac-  
 20 cursed be their anger!' For had not Reason possessed the power to restrain their anger he would  
 21 not have spoken thus. For in the day when God created man, he implanted in him his passions  
 22 and inclinations, and also, at the very same time, set the mind on a throne amidst the senses to be  
 23 his sacred guide in all things; and to the mind he gave the Law, by the which if a man order himself,  
 he shall reign over a kingdom that is temperate, and just, and virtuous, and brave.

24 Well then, some one may ask, if Reason is master of the passions why is it not master of forget-  
 3<sup>1</sup> fulness and ignorance? But the argument is supremely ridiculous. For Reason is not shown to be  
 2 master over passions or defects in itself, but over those of the body. For example, none of you is  
 able to extirpate our natural desire, but the Reason can enable him to escape being made a slave by  
 3 desire. None of you is able to extirpate anger from the soul, but it is possible for the Reason to  
 4 come to his aid against anger. None of you can extirpate a malevolent disposition, but Reason can  
 5 be his powerful ally against being swayed by malevolence. Reason is not the extirpator of the  
 passions, but their antagonist.

II. 8. ἐνστάσεων Ν V

III. 3. + τον λογισμον Ν V

II. 8. at the seventh-year periods. The reading ἐντάσεων, which is that of A, and accordingly is retained by Swete, is supported by the Syriac version, which Bently renders as follows: 'So he reckoneth by the weeks and forgiveth part of that which is due to him.' But there is no MS. authority in the Greek for the insertion of the words 'part of', without which ἐντάσεων yields very poor sense. And even if we admit 'part of', how can reckoning by the weeks be supposed to reduce the debt? The Strassburg Bible of 1526 has the more intelligible reading ἐνστασῶν, which must mean the seventh-year period of release. This reading is followed by Lloyd (1590) and many others. Lloyd translated the passage thus: 'Cum primum igitur quis (? quisquis) ad Legis praescriptum vivit, si avaro fuerit ac sordido ingenio, suis vim adhibere moribus cogitur, ut tenuioribus sine foenore mutuet; atque imminentibus iam septimanis mutuum amittat.' And Lloyd is followed by Hudson (1720), who also reads ἐνστασῶν and translates 'ut imminentibus iam septimanis mutuum amittat'. The version of Deissmann, who likewise reads ἐνστασῶν, runs, 'He lends to the needy without interest, although (in the future) when the seventh year comes he even loses the capital he has lent.' This reading ἐνστασῶν is also supported by the fact that it does certainly correspond very closely with the Law as stated in Deut. xv. 9: Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought.'

22. his sacred guide. As an instance of the Stoic terminology of this book I give the following passage from A. C. Pearson's *Fragments of Zeno and Cleanthes*, p. 142, where he quotes from *Nemes. de Nat. Hom.*, p. 96 Ζήνων δὲ ὁ Στωικός ὀκταμερῆ φησιν εἶναι τὴν ψυχὴν, διαιρῶν αὐτὴν εἰς τέ τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν καὶ εἰς τὰς πέντε αἰσθήσεις καὶ εἰς τὸ φωνητικὸν καὶ τὸ σπερματικόν. And Diog. Laert. vii. 52 has this: αἰσθησεις δὲ λέγεται κατὰ τοὺς Στωικούς τό τ' ἀφ' ἡγεμονικοῦ πνεῦμα ἐπὶ τὰς αἰσθήσεις διήκον. . . . καὶ ἡ περὶ τὰ αἰσθητήρια κατασκευή.



6. 7 The case of the thirst of King David may serve at least to make this clearer. For when David had fought the live-long day against the Philistines, and by the help of our country's warriors had slain many of them, he came at eventide, all fordone with sweat and toil, to the royal tent, around which was encamped the whole army of our ancestors. So all the host fell to their evening meal; but the king, being consumed with an intense thirst, though he had abundance of water, was unable to slake it. Instead, an irrational desire for the water that was in the possession of the enemy with growing intensity burned him up and unmanned and consumed him. Then when his body-guard murmured against the craving of the king, two youths, mighty warriors, ashamed that their king should lack his desire, put on all their armour, and took a water-vessel, and scaled the enemy's ramparts; and stealing undetected past the guards at the gate, they searched through all the enemy's camp. And they bravely found the spring, and drew from it a draught for the king. But David, though still burning with the thirst, considered that such a draught, reckoned as equivalent to blood, was a grievous danger to his soul. Therefore, opposing his Reason to his desire, he poured out the water as an offering to God. For the temperate mind is able to conquer the dictates of the passions, and to quench the fires of desire, and to wrestle victoriously with the pangs of our bodies though they be exceeding strong, and by the moral beauty and goodness of Reason to defy with scorn all the domination of the passions. And now the occasion calls us to set forth the story of the self-controlled Reason.
- 20 At a time when our fathers enjoyed great peace through the due observance of the Law, and were in happy case, so that Seleucus Nicanor, the king of Asia, sanctioned the tax for the temple-service, and recognized our polity, precisely then, certain men, acting factiously against the general concord, involved us in many and various calamities. Onias, a man of the highest character, being then high priest and having the office for his life, a certain Simon raised a faction against him, but since despite every kind of slander he failed to injure him on account of the people, he fled abroad with intent to betray his country.
4. 1 So he came to Apollonius, the governor of Syria and Phoenicia and Cilicia, and said, 'Being loyal to the king, I am here to inform you that in the treasuries of Jerusalem are stored many thousands of private deposits, not belonging to the temple account, and rightfully the property of King Seleucus.'
- 4 Apollonius, having made inquiry into the details of the matter, praised Simon for his loyal service to the king, and hastening to the court of Seleucus, disclosed to him the valuable treasure; then, after receiving authority to deal with the matter, he promptly marched into our country, accompanied by the accursed Simon and a very powerful army, and announced that he was there by the king's command to take possession of the private deposits in the treasury. Our people were deeply angered by this announcement, and protested strongly, considering it an outrageous thing for those who had entrusted their deposits to the temple treasury to be robbed of them, and they threw all possible obstacles in his way. Apollonius, however, with threats, made his way into the temple. Then the priests in the temple and the women and children besought God to come to the rescue of his Holy Place that was being violated; and when Apollonius with his armed host marched in to seize the moneys, there appeared from heaven angels, riding upon horses, with lightning

14. *εγεμισαν* is supported by the Syriac

18. *τη καλοκαγαθία* N V

IV. 8. *απειλων* N

9. *του ιερου* N V

12. **two youths.** The author's story of David's thirst and the water that he poured out like blood upon the ground differs materially from that told in 2 Sam. xxiii. 16 ff. and 1 Chron. xi. 11. Here the feat is performed by two young soldiers who scour the whole Philistine camp (which lies in a place whose name is not given) in order to find the spring. In the O.T. the heroes are three chiefs of David's mighty men, apparently Jashobeam, Eleazar, and Shammah, though there is some uncertainty about the names. The action takes place at Bethlehem and the well is close to the gate, neither have they any special difficulty in finding it. The author does not use, perhaps he even avoids, the actual phraseology of the LXX, except only that in reference to David's action he employs the words *ἐπιθυμία* and *ἔσπεισεν*. Either his Bible differed materially from ours, or else he allowed himself considerable latitude in handling the incident. The latter seems probable, and this should be borne in mind when considering the various points on which he differs from the writer of 2 Maccabees.

20. **Seleucus Nicanor.** *τὸν Νικάνορα*. Perhaps we should here read with V *τὸν Νικάνορος*, 'the descendant of Nicanor', he being the one of Alexander's generals who founded the Seleucid dynasty. The king who is here meant was his sixth successor, Seleucus IV (Philopator), son of Antiochus III (the Great), and elder brother of his own successor Antiochus IV (Epiphanes). He reigned first as associated with his father and shared his defeat by Rome, and after 187 B.C. he reigned as sole king till he was murdered by Heliodorus in 176-5. Seleucus IV wasted little money in wars and left a full treasury. The words *χρήματα* κτλ. may mean that he assigned part of the state revenues to the Temple service, or that he sanctioned the exaction of the regular Temple tax, the annual half-shekel which the Jews, not in Palestine only but in all parts, were expected to pay to the priests. The authority for this tax was derived from Moses' Law, Exod. xxx. 12, 2 Chron. xxiv. 6. After the Captivity it was reduced to a third, in consequence of the rise in values and the poverty of the people; but it was raised again to half a shekel by Simon the Maccabee. The expression *τὴν πολιτείαν ἀποδεχέσθαι* indicates that the king recognized the Jewish form of government which prevailed after the Return, that is to say, a theocracy under which the high-priest was also the chief ruler of the state.



11 flashing from their arms, and cast great fear and trembling upon them. And Apollonius fell down  
 12 half-dead in the Court of the Gentiles, and stretched out his hands to heaven, and with tears he  
 13 entreated the Hebrews that they would make intercession for him and stay the wrath of the heavenly  
 14 host. For he said that he had sinned and was worthy even of death, and that if he were given his  
 15 life he would laud to all men the blessedness of the Holy Place. Moved by these words, Onias, the  
 16 high-priest, although most scrupulous in other cases, made intercession for him lest King Seleucus  
 17 should possibly think that Apollonius had been overthrown by a human device and not by divine  
 18 justice. Apollonius, accordingly, after his astonishing deliverance departed to report to the king the  
 19 things that had befallen him. But Seleucus dying, his successor on the throne was his son Antiochus  
 20 Epiphanes, an overweening terrible man; who dismissed Onias from his sacred office, and made his  
 21 brother Jason high-priest instead, the condition being that in return for the appointment Jason should  
 22 pay him three thousand six hundred and sixty talents yearly. So he appointed Jason high-priest and  
 23 made him chief ruler over the people. And he (*Jason*) introduced to our people a new way of life  
 24 and a new constitution in utter defiance of the Law; so that not only did he lay out a gymnasium  
 25 on the Mount of our fathers, but he actually abolished the service of the temple. Wherefore the  
 26 divine justice was kindled to anger and brought Antiochus himself as an enemy against us. For  
 when he was carrying on war with Ptolemy in Egypt and heard that the people of Jerusalem had  
 rejoiced exceedingly over a report of his death, he immediately marched back against them. And  
 when he had plundered the city he made a decree denouncing the penalty of death upon any who  
 should be seen to live after the Law of our fathers. But he found all his decrees of no avail to  
 break down the constancy of our people to the Law, and he beheld all his threats and penalties  
 utterly despised, so that even women for circumcising their sons, though they knew beforehand  
 what would be their fate, were flung, together with their offspring, headlong from the rocks. When  
 therefore his decrees continued to be contemned by the mass of the people, he personally tried to  
 force by tortures each man separately to eat unclean meats and thus abjure the Jewish religion.

5.1 Accordingly, the tyrant Antiochus, accompanied by his councillors, sat in judgement on a certain  
 2 high place with his troops drawn up around him in full armour, and he ordered his guards to drag

19. ἐξεδιήτησεν N V Syr.

21. ἐπολεμῶσιν

24. εὐνομῶν N V Syr.

IV. 13. **most scrupulous.** I have followed Grimm's rendering, but it here may be noted that εὐλάβεια, caution, is the regular philosophical term for the useful side of the passion which in excess becomes fear. If we take it in the latter sense, ἄλλως εὐλαβηθεὶς would mean that Onias was so much alarmed as to the possible effect on King Seleucus that on this occasion he swallowed his repugnance and offered the prayer. In 2 Macc., where the story is told at much greater length, and where the offender is called Heliodorus not Apollonius, Onias not only prays but also offers sacrifice 'as an atonement for the man'. Poor Onias seems to have been a lover of peace, nevertheless he was, after his retirement, murdered at Antioch by Menelaus, the usurping high-priest who outbid and ousted Jason.

15. **his son, υἱός.** An extraordinary mistake for brother, but the MSS. leave no doubt that the author made it. Antiochus Epiphanes was a curious mixture. Like the rest of the Seleucid House he was of mixed Persian and Macedonian blood, and his education, half Greek, half Roman, was no less mixed, for he spent his childhood at the Graeco-Syrian court, and his boyhood at Rome, where he became a hostage for his father on his defeat. Released after his father's death, he played as a young man at being a citizen and an elected official of Athens, keeping his eye all the time on the Syrian throne. Then came the murder of his brother Seleucus by Heliodorus, and Antiochus presently made his bid for the kingdom and won. Thenceforth he reigned with a sort of insane energy, acting as the militant missionary of Hellenism in the East, and backing up his mission with wayward freakishness. While planting gorgeous new temples and new Antiochs everywhere, he took advantage of his audacious title of Θεός Ἐπιφανής, the Manifest God, to assert his right to plunder remorselessly the already existing temples in order that their treasures might support his extravagances. His looting of the Temple at Jerusalem was but one instance out of many, and it was the failure of his attempt on the shrine of Ishtar at Elymais that brought about his doom.

22. **war with Ptolemy.** Antiochus made several campaigns against Ptolemy and succeeded in conquering the whole of Egypt with the single exception of Alexandria, to which he actually laid siege. But he had reckoned without Rome, who disapproved of his ambitions, and having finished the Macedonian war had got her hands free at last. Antiochus was watching the siege when he saw a small party of Romans who had just landed approaching him. He recognized their leader, a consular, Pompilius Laenas, whom he had known as a boy in Rome, and held out his hand in greeting. Pompilius took no notice of the offered hand, but presented a note from the senate desiring Antiochus to quit Egypt. The Syrian king looked at it, and said lightly, 'I will consider it with my friends.' Pompilius held in his hand a vine-stick, a thing as characteristic of a Roman officer as the sjambok was of a Boer commander. He drew a circle in the sand with it round the king. 'Consider there,' he said. Antiochus paused, hesitated, and then, still inside the circle, said, 'The senate shall be obeyed.' His hand was instantly grasped by Pompilius, and they were the best of friends. Having accepted the situation Antiochus withdrew his armies from Egypt, but being enraged with the Jews, as related in the text, he relieved his feelings by the sack of Jerusalem and the persecution of the Jews.

V. 1. **a certain high place.** Tradition varies as to the scene of the martyrdoms. In Maccabees there is nothing to indicate that they took place anywhere except at Jerusalem. The early Church, however, held the place to have been Antioch, and a basilica was erected there in the martyrs' honour. For the transfer of the relics from Antioch to Milan and Cologne, see § 8. The relics are said now to be in Rome.



there every single man of the Hebrews and compel them to eat swine's flesh and things offered to idols; but if any should refuse to defile themselves with the unclean things, they were to be tortured and put to death. And when many had been taken by force, one man first from among the company was brought before Antiochus, a Hebrew whose name was Eleazar, a priest by birth, trained in knowledge of the law, a man advanced in years and well known to many of the tyrant's court for his philosophy.

5 And Antiochus, looking on him, said:

6 'Before I allow the tortures to begin for you, O venerable man, I would give you this counsel, that you should eat of the flesh of the swine and save your life; for I respect your age and your grey hairs, although to have worn them so long a time, and still to cling to the Jewish religion, makes me think you no philosopher. For most excellent is the meat of this animal which Nature has graciously bestowed upon us, and why should you abominate it? Truly it is folly not to enjoy innocent pleasures, and it is wrong to reject Nature's favours. But it will be still greater folly, I think, on your part if with idle vapouring about truth you shall proceed to defy even me to your own punishment. Will you not awake from your preposterous philosophy? Will you not fling aside the nonsense of your calculations and, adopting another frame of mind befitting your mature years, learn the true philosophy of expediency, and bow to my charitable counsel, and have pity on your own venerable age? For consider this, too, that even if there be some Power whose eye is upon this religion of yours, he will always pardon you for a transgression done under compulsion.'

14 Thus urged by the tyrant to the unlawful eating of unclean meat, Eleazar asked permission to speak; and receiving it, he began his speech before the court as follows:

16 'We, O Antiochus, having accepted the Divine Law as the Law of our country, do not believe any stronger necessity is laid upon us than that of our obedience to the Law.  
17, 18 'Therefore we do surely deem it right not in any way whatsoever to transgress the Law. And yet, were our Law, as you suggest, not truly divine, while we vainly believed it to be divine, not even so would it be right for us to destroy our reputation for piety. Think it not, then, a small sin for us to eat the unclean thing, for the transgression of the Law, be it in small things or in great, is equally heinous; for in either case equally the Law is despised. And you scoff at our philosophy, as if under it we were living in a manner contrary to reason. Not so, for the Law teaches us self-control, so that we are masters of all our pleasures and desires and are thoroughly trained in manliness so as to endure all pain with readiness; and it teaches justice, so that with all our various dispositions we act fairly, and it teaches righteousness, so that with due reverence we worship only the God who is. Therefore do we eat no unclean meat; for believing our Law to be given by God, we know

V. 4. φιλοσοφίαν V

11. των λογισμων N

24. εκδιδασκει N

4. advanced in years. According to 2 Macc. he was ninety. Prof. Kraus in the *Jewish Encyclopaedia* has this interesting note on him: 'Cardinal Rampolla's investigations have proved the historical character of the account despite the fact that while the seven martyrs are mentioned in rabbinical legend, Eleazar seems to be unknown to the Rabbis (*Martyre et Sépulture des Macchabées*, Bruges, 1900). Grätz had already declared it to be substantially true (*Geschichte*, 2nd ed., ii. 317). Hertzfeld's supposition (*Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, ii. 75) that Eleazar is identical with Eleazar ben Harson is untenable.'

5. And Antiochus... said. The author adopts the usual ancient practice of making up speeches for his characters, a practice too common to call for comment. In some cases the speeches must have been invented from beginning to end; in others they doubtless contain actual phrases worked into their text which had been used by the speaker in whose mouth they are put. Such interweavings of truth and fiction are well known as occurring, to take the most obvious case, in Shakespeare's historical plays; and, to come down to our own day, I have seen in America a popular biography of so great a man as Abraham Lincoln which purported to report verbatim long conversations of his, suitable indeed to the circumstances but unquestionably invented. It is hard to be sure that even the shortest phrase is truly recorded in history. I think I have seen four or five different accounts both in Greek and Latin of the scene outside Alexandria between Antiochus and Pompilius Laenas (see on iv. 22, note), where scarcely a dozen words were spoken between the two men, but I cannot remember that any two of the reports can be said to coincide, or even to approach it. So at Waterloo; what was the word that Cambronne used? or did the Duke ever say, 'Up, guards, and at them,' or anything of the sort? We must make the best of our history as we have it.

20. equally heinous. This is a well-known doctrine of the Stoics. Stobaeus (*Eth.* ii. 218) says ἵσα τε πάντα λέγουσιν εἶναι τὰ ἀμαρτήματα, οὐκ ἔτι δ' ὅμοια. And he goes on to explain how a lie is always a lie καὶ ἀμαρτάνειν δὲ μᾶλλον καὶ ἥττον οὐκ ἔστι, πᾶσαν γὰρ ἀμαρτίαν κατὰ διάφενον πρᾶττεσθαι. Horace in the *Satires* makes fun of the idea (l. iii. 115):

'It never can be an equivalent crime

To crib the cheap cabbage and plunder the shrine.'

Zeno himself is quoted as the original authority for it by Diog. Laert. vii. 120 ἀρέσκει τε αὐτοῖς ἵσα ἡγείσθαι τὰ ἀμαρτήματα καθά φησι Ζήνων. With these pronouncements of the Stoics we may compare James ii. 10: 'For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.' St. James was the most Jewish of the apostles, and the idea which to us seems so strained was not less familiar to the Jew than to the Greek.



26 also that the Creator of the world, as a Lawgiver, feels for us according to our nature. He has commanded us to eat the things that will be convenient for our souls, and he has forbidden us to eat meats that would be the contrary. But it is the act of a tyrant that you should compel us not only to transgress the Law, but should also make us eat in such manner that you may mock at this defilement so utterly abominable to us. But you shall not mock at me thus, neither will I break the sacred oaths of my ancestors to keep the Law, not even though you tear out mine eyes and burn out mine entrails. I am not so unmanned by old age but that when righteousness is at stake the strength of youth returns to my Reason. So twist hard your racks and blow your furnace hotter. I do not so pity mine old age as to break the Law of my fathers in mine own person. I will not belie thee, O Law that wast my teacher; I will not desert thee, O beloved self-control; I will not put thee to shame, O wisdom-loving Reason, nor will I deny ye, O venerated priesthood and knowledge of the Law. Neither shalt thou sully the pure mouth of mine old age and my lifelong constancy to the Law. Clean shall my fathers receive me, unafraid of thy torments even to the death. For thou indeed mayest be tyrant over unrighteous men, but thou shalt not lord it over my resolution in the matter of righteousness either by thy words or through thy deeds.'

6 But when Eleazar replied thus eloquently to the exhortations of the tyrant, the guards around him dragged him roughly to the torturing place. And first they unclothed the old man, who was adorned with the beauty of holiness. Then binding his arms on either side they scourged him, a herald standing and shouting out over against him, 'Obey the orders of the king!' But the great-souled and noble man, an Eleazar in very truth, was no more moved in his mind than if he were being tormented in a dream; yea, the old man keeping his eyes steadfastly raised to heaven suffered his flesh to be torn by the scourges till he was bathed in blood and his sides became a mass of wounds; and even when he fell to the ground because his body could no longer support the pain he still kept his Reason erect and inflexible. With his foot then one of the cruel guards as he fell kicked him savagely in the side to make him get up. But he endured the anguish, and despised the compulsion, and bore up under the torments, and like a brave athlete taking punishment, the old man outwore his tormentors. The sweat stood on his brow, and he drew his breath in hard gasps, till his nobility of soul extorted the admiration of his tormentors themselves. Hereupon, partly in pity for his old age, partly in sympathy for their friend, partly in admiration of his courage, some of the courtiers of the king went up to him and said: 'Why, O Eleazar, dost thou madly destroy thyself in this misery? We will bring to thee of the seethed meats, but do thou feign only to partake of the swine's flesh, and so save thyself.'

16, 17 And Eleazar, as if their counsel did but add to his tortures, cried loudly: 'No. May we sons of Abraham never have so evil a thought as with faint heart to counterfeit a part unseemly to us.'

# 11. εὐψυχία

26. according to our nature. The Rabbis explained these commands to abstain from unclean food in the following way: 'These commands were given with the highest of all objects—for the sake of the purity which obedience to them imparts to the moral life.' And again: 'The ideal Jew does not say, "I have no desire to eat swine's flesh, no desire to indulge in any sensual cravings; I desire, but I will conquer the desire for the sake of my Father which is in Heaven"' (Oesterley and Box, *Synagogue Religion and Worship*, p. 412). Of course anthropologists explain such matters as taboos, probably based on a primitive totemism.

38. through thy deeds. Before we begin the dreadful story of the martyrdoms I would like to recall the words of Heine, the emancipated Jew, who from his mattress-grave tilted against Destiny with a sardonic humour that often mocked both himself and his race. 'If suffering ennobles,' he says, 'then has Israel attained the highest rank.' And if the Jewish refusal to eat swine's flesh seems a trivial cause for which to endure death in torments, let me also quote here these words of a yet more recent writer: 'There is no idea so ridiculous and outlandish but that some one has gone to the stake for it. Thousands have died for the Crescent as for the Cross, for the Synagogue as for the Church, for heresy as for orthodoxy, for undistinguishable shades of opinion about beliefs which were wholly false, for tyranny as for liberty, for anarchy as for order—faithful unto death for the truth that was no truth, doing loyal service to detestable masters, wasting heroism in the service of poltroons. Yet by such have the great human virtues of constancy and loyalty been established; and if not martyrs for the truth, they are witnesses to the best in man—his fantastic chivalry and contempt for death, when once an idea has laid hold of his imagination.'

VI. 5. Eleazar. This name means 'God help'. As to his defiance of torture let me quote the following passage from Pearson's *Fragments of Zeno and Cleanthes*, p. 214: 'The Indian philosophers are said to have used these words to Alexander: σώματα μὲν μεταίεσις ἐκ τόπου εἰς τόπον, ψυχὰς δ' ἡμετέρας οὐκ ἀναγκάσεις ποιεῖν ἃ μὴ βουλόμεθα. πῦρ ἀνθρώποις μέγιστον κολαστήριον, τοῦτον ἡμεῖς καταφρονοῦμεν. Similarly Philo, in telling the same story (*Quod omnis probus sit liber*, p. 879), has this: πῦρ μέγιστος τοῖς ζῶσι σώμασι πόνους καὶ φθορὰν ἐργάζεται, τοῦτον ὑπεράνω ἡμεῖς γινόμεθα, ζῶντες καίμεθα. Other historians attest the custom of burning themselves alive, which is said to have been practised by the Brahmins. Strabo, xv. 1. 65, says αἰσχιστον δ' αὐτοῖς νομίζεσθαι νόσον σωματικὴν τὸν δ' ὑπονοήσαντα καθ' αὐτοῦ τοῦτο ἐξάγειν καθίσαντα ἐπὶ τὴν πυρὰν ὑφάψαι κελεύειν, ἀκίνητον δὲ καίεσθαι.'

15. We will bring. In 2 Macc. vi. 21 they beseech him 'to bring flesh of his own provision, such as was lawful for him to use, and make as if he did eat of the flesh taken from the sacrifice commanded by the king'.



- 18 Contrary to Reason, indeed, were it for us, after living unto the truth till old age, and guarding in  
 19 lawful guise the repute of so living, now to change and become in our own persons a pattern to  
 20 the young of impiety, to the end that we should encourage them to eat unclean meat. Shame were  
 21 it if we should live on a little longer, during that little being mocked of all men for cowardice, and  
 22 while despised by the tyrant as unmanly should fail to defend the Divine Law unto the death. There-  
 23 fore, O sons of Abraham, do ye die nobly for righteousness' sake; but as for you, O minions of the  
 tyrant, why pause ye in your work?  
 24 So they, seeing him thus triumphant over the tortures and unmoved even by the pity of his  
 25 executioners, dragged him to the fire. There they cast him on it, burning him with cruelly cunning  
 26 devices, and they poured broth of evil odour into his nostrils. But when the fire already reached  
 27 to his bones and he was about to give up the ghost, he lifted up his eyes to God and said, 'Thou,  
 28 O God, knowest that though I might save myself I am dying by fiery torments for thy Law. Be  
 29 merciful unto thy people, and let our punishment be a satisfaction in their behalf. Make my blood  
 their purification, and take my soul to ransom their souls.'  
 30 And with these words the holy man nobly yielded up his spirit under the torture, and for the  
 sake of the Law held out by his Reason even against the torments unto death.  
 31, 32 Beyond question, then, the Inspired Reason is master over the passions; for if his passions or  
 sufferings had prevailed over his Reason we should have credited them with this evidence of their  
 33 superior power. But now his Reason having conquered his passions, we properly attribute to it  
 34 the power of commanding them. And it is right that we should admit that the mastery lies with  
 35 Reason, in cases at least where it conquers pains that come from outside ourselves; for it were  
 ridiculous to deny it. And my proof covers not only the superiority of Reason to pains, but its  
 superiority to pleasures also; neither does it surrender to them.  
 7 1 For the Reason of our father Eleazar, like a fine steersman steering the ship of sanctity on the  
 2 sea of the passions, though buffeted by the threats of the tyrant and swept by the swelling waves  
 3 of the tortures, never shifted for one moment the helm of sanctity until he sailed into the haven of  
 4 victory over death. No city besieged with many and cunning engines ever defended itself so well  
 as did that holy man when his sacred soul was attacked with scourge and rack and flame, and he  
 moved them who were laying siege to his soul through his Reason that was the shield of sanctity.  
 5 For our father Eleazar, setting his mind firm as a beetling sea-cliff, broke the mad onset of the  
 6 surges of the passions. O priest worthy of thy priesthood, thou didst not defile thy holy teeth,  
 7 nor didst thou befoul with unclean meat thy belly that had room only for piety and purity. O  
 8 confessor of the Law and philosopher of the Divine life! Such should those be whose office is to  
 serve the Law and defend it with their own blood and honourable sweat in the face of sufferings to  
 9 the death. Thou, O father, didst fortify our fidelity to the Law through thy steadfastness unto  
 glory; and having spoken in honour of holiness thou didst not belie thy speech, and didst confirm  
 10 the words of divine philosophy by thy deeds, O aged man that wast more forceful than the tortures,  
 O reverend elder that wast tenser-strung than the flame, thou great king over the passions, Eleazar.  
 11 For as our father Aaron, armed with the censer, ran through the massed congregation against the  
 12 fiery angel and overcame him, so the son of Aaron, Eleazar, being consumed by the melting heat of  
 13 the fire, remained unshaken in his Reason. And yet most wonderful of all, he, being an old man,  
 with the sinews of his body unstrung and his muscles relaxed and his nerves weakened, grew a young  
 14 man again in the spirit of his Reason and with Isaac-like Reason turned the hydra-headed torture  
 15 to impotence. O blessed age, O reverend grey head, O life faithful to the Law and perfected by  
 the seal of death!  
 16 Assuredly, then, if an old man despised the torments unto death for righteousness' sake it must  
 17 be admitted that the Inspired Reason is able to guide the passions. But some perhaps may answer  
 that not all men are masters of the passions because not all men have their Reason enlightened.

18. ἐπὶ αὐτῷ N

24. μεταβαλλομενον N

VII. 13. τονων N Syr

20. a little longer. There is a curiously close correspondence between these words and the counsel attributed by Stobaeus to Eusebius: 'We ought not therefore for the sake of brief, uncertain, and transitory pleasure to choose great evils which endure for all time, and, in a life which is of the briefest, injure the after-life which is immensely long, nor yet, fearing a short pain, should we loose hold on great blessings which endure for all time and on the happiness of the immensely long life which comes after this world.' *Ethica* ii. 420.

29. to ransom their souls. These remarkable words on the martyr's death being taken as an atonement for the whole people are discussed in § 9.

35. for it were ridiculous, ἐπεὶ καὶ γελοῖον. Bensly translates the Syriac thus: 'It is therefore ridiculous that a man should say, Reason does not rule, where we have shown that it overcame not only passions (sufferings) but also threats.' Lloyd, whose reading is the same as that in our text, translates 'nisi ridiculi esse velimus'. οἱ ἔξωθεν ἀληθινὰς are the physical tortures as distinguished from οἱ ἐνδοθεν πόνοι of xv. 29 and xviii. 2.



18 But as many as with their whole heart make righteousness their first thought, these alone are able  
 19 to master the weakness of the flesh, believing that unto God they die not, as our patriarchs, Abra-  
 20 ham and Isaac and Jacob, died not, but that they live unto God. Therefore there is nothing  
 contradictory in certain persons appearing to be slaves to passion in consequence of the weakness of  
 21 their Reason. For who is there that being a philosopher following righteously the whole rule of  
 22 philosophy, and having put his trust in God, and knowing that it is a blessed thing to endure all  
 23 hardness for the sake of virtue, would not conquer his passions for the sake of righteousness? For the  
 wise and self-controlled man alone is the brave ruler of the passions. Yea, by this means even young  
 boys, being philosophers by virtue of the Reason which is according to righteousness, have triumphed  
 over yet more grievous tortures.

8 1 For when the tyrant found himself notably defeated in his first attempt, and impotent to compel  
 2 an old man to eat unclean meat, then truly in violent rage he ordered the guards to bring others of  
 the young men of the Hebrews, and if they would eat unclean meat to release them after eating it,  
 3 but if they refused, to torture them yet more savagely. And under these orders of the tyrant  
 seven brethren together with their aged mother were brought prisoners before him, all handsome,  
 4 and modest, and well-born, and generally attractive. And when the tyrant saw them there, standing  
 as if they were a festal choir with their mother in the midst, he took notice of them, and struck by  
 their noble and distinguished bearing he smiled at them, and calling them nearer said:

5 'O young men, I wish well to each one of you, and admire your beauty, and honour highly so  
 large a band of brothers; so not only do I advise you not to persist in the madness of that old  
 6 man who has already suffered, but I even entreat of you to yield to me and become partakers  
 in my friendship. For, as I am able to punish those who disobey my orders, so am I able to  
 7 advance those who do obey me. Be assured then that you shall be given positions of importance  
 8 and authority in my service if you will reject the ancestral law of your polity. Share in the  
 9 Hellenic life, and walk in a new way, and take some pleasure in your youth; for if you drive  
 me to anger with your disobedience you will compel me to resort to terrible penalties and put  
 10 every single one of you to death by torture. Have pity then on yourselves, whom even I, your  
 11 opponent, pity for your youth and your beauty. Will you not consider with yourselves this  
 thing, that if you disobey me there is nothing before you but death in torments?'

12 With these words he ordered the instruments of torture to be brought forward in order to per-  
 13 suade them by fear to eat unclean meat. But when the guards had produced wheels, and joint-  
 dislocators, and racks, and bone-crushers, and catapults, and chaldrons, and braziers, and thumb-  
 14 screws, and iron claws, and wedges, and branding irons, the tyrant spoke again and said, 'You  
 15 had better feel fear, my lads, and the Justice you worship will pardon your unwilling transgression'.

But they, hearing his persuasions, and seeing his dreadful engines, not only showed no fear  
 but actually arrayed their philosophy in opposition to the tyrant, and by their right Reason did  
 abase his tyranny.

16 And yet consider; supposing some amongst them to have been faint-hearted and cowardly, what  
 sort of language would they have used? would it not have been to this effect?

17 'Alas! miserable creatures that we are and foolish above measure! When the king invites us  
 18 and appeals to us on terms of kind treatment shall we not obey him? Why do we encourage our-  
 19 selves with vain desires and dare a disobedience that is to cost us our lives? Shall we not, O men my  
 20 brothers, fear the dread instruments and weigh well his threats of the tortures, and abandon these  
 21 empty vaunts and this fatal bragging? Let us take pity on our own youth and have compassion on  
 22 our mother's age; and let us lay to heart that if we disobey we shall die. And even the divine  
 23 justice will have mercy on us, if compelled by necessity we yield to the king in fear. Why should  
 24 we cast away from us this dear life and rob ourselves of this sweet world? Let us not strive against

VII. 19. **they live unto God.** These words on immortality are repeated in xvi. 25. The closest parallel is  
 Mark xii. 26: 'And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God  
 spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God  
 of the dead, but the God of the living.'

See also § 9.

VIII. 13. **wheels, &c.** Erasmus gives the horrid list in Latin thus: 'Exhibentur itaque rotae, radii, ungulae,  
 rotabula, catapultae, lebetes, catastae, frixoria, digitaria, pugillaria, manus ferreae, subulae, succensoria, ollae aeneae,  
 sartago. Haec enim illis nomina esse reperimus. Succensorium ad excitandam flammam quoddam tenue esse ferri  
 telum accepimus. Exhibentur id genus reliqua nimis profecto abhorrenda, quae sigillatim enarrantem dies sit defe-  
 cturus.' Lloyd's list is 'rotae, eculeus, fidiculae, unci, catapultae, lebetes, sartagine, digitalia, manicae ferreae, cunei, et  
 folles'. For myself I agree with the poet that artists in torture should be hoist with their own petard.

'... neque enim lex aequior ulla est  
 Quam necis artifices arte perire sua.'



- 25 necessity nor with vain confidence invite our torture. Even the Law itself does not willingly con-  
 26 demn us to death, we being in terror of the instruments of torture. Why does such contentiousness  
 inflame us and a fatal obstinacy find favour with us, when we might have a peaceful life by obeying  
 27 the king?' But no such words escaped these young men at the prospect of the torture, nor did  
 28 such thoughts enter into their minds. For they were despisers of the passions and masters over pain.  
 29 And thus no sooner did the tyrant conclude his urging of them to eat unclean meat than all with  
 one voice together, and as with one soul, said to him:
- 9 1 'Why dost thou delay, O tyrant? We are ready to die rather than transgress the command-  
 2 ments of our fathers. For we should be putting our ancestors also to shame, if we did not walk in  
 3 obedience to the Law and take Moses as our counsellor. O tyrant that counselest us to transgress  
 4 the Law, do not, hating us, pity us beyond ourselves. For we esteem thy mercy, giving us our life  
 5 in return for a breach of the Law, a thing harder to bear than death itself. Thou wouldst terrify us  
 6 with thy threats of death under torture, as if a little while ago thou hadst learned nothing from  
 Eleazar. But if the old men of the Hebrews endured the tortures for righteousness' sake, yea, until  
 they died, more befittingly will we young men die despising the torments of thy compulsion, over  
 7 which he our aged teacher also triumphed. Make trial therefore, O tyrant. And if thou takest our  
 8 lives for the sake of righteousness, think not that thou hurtest us with thy tortures. For we through  
 9 this our evil entreatment and our endurance of it shall win the prize of virtue; but thou for our  
 cruel murder shalt suffer at the hands of divine justice sufficient torment by fire for ever.'
- 10 These words of the youths redoubled the wrath of the tyrant, not at their disobedience only but  
 11 at what he considered their ingratitude. So by his orders the scourgers brought forward the eldest  
 of them and stripped him of his garment and bound his hands and arms on either side with thongs.  
 12 But when they had scourged him till they were weary, and gained nothing thereby, they cast him  
 13, 14 upon the wheel. And on it the noble youth was racked till his bones were out of joint. And as  
 joint after joint gave way, he denounced *the tyrant* in these words:
- 15 'O thou most abominable tyrant, thou enemy of the justice of heaven and bloody-minded, thou dost  
 torment me in this fashion not for manslaying nor for impiety but for defending the Law of God.'
- 16 And when the guards said to him, 'Consent to eat, that so you may be released from your  
 17 tortures,' he said to them, 'Your method, O miserable minions, is not strong enough to lead captive  
 18 my Reason. Cut off my limbs, and burn my flesh, and twist my joints; through all the torments I  
 19 will show you that in behalf of virtue the sons of the Hebrews alone are unconquerable.' As he thus  
 spake they set hot coals upon him besides, and intensifying the torture strained him yet tighter on  
 20 the wheel. And all the wheel was besmeared with his blood, and the heaped coals were quenched  
 by the humours of his body dropping down, and the *rent* flesh ran round the axles of the machine.  
 21 And with his bodily frame already in dissolution this great-souled youth, like a true son of Abraham,  
 22 groaned not at all; but as if he were suffering a change by fire to incorruption, he nobly endured  
 23 the torment, saying, 'Follow my example, O brothers. Do not for ever desert me, and forswear

IX. 2. Μωϋσαι Ν Syr.

19. λεγοντι M

IX. 9. **torment by fire for ever.** For the eschatology of this passage see § 9. There is here no trace of the spirit of the Crucified: 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.'

18. **alone are unconquerable.** Some commentators think that the words put into the mouths of the martyrs are unreal and impossible. Dramatic inventions they doubtless are, like most other speeches that have come down to us from antiquity, but for a commentator to reject them *a priori* as impossible is to assume to himself the power to plumb the depths of human nature. That is an assumption that does not commend itself to one who has heard with his own ears the strange things even a ruffian can say with the hangman's rope round his neck. And when it comes to martyrdom for a principle, we have good evidence that men dying for what they hold truth can play the man in the tenth or twentieth century as well as in the first. Did not Latimer, here in Oxford three and a half centuries ago, say at the stake, 'Play the man, Master Ridley; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out'? And did not Cranmer—Cranmer who so feared the fire—thrust the hand which had signed his recantation into the flames that it might be burned first? The nature of man is strangely compounded, and it is best not to dogmatize too rashly about what it can or cannot rise to.

19. **tighter on the wheel.** Bensly translates the Syriac here: 'They made the wheel more cruel by artifice against him.' Erasmus translates: 'Haec eo loquente praeparatur incendium, et ut erat affixus rotae, igni in catasta obliquitur, atque ita tendentibus corpus radiis et contrahentibus flammis, costis deinde patentibus lateribus vitalia rumpuntur.' In this he adds to the original narrative certain explanatory details as to the exact workings of the torment; probably some fifteenth-century expert in torture told him all about how it was done, if indeed he had not seen it for himself. But it is better not to go more closely into the horrors of torture. The writer happened once to be in company with some frontiersmen who were pursuing a white renegade, said to be guilty of having betrayed the whites to the Indians. He learned that if they caught the renegade they proposed to burn him alive, and they treated with some scorn the suggestion that death was penalty enough, as they grimly jested over the various particulars of what they intended for him. The wretch was not caught, but it is as true to-day as ever it was that the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.



- 24 not our brotherhood in nobility of soul. War a holy and honourable warfare on behalf of righteousness, through which may the just Providence that watched over our fathers become merciful unto his  
25 people and take vengeance on the accursed tyrant.' And with these words the holy youth yielded up the ghost.
- 26 But while all were wondering at his constancy of soul, the guards brought forward the second in age of the sons, and grappling him with sharp-clawed hands of iron they fastened him to the  
27 engines and the catapult. But when they heard his noble resolve in answer to their question, 'Would  
28 he eat rather than be tortured?' these panther-like beasts tore at his sinews with claws of iron, and rent away all the flesh from his cheeks, and tore off the skin from his head. But he steadfastly  
29 enduring this agony said, 'How sweet is every form of death for the sake of the righteousness of  
30 our fathers!' And to the tyrant he said, 'O most ruthless of tyrants, doth not it seem to thee that at this moment thou thyself sufferest tortures worse than mine in seeing thy tyranny's arrogant  
31 intention overcome by my endurance for righteousness' sake? For I am supported under pain  
32 by the joys that come through virtue, whereas thou art in torment whilst glorying in thy impiety; neither shalt thou escape, O most abominable tyrant, the penalties of the divine wrath.'
- 10 1 And when he had bravely met his glorious death, the third son was brought forward and was  
2 earnestly entreated by many to taste and so to save himself. But he answered in a loud voice, 'Are ye ignorant that the same father begat me and my brothers that are dead, and the same  
3 mother gave us birth, and in the same doctrines was I brought up? I do not forswear the noble  
4 bond of brotherhood. Therefore if ye have any engine of torment, apply it to this body of mine; for  
5 my soul ye cannot reach, not if ye would.' But they were greatly angered at the bold speech of the  
6 man, and they dislocated his hands and his feet with their dislocating engines, and wrenched his limbs out of their sockets, and unstrung them; and they twisted round his fingers, and his arms,  
7 and his legs, and his elbow-joints. And in no wise being able to strangle *his spirit* they stripped off his skin, taking the points of the fingers with it, and tore in Scythian fashion the scalp from his head,  
8 and straightway brought him to the wheel. And on this they twisted his spine till he saw his own  
9 flesh hanging in strips and great gouts of blood pouring down from his entrails. And at the point  
10 of death he said, 'We, O most abominable tyrant, suffer thus for our upbringing and our virtue that  
11, 12 are of God; but thou for thy impiety and thy cruelty shalt endure torments without end.' And  
13 when this man had died worthily of his brothers, they brought up the fourth, and said to him, 'Be not thou also mad with the same madness as thy brethren, but obey the king and save thyself.'
- 14, 15 But he said unto them, 'For me ye have no fire so exceeding hot as to make me a coward. By the blessed death of my brethren, by the eternal doom of the tyrant, and by the glorious life of the  
16 righteous, I will not deny my noble brotherhood. Invent tortures, O tyrant, in order that thou  
17 mayest learn thereby that I am brother of those who have been already tortured.' When he heard this the bloodthirsty, murderous, and utterly abominable Antiochus bade them cut out his tongue.  
18 But he said, 'Even if thou dost remove my organ of speech, God is a hearer also of the speechless.'
- 19, 20 Lo, I put out my tongue ready: cut it out, for thou shalt not thereby silence my Reason. Gladly  
21 do we give our bodily members to be mutilated for the cause of God. But God will speedily pursue after thee; for thou cuttest out the tongue that sang songs of praise unto him.'
- 11 1 But when this man also was put to a death of agony with the tortures, the fifth sprang forward  
2, 3 saying, 'I shrink not, O tyrant, from demanding the torture for virtue's sake. Yea, of myself I come forward, in order that, slaying me also, thou mayest by yet more misdeeds increase the penalty thou  
4 owest to the justice of Heaven. O enemy of virtue and enemy of man, for what crime dost thou  
5 destroy us in this way? Doth it seem evil to thee that we worship the Creator of all and live  
6, 7 according to his virtuous Law? But these things are worthy of honours not of tortures, if thou  
8 didst understand human aspirations and hadst hope of salvation before God. Lo, now thou art  
9 God's enemy and makest war on those that worship God.' As he spake thus the guards bound  
10 him and brought him before the catapult; and they tied him thereto on his knees, and, fastening them there with iron cramps, they wrenched his loins over the rolling 'wedge' so that he was  
11 completely curled back like a scorpion and every joint was disjoined. And thus in grievous strait  
12 for breath and anguish of body he exclaimed, 'Glorious, O tyrant, glorious against thy will are

## XI. 7. ἀνθρώπου ποθῶν

XI. 3. **increase the penalty.** Erasmus paraphrases thus: 'Reum te gehennae effusus quattuor innocentum sanguis effecit, me quinto gradatim numerus ipse ampliandus est, ut tibi tandem poenae ex multitudine peremptorum accrescant.'

7. **if thou didst understand.** εἴπερ ἡσθάνου ἀνθρώπου ποθῶν. Lloyd's text omits 7 and 8 entirely, following the Strassburg Bible. What Erasmus had before him is hard to guess: what he prints is '... honor nobis est et salus non poena: mirificum accipiemus a deo beneficium, si in nulla nobis laterum parte parcatur'.



the boons that thou bestowest on me, enabling me to show my fidelity to the Law through yet more honourable tortures.

13 And when this man also was dead, the sixth was brought, a mere boy, who in answer to the  
14 tyrant's inquiry whether he was willing to eat and be released, said: 'I am not so old in years as  
15 my brethren, but I am as old in mind. For we were born and reared for the same purpose and are  
16 equally bound also to die for the same cause; so if thou chooseth to torture us for not eating unclean  
meat, torture.'

17, 18 As he spake these words they brought him to the wheel, and with care they stretched him out and  
19 dislocated the bones of his back and set fire under him. And they made sharp skewers red-hot  
20 and ran them into his back, and piercing through his sides they burned away his entrails also. But he  
in the midst of his tortures exclaimed, 'O contest worthy of saints, wherein so many of us brethren,  
in the cause of righteousness, have been entered for a competition in torments, and have not been  
21, 22 conquered! For the righteous understanding, O tyrant, is unconquerable. In the armour of virtue  
23 I go to join my brothers in death, and to add in myself one strong avenger more to punish thee, O  
24 deviser of the tortures and enemy of the truly righteous. We six youths have overthrown thy tyranny.  
25 For is not thine impotence to alter our Reason or force us to eat unclean meat an overthrow for thee?  
26, 27 Thy fire is cool for us, thy engines of torture torment not, and thy violence is impotent. For the  
guards have been officers for us, not of a tyrant, but of the Divine Law; and therefore have we our  
Reason yet unconquered.'

12 1 And when this one also died a blessed death, being cast into the cauldron, the seventh son, the  
2 youngest of them all, came forward. But the tyrant, although fiercely exasperated by his brethren,  
felt pity for the boy, and seeing him there already bound he had him brought near, and sought to  
3 persuade him, saying, 'Thou seest the end of the folly of thy brethren; for through their dis-  
4 obedience they have been racked to death. Thou, too, if thou dost not obey, wilt thyself also be  
5 miserably tortured and put to death before thy time; but if thou dost obey thou shalt be my friend,  
6 and thou shalt be advanced to high office in the business of the kingdom.' And while thus appealing  
to him he sent for the boy's mother, in order that in her sorrow for the loss of so many sons she  
7 might urge the survivor to obey and be saved. But the mother, speaking in the Hebrew tongue, as  
8 I shall tell later on, encouraged the boy, and he said to the guards, 'Loose me, that I may speak to  
9 the king and to all his friends with him.' And they, rejoicing at the boy's request, made haste to  
10, 11 loose him. And running up to the red-hot brazier, 'O impious tyrant,' he cried, 'and most ungodly  
of all sinners, art thou not ashamed to take thy blessings and thy kingship at the hands of God,  
12 and to slay his servants and torture the followers of righteousness? For which things the divine  
justice delivers thee unto a more rapid and an eternal fire and torments which shall not leave hold  
13 on thee to all eternity. Art thou not ashamed, being a man, O wretch with the heart of a wild  
beast, to take men of like feelings with thyself, made from the same elements, and tear out their  
14 tongues, and scourge and torture them in this manner? But while they have fulfilled their righteous-  
15 ness towards God in their noble deaths, thou shalt miserably cry "Woe is me!" for thy unjust slaying of  
16, 17 the champions of virtue.' And then standing on the brink of death he said, 'I am no renegade to  
18 the witness borne by my brethren. And I call upon the God of my fathers to be merciful unto my  
19, 20 nation. And thee will he punish both in this present life and after that thou art dead.' And with  
this prayer he cast himself into the red-hot brazier, and so gave up the ghost.

13 1 If therefore the seven brethren despised the tortures even to the death, it is universally proved  
2 that the Inspired Reason is supreme lord over the passions. For if they had yielded to their passions  
or sufferings and eaten unclean meat, we should have said that they had been conquered thereby.  
3 But in this case it was not so; on the contrary by their Reason, which was commended in the sight  
4 of God, they rose superior to their passions. And it is impossible to deny the supremacy of the  
5 mind; for they won the victory over their passions and their pains. How can we do otherwise than  
admit right Reason's mastery over passion with these men who shrank not before the agonies of

18. ἐπιμελώς 19. αὐτοῦ καὶ N 20. ἀγωνος N Syr. XII. 6. εαυτὴν ἐλεῆσασα . . . . . ἐπὶ τὴν σωτηρίον εὐπειθειαν N  
Syr. XIII. 2. εἰ N αν N

19. sharp skewers. Erasmus has 'Subulis etiam ferire pendentis latera ad viscera iubet, ut per eas (quae his ductae erant in longum tramitem) rimas ad intimas fibras flamma perveniret'.

XII. 7. speaking in the Hebrew tongue. Erasmus chooses to insert her speech at this point instead of keeping it back as the author had done. He also adds, borrowing from I know not where, or else inventing, a long torture scene with the seventh son; and in the son's speech he introduces (apparently after verse 12) 'Sit enim inter te et reliquos discretio potestatis. Numquid alterius tu operis, tuve alterius naturae homo es? Una nascendi et moriendi omnibus ratio est. Quisquis hominem interficit, interfici se posse confirmat. Tu effigiem tuam laceras, tu in torquendo nihil proficis.'



6 burning? For even as towers on harbour-moles repulse the assaults of the waves and offer a calm  
 7 entrance to those entering the haven, so the seven-towered right Reason of the youths defended the  
 8 haven of righteousness and repulsed the tempestuousness of the passions. They formed a holy choir  
 9 of righteousness as they cheered one another on, saying: 'Let us die like brothers, O brethren, for  
 the Law. Let us imitate the Three Children at the Assyrian court who despised this same ordeal of  
 10, 11 the furnace. Let us not turn cravens before the proof of righteousness.' And one said, 'Brother, be  
 12 of good cheer,' and another, 'Bear it out nobly'; and another, recalling the past, 'Remember of what  
 stock ye are, and at whose fatherly hand Isaac for righteousness' sake yielded himself to be a sacri-  
 13 fice.' And each and all of them together, looking at each other brightly and very boldly, said, 'With  
 a whole heart will we consecrate ourselves unto God who gave us our souls, and let us lend our bodies  
 14, 15 to the keeping of the Law. Let us not fear him who thinketh he kills; for a great struggle and  
 16 peril of the soul awaits in eternal torment those who transgress the ordinance of God. Let us then  
 17 arm ourselves with divine Reason's mastery of the passions. After this our passion, Abraham, Isaac,  
 and Jacob shall receive us, and all our forefathers shall praise us.'  
 18 And to each separate one of the brothers, as they were dragged off, those whose turn was yet to  
 come said, 'Do not disgrace us, brother, nor be false to our brethren already dead.'  
 19 You are not ignorant of the love of brethren, whereof the divine and all-wise Providence has given  
 an inheritance to those who are begotten though their fathers, implanting it in them even through  
 20 the mother's womb; wherein brethren do dwell the like period, and take their form during the same  
 21 time, and are nourished from the same blood, and are quickened with the same soul, and are brought  
 into the world after the same space, and they draw milk from the same founts, whereby their frater-  
 22 nal souls are nursed together in arms at the breast; and they are knit yet closer through a common  
 nurture and daily companionship and other education, and through our discipline under the Law  
 of God.  
 23 The feeling of brotherly love being thus naturally strong, the seven brethren had their mutual  
 24 concord made yet stronger. For trained in the same Law, and disciplined in the same virtues, and  
 25 brought up together in the upright life, they loved one another the more abundantly. Their  
 26 common zeal for moral beauty and goodness heightened their mutual concord, for in conjunction  
 with their piety it rendered their brotherly love more fervent.  
 27 But though nature, companionship, and their virtuous disposition increased the ardour of their  
 brotherly love, nevertheless the surviving sons through their religion supported the sight of their  
 14 1 brethren, who were on the rack, being tortured to death; nay more, they even encouraged them to  
 face the agony, so as not only to despise their own tortures, but also to conquer their passion of  
 2 brotherly affection for their brethren. O Reasoning minds, more kingly than kings, than freemen  
 3 more free, of the harmony of the seven brethren, holy and well attuned to the keynote of piety!  
 4, 5 None of the seven youths turned coward, none shrunk in the face of death, but all hastened to  
 6 the death by torture as if running the road to immortality. For as hands and feet move in har-  
 mony with the promptings of the soul, so those holy youths, as if prompted by the immortal soul  
 7 of religion, went in harmony to death for its sake. O all-holy sevenfold companionship of brethren  
 8 in harmony! For as the seven days of the creation of the world do enring religion, so did the youths

9. Ἀσσυρίας (ασ superscrip.). 12. καταμνησθεῖς M V Syr. 19. ἀδελφοῦτος N 24. εαυτους ἡγαπων N V Syr.  
 XIV. 2. βασιλέων N V 3. εναρμωστού N

XIV. 2. **more kingly than kings**, βασιλέων βασιλικότεροι. The Stoics held that the wise man alone was a king: *μόνον εἶναι τὸν σοφὸν βασιλέα καὶ βασιλικόν* (Stob. *Eth.* ii. [222] of Heeren's ed.). Also we have in Diog. Laert. vii. 122 *οὐ μόνον δ' ἐλευθέρους εἶναι τοὺς σοφοὺς ἀλλὰ καὶ βασιλέας, τῆς βασιλείας οὐσίας ἀρχῆς ἀντυπευθύνου*.

8. **the seven days of the creation**, ὡς περὶ τὴν ἑβδομάδα χορεύοντες κτλ. Erasmus paraphrases thus: 'Quos (credo) propterea in eo numero esse voluit in quo mundum ipse construxit, ut septem fratres septem dierum, quibus perfecta sunt omnia, aemuli redderentur.' The general sense of the passage in the Greek is clear enough, though a word for word translation does not yield very intelligible English, and Deissman accordingly transposes *ἑβδομάδα* and *εὐσεβειαν*, and renders it 'For as the seven days of creation around the (sacred) number seven, so circled the youths in chorus round piety'. Grimm describes the passage as a forced comparison in the style of the Alexandrian mystics; the seven days of the week were meant by God to recall to His people's minds the sacred seven days of creation; and the figure seven being thus a means of grace, this sacred number stands in the text as a visible expression of the piety which was the centre of these young men's lives. Doubtless the above explains well the Jewish feeling of reverence for the mystical nature of seven. This feeling of reverence was, however, common to other ancient peoples besides the Jews, and most students of early man now incline to the belief that the sacred number seven derived its mystic significance from astrology. Astrology, indeed, was forbidden to the Jews, but that need not prevent their having assimilated ideas to which it had given birth elsewhere. When first men began to observe the stars attentively, it presently appeared that in the heavens, visible to the naked eye, there were certain bodies that were always changing their position among the fixed stars; and ultimately men succeeded in tracing out, more or less correctly, their motions and calculating their periodic times. These times ran from the Moon's one month to the thirty years of Saturn, and



- choir-like enring their sevenfold companionship, and made the terror of the tortures of no account.
- 9 We now shudder when we hear of the suffering of those youths; but they, not only seeing it with their eyes, nor merely hearing the spoken, imminent threat, but actually feeling the pang, endured it through; and that in the torture by fire, than which what greater agony can be found? For sharp and stringent is the power of fire, and swiftly did it bring their bodies to dissolution.
- 11 And think it not wonderful if with those men Reason triumphed over the tortures, when even 12 a woman's soul despised a yet greater diversity of pains; for the mother of the seven youths endured the torments inflicted on each several one of her children.
- 13 But consider how manifold are the yearnings of a mother's heart, so that her feeling for her 14 offspring becomes the centre of her whole world; and indeed, here, even the irrational animals have 15 for their young an affection and love similar to men's. For example, among the birds, the tame 16 ones sheltering under our roofs defend their nestlings; and those that nest upon the mountain 17 tops, and in the rock clefts, and in the holes of trees, and in the branches, and hatch their young 18 there, do also drive away the intruder. And then, if they be unable to drive him away, they flutter 19 around the nestlings in a passion of love, calling to them in their own speech, and they give suc- 20 cour to their young ones in whatever fashion they can. And what need have we of examples of the 21 love of offspring among irrational animals, when even the bees, about the season of the making 22 of the comb, fend off intruders, and stab with their sting, as with a sword, those who approach their 23 brood, and do battle against them even to the death? But she, the mother of those young men, 24 with a soul like Abraham, was not moved from her purpose by her affection for her children.
- 15 1 O Reason of the sons, lord over the passions! O religion, that wast dearer to the mother than 2 her children! The mother, having two choices before her, religion and the present saving alive of 3 her seven sons according to the tyrant's promise, loved rather religion, which saveth unto eternal 4 life according to God. O how may I express the passionate love of parents for children? We stamp 5 a marvellous likeness of our soul and of our shape on the tender nature of the child, and most of all 6 through the mother's sympathy with her children being deeper than the father's. For women are 7 softer of soul than men, and the more children they bear the more do they abound in love for them. 8 But, of all mothers, she of the seven sons abounded in love beyond the rest, seeing that, having in 9 seven child-bearings felt maternal tenderness for the fruit of her womb, and having been constrained 10 because of the many pangs in which she bore each to a close affection, she nevertheless through the 11 fear of God rejected the present safety of her children. Ay, and more than that, through the moral 12 beauty and goodness of her sons and their obedience to the Law, her maternal love for them was 13 made stronger. For they were just, and temperate, and brave, and great-souled, and lovers of each 14 other and of their mother in such manner that they obeyed her in the keeping of the Law even unto

XV. 4. (:) after παθη

εναποσφραγιζομεν N\*

το των πατερων V

7. ηναγκασμενη N V

their proper motions were seen to be confined within the broad belt of the heavens known to us as the Zodiac. Seven was found to be the number of these πλάνητες or Wanderers, who did indeed appear to go like the fixed stars round the earth from east to west once in every twenty-four hours, but, as was well known to Chaldaean, Egyptian, and Greek star-gazers, had likewise another exceedingly complicated set of movements peculiar to themselves. The direction of these movements was retrograde or from west to east: ἀπὸ γὰρ δυσμῶν ἐπ' ἀνατολὰς ἀντιφέρεσθαι says Plutarch (*Plac. Phil.* ii. 16), describing the astronomical knowledge possessed by Alcmaeon and the mathematicians. And the early star-gazers, who by painful labour had obtained this difficult knowledge, took these movements of the mysterious Seven, their journeyings and their standings still, their oppositions and their conjunctions, to be the visible hand of Fate writing the scroll of man's destiny upon the sky. Thus the sacred Seven, the Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn, to whom in the course of time were assigned the different hours of the day and after whom were named the days of the week, came to be honoured as the lords of heaven and earth, and the very number of them, seven, was nothing less than a power to conjure with.

9. **We now shudder.** An important inference can be drawn from this phrase. It is true that *νῦν* may mean no more than that the discourse is being delivered on the anniversary of the martyrs. But it has also been taken to indicate something further, namely, that the audience shudder at the past as contrasted with the present state of things in which they find themselves. If this be so, it certainly points to a time when the Jews in Alexandria had little or no personal experience of persecution, and necessarily indicates for the discourse a date previous to the awful persecution under Caligula in A.D. 38. See § 5.

XV. 4. **a marvellous likeness**, ψυχῆς τε καὶ μορφῆς ὁμοιότητα. There is a whole literature, ancient as well as modern, on heredity and the mysterious relation of parent to child in mind as well as body. I will only quote here a fragment of Cleanthes from Nemesius, *Nat. Hom.*, p. 32 (see Pearson, *Fragm. Cleanthes*, 36) 'Ὁ Κλεάνθης τοιόνδε πλέκει συλλογισμόν' οὐ μόνον φησὶν ὅμοιοι τοῖς γονεῦσι γινόμεθα κατὰ τὸ σῶμα ἀλλὰ καὶ κατὰ τὴν ψυχὴν, τοῖς πάθεσι, τοῖς ἡθέσι, ταῖς διαθέσεσι: and also this from Plut. *Plac. Phil.* lib. 5, cap. 11 οἱ Στωικοί, ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος ὅλου καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς φέρεσθαι τὰ σπέρματα, καὶ τὰς ὁμοιότητας ἀνυπλάττεσθαι ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν γενῶν τοὺς τύπους καὶ τοὺς χαρακτῆρας, ὥσπερα νεὶ ζωγράφον ἀπὸ ὁμοίων χρωμάτων εἰκόνα τοῦ βλεπομένου. And yet one more from cap. 12, where he makes the curious statement that certain women have admired statues so passionately as to produce children like them: πολλάκις γὰρ εἰκόνων καὶ ἀνδριάντων ἡράσθησαν γυναῖκες, καὶ ὅμοια τούτοις ἀπέτεκον. οἱ Στωικοί, συμπαθεία τῆς διανοίας, κατὰ ῥευμάτων εἰσκήρσεις καὶ ἀκτίνων, οὐκ εἰδῶλων, γίνεσθαι τὰς ἀλλήλων ὁμοιότητας.



11 death. But nevertheless, though she had so many temptations to yield to her maternal instincts, in no single instance did the dreadful variety of tortures have power to alter her Reason ;  
 12, 13 but the mother urged each son separately, and all together, to die for their religion. O holy nature, and parental love, and yearning of parents for offspring, and wages of nursing, and unconquerable  
 14 affection of mothers! The mother, seeing them one by one racked and burned, remained unshaken  
 15 in soul for religion's sake. She saw the flesh of her sons being consumed in the fire, and the extremities of their hands and feet scattered on the ground, and the flesh-coverings, torn off from  
 16 their heads right to their cheeks, strewn about like masks. O mother, who now knew sharper  
 17 pangs than the pangs of labour! O woman, alone among women, the fruit of whose womb was  
 18 perfect religion! Thy firstborn, giving up the ghost, did not alter thy resolution, nor thy second,  
 19 looking with eyes of pity on thee under his tortures, nor thy third, breathing out his spirit. Neither  
 didst thou weep when thou beheldest the eyes of each amid the torments looking boldly on the same  
 20 anguish, and sawest in their *quivering* nostrils the signs of approaching death. When thou sawest  
 the flesh of one son being severed after the flesh of another, and hand after hand being cut off, and  
 head after head being flayed, and corpse cast upon corpse, and the place crowded with spectators  
 21 on account of the tortures of thy children, thou sheddest not a tear. Not the melodies of the sirens  
 nor the songs of swans with sweet sound do so charm the hearers' ears, as sounded the voices of the  
 22 sons, speaking to the mother from amid the torments. How many and how great were the tortures  
 with which the mother was tormented while her sons were being tortured with torments of rack and  
 23 fire! But Inspired Reason lent her heart a man's strength under her passion of suffering, and  
 exalted her to make no account of the present yearnings of mother-love.  
 24 And although she saw the destruction of her seven children and the many and varied forms of  
 25 their torments, the noble mother willingly surrendered them through faith in God. For she beheld  
 in her own mind, even as it had been cunning advocates in a council-chamber, nature, and parenthood,  
 26 and mother-love, and her children on the rack, and it was as if she, the mother, having the choice  
 27 between two votes in the case of her children, one for their death and one to save them alive, thereupon  
 28 regarded not the saving of her seven sons for a little time, but, as a true daughter of Abraham, called  
 29 to mind his God-fearing courage. O mother of the race, vindicator of our Law, defender of our religion,  
 30 and winner of the prize in the struggle within thyself! O woman, nobler to resist than men, and braver  
 31 than warriors to endure! For as the Ark of Noah, with the *whole living* world for her burden in  
 32 the world-whelming Deluge, did withstand the mighty surges, so thou, the keeper of the Law, beaten  
 upon every side by the surging waves of the passions, and strained as with strong blasts by the  
 tortures of thy sons, didst nobly weather the storms that assailed thee for religion's sake.  
 16 1 Thus then, if one both a woman and advanced in years, and the mother of seven sons, endured  
 the sight of her children being tortured to death, the Inspired Reason must confessedly be supreme  
 2 ruler over the passions. I have proved, accordingly, that not only have men triumphed over their  
 3 sufferings, but that a woman also has despised the most dreadful tortures. And not so fierce were  
 the lions around Daniel, not so hot was the burning fiery furnace of Mishael, as burned in her the  
 4 instinct of motherhood at the sight of her seven sons being tortured. But by her religion-guided  
 5 Reason the mother quenched her passions, many and strong as they were. For there is this also to

11. +βασανוי 13. γενεσει V: γενεσις Syr. 18. εις]+σε NV 21. ως NV Syr. 32. υπερ NV Syr.  
 XVI. 3. εκεινην ορωσαν V Syr. ουτως ποικιλως NV Syr.

13. **wages of nursing.** Deissmann would read *γένεσις φιλόστοργε καὶ τροφέ*, and objects to Grimm who upholds *τροφέα*. The MS. authority for *γένεσις* is weak, but V reads *γενέσει*; and *γένεσις*, according to Bensly, has the support of the Syriac, and it makes good sense with or without Deissmann's emendation of *τροφέ*. The Strassburg text has *ὁ φύσις ἱερὰ καὶ φίλτρα γονέων, καὶ σύνεσις φιλόστοργε, καὶ τροφέα, καὶ μητέρων ἀδάμαστα πάθη*, which Lloyd keeps, rendering, 'O sanctissimam naturam, amorisque parentum illecebras; et intelligentiam indulgentissimam, et nutricia, matrumque motus indomitos.' The marginal collation in the Bodleian copy of the Geneva edition of 1611 has the curious variation *γοναὶ φιλόστοργοι καὶ τροφέαι*. I have attempted to render *γένεσις φιλόστοργε, καὶ τροφέα*.

20. **the place crowded.** The text here is very corrupt: *χωριον* (A) gives good sense and has the support of V, but there is another reading *χοριον* (N\*) or *χοριδιον* (N<sup>c</sup>.a) which appears as *χορειον*, a dancing-place, in the Strassburg LXX; *χορειον* would undoubtedly be quite in the author's rhetorical style, as it would artfully recall his comparison in viii. 4 of the band of youths to a *χορός* or festal choir with the mother in their midst, and also allude to *χορεύοντες* above in xiv. 8. The Syriac has the strange rendering, 'when she saw the servants of the tyrant falling like a storm upon her sons,' which does not seem reconcilable with any Greek text known to us.

29. **the struggle within thyself.** These are the *οἱ ἐνδοθεν πόνοι* as distinguished in xviii. 2 from *οἱ ἔξωθεν πόνοι*, the physical tortures. We may note again in *ἀδλοφόρε* how the author recurs to the comparison with the Greek games.

31. **her burden in the world-whelming Deluge.** *κοσμοπληθής* and *κοσμοφορεῖν* are vigorous compounds coined by the author, and good specimens of their sort, just as the whole passage is typical of his rhetoric. The three alliterative quadrisyllables, rolling in like waves one after the other, aim at something like the Homeric *πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης*. I have attempted a slight imitation of his effect with 'world-whelming' and 'whole living world'.



- consider, that had the woman been weak of spirit, despite her motherhood, she might have wept  
 6 over them, and perchance spoken thus: 'Ah, thrice wretched me, and more than thrice wretched!  
 7 Seven children have I borne and am left childless! In vain was I seven times with child, and to no  
 profit was my ten months' burden seven times borne, and fruitless have been my nursings, and  
 8 sorrowful my sucklings. In vain for you, O my sons, did I endure the many pangs of labour, and  
 9 the more difficult cares of your upbringing. Alas, for my sons, that some were yet unwed, and those  
 that were wedded had begotten no children; I shall never see children of yours, nor shall I be called  
 10 by the name of grandparent. Ah me, that had many beautiful children, and am a widow and  
 11 desolate in my woe! Neither will there be any son to bury me when I am dead!'  
 12 But the holy and God-fearing mother wailed not with this lamentation over any one of them, neither  
 13 besought she any to escape death, nor lamented over them as dying men; but, as though she had a  
 soul of adamant and were bringing forth the number of her sons, for a second time, into immortal life,  
 14 she besought rather and entreated of them that they should die for religion's sake. O mother, warrior  
 of God in the cause of religion, old and a woman, thou didst both defeat the tyrant by thy endurance,  
 15 and wast found stronger than a man, in deeds as well as words. For verily when thou wast put in  
 bonds with thy sons, thou stoodest there seeing Eleazar being tortured, and thou spakest to thy  
 16 sons in the Hebrew tongue: 'My sons, noble is the fight; and do ye, being called thereto to bear  
 17 witness for our nation, fight therein zealously on behalf of the Law of our fathers. For it would be  
 shameful if, while this aged man endured the agony for religion's sake, you that are young men shrank  
 18 before the pain. Remember that for the sake of God ye have come into the world, and have enjoyed  
 19, 20 life, and that therefore ye owe it to God to endure all pain for his sake; for whom also our father  
 Abraham made haste to sacrifice his son Isaac, the ancestor of our nation; and Isaac, seeing his  
 21 father's hand lifting the knife against him, did not shrink. And Daniel, the just man, was cast to  
 the lions, and Ananias, Azarias, and Mishael were flung into the furnace of fire, and they endured  
 22, 23 for God's sake. And ye also, having the same faith unto God, be not troubled; for it were against  
 Reason that ye, knowing righteousness, should not withstand the pains.'  
 24 With these words the mother of the seven encouraged every single one of her sons to die rather  
 25 than transgress the ordinance of God; they themselves also knowing well that men dying for God  
 live unto God, as live Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the patriarchs.  
 17 <sup>1</sup> Some of the guards declared that when she also was about to be seized and put to death, she  
<sup>2</sup> cast herself on the pyre in order that no man might touch her body. O mother, that together

20. ὁρῶν ὁ Ἰσαακ Syr.

24. ἀποθανεῖν N Syr.

25. εἰδότες N V

XVII. 1. τις N V Syr.

XVI. 14. old and a woman. The Syriac has 'who didst go a warfare in old age'.

20. ancestor of our nation. *ἐθνοπάτωρ* is another of the author's coinages like *ἐθνοπληθός* in vii. 11. He has an affection for the word *ἔθνος*, much as some English writers like to speak of 'our people', by way of heightening the sense of union between author and reader as belonging to a nation set apart for great ends.25. knowing well. I have accepted the reading of N, *εἰδότες*, but it really seems to me that I have translated *εἰδότες*, which Grimm adopts apparently without MS. authority. In this I rely upon Deissmann, whose note I translate verbatim: 'Read with Sin. Ven. *εἰδότες*. Freudenthal, S. 123 f., is unjust in his complaints of the "ungrammatical sequence". For this formal and rigid *εἰδότες* is found elsewhere: 2 Cor. i. 7, Rom. xiii. 11. Egyptian report of the Berlin Museum No. 246, Z. 11 f. Private letter, Fayoum, 2-3 century A.D.: *ἡ οὐκ ἰδότες (sic) ὅτι νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐντυγχάνω (sic) τῷ θεῷ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν*. The nominative plural of a participle in other instances readily becomes an anacolouthon.'XVII. 1. she cast herself, *ἐαυτὴν ἔρριψεν κατὰ τῆς πυρᾶς*. It is curious in what a sidelong fashion the author does but hint at the suicide of the woman. The writer of Second Maccabees never alludes to it at all, though he can hardly have considered it wrong, for the act is nowhere forbidden in the Old Testament and he himself celebrates (xv. 42) the self-inflicted death of Razis, who 'fell upon his sword, choosing rather to die manfully, than to come into the hands of the wicked, to be abused otherwise than becomed his noble birth'. It is well known that the Stoics habitually advocated suicide, *ἐξαγωγή*, when life became a burden, but the author of Fourth Maccabees makes no allusion to this, neither does he quote the various Old Testament instances of it. There is, indeed, only one case in the O.T. that can really be considered analogous to the Mother's, for Samson's deed in pulling down the house on himself and his enemies must be classed as an act of war, and was no more suicide than the self-devotion of Arnold von Winkelried embracing the spears at Sempach, or of Salkeld and Burgess blowing in the Cashmere Gate at Delhi. There is, however, an exact parallel in the case of Saul, when he killed himself (or had himself killed) 'lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me'. Erasmus does not mention the mother's suicide, unless indeed 'ultro' is intended to suggest it, but (as already mentioned in § 8) he pictures the woman as being in the first instance most horribly tortured by Antiochus, and then, 'being brought to the fire-vomiting brazier,' she of her own accord (*ultro*) joins her sons who had been already burnt, in their pains, 'ac oratione protensis surrectisque manibus pro gravidis matribus fusa coelibem effudit spiritum'; where *coelibem* is quite un-Jewish and mediaeval. As to the morality of such an act opinions differ and will differ to the end of time. During the Indian Mutiny, near sixty years ago, a bishop of the Irish Church gave it as his opinion that it was morally justifiable for white women there to choose death before outrage, and those who know anything of savage warfare, be it in India, or Africa, or America, or even in Europe (for we still have savages in Europe), will agree with him. As to such a deed being cowardly, I can only



with thy seven sons didst break the tyrant's force, and bring to nought his evil devices, and gavest an example of the nobleness of faith. Thou wert nobly set as a roof upon thy sons as pillars, and the earthquake of the torments shook thee not at all. Rejoice therefore, pure-souled mother, having the hope of thy endurance certain at the hand of God. Not so majestic stands the moon amid the stars in heaven as thou, having lit the path of thy seven starlike sons unto righteousness, standest in honour with God; and thou art set in heaven with them. For thy child-bearing was from the son of Abraham. And had it been lawful for us to paint, as might some *artist*, the tale of thy piety, would not the spectators have shuddered at the mother of seven sons suffering for righteousness' sake multitudinous tortures even unto death? And indeed it were fitting to inscribe these words over their resting-place, speaking for a memorial to future generations of our people:

HERE LIE AN AGED PRIEST  
AND A WOMAN FULL OF YEARS  
AND HER SEVEN SONS  
THROUGH THE VIOLENCE OF A TYRANT  
SIRING TO DESTROY THE HEBREW NATION.  
Y VINDICATED THE RIGHTS OF OUR PEOP  
LOOKING UNTO GOD AND ENDURING  
THE TORMENTS EVEN UNTO DEATH.

11, 12 For truly it was a holy war which was fought by them. For on that day virtue, proving them  
13 through endurance, set before them the prize of victory in incorruption in everlasting life. But the  
first in the fight was Eleazar, and the mother of the seven sons played her part, and the brethren  
14 fought. The tyrant was their adversary and the world and the life of man were the spectators.  
15, 16 And righteousness won the victory, and gave the crown to her athletes. Who but wondered at the  
17 athletes of the true Law? Who were not amazed at them? The tyrant himself and his whole  
18 council admired their endurance, whereby they now do both stand beside the throne of God and  
19 live the blessed age. For Moses says, 'All also who have sanctified themselves are under thy  
20 hands.' And these men, therefore, having sanctified themselves for God's sake, not only have  
received this honour, but also *the honour* that through them the enemy had no more power  
21, 22 over our people, and the tyrant suffered punishment, and our country was purified, they having  
as it were become a ransom for our nation's sin; and through the blood of these righteous men  
and the propitiation of their death, the divine Providence delivered Israel that before was evil  
23 entreated. For when the tyrant Antiochus saw the heroism of their virtue, and their endurance  
24 under the tortures, he publicly held up their endurance to his soldiers as an example; and he thus

3. στυλους Ν V

4. *βεβαιαν* N V

7. ὡς ἐπὶ τινος N<sup>o</sup> V Syr.

ευτεβιας σου ιστοριαν N V

say that a few years ago, when the Red Indian tortures still awaited captives, many frontiersmen, men whom it would hardly have been safe to call cowards, made no secret that they intended to keep their last bullet (if need be) for themselves. As to whether a woman could harden her heart to the act, let me borrow the words of the author of this book, *πολλαχόθεν μὲν οὐκ καὶ ἀλλαχόθεν ἔχομεν* *ἀν ὅρην ἐπιδείξει*, and say that many a woman in every age and every land has chosen death rather than that polluted hands should touch her body.

7. some artist, *ὡς ἐπὶ τινας*. The conjecture *πίνακος* is highly plausible, but lacks MS. authority; and if we take *ἐπὶ* as 'after', i.e. 'in the style of', *πίνακος* is not really needed, for the word *ζωγραφῆσαι* itself must imply an artist to paint the picture. In § 8 I have discussed the very striking allusion to this passage in Chrysostom's *τοὺς ἀγῶνας καὶ τὰ παλαίσματα ὥσπερ ἐπὶ πίνακος τινας τῆς καρδίας ἡμῶν ἀπογράφαντες*, and also the curious turn given to it by Erasmus when he suggests that the figure of the martyr might be made into an amulet. The latter quite excels himself in his paraphrase of the first part of the passage: 'Si possit in picturam aliquam manus humana describere et victorum omnium poenarum genus in posteris ceris, ut gestum constitit, explicare, sine lachrymis nemo transiret, omnis utique multitudo conflueret, suffragarentur plurimi, et multa videretur donasse qui in gloriam summi dei stratagemata depinxisset.'

8. for a memorial. τοῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔθνους εἰς μνείαν λεγόμενα. The author may well have been thinking of the great monument of polished white stone, rising above a cloister with monolithic columns of the same, which Simon Maccabeus set up in memory of his parents and his brethren at Modin near Joppa. Neither Josephus in his *Antiquities* nor the author of 1 Macc. speaks of any inscription on the monument, though the latter mentions the armour of the heroes being set on the pillars, 'and by the armour ships carved, that they might be seen of all that sail on the sea.' But some fitting inscription there must have been of a tenor not unlike that proposed here. Of course to employ sculpture to represent Jewish heroes and martyrs was out of the question, but our author in the verses which follow uses the imagery of the Greek games, making the tyrant and the martyrs, as it were, competitors, in a way to give the idea of a frieze—may one say?—like that of a Greek temple, commemorating their exploits.

19. **under thy hands.** πάντες οἱ ἡγιασμένοι ὑπὸ τὰς χεῖράς σου. This is taken word for word from Deut. xxxiii. 3.

22. **having as it were become a ransom.** ὡς περ ἀντίψυχον γενόμενος. The idea of the deaths of the martyrs becoming a ransom for the sin of Israel has been noticed in § 9, and the deliverance of Israel through them in the note on i. 11.

24. as an example. One would like further evidence before giving credence to the story that Antiochus publicly



inspired his men with a sense of honour and heroism on the field of battle and in the labours of besieging, so that he plundered and overthrew all his enemies.

- 18 <sup>1</sup> O Israelites, children born of the seed of Abraham, obey this Law, and be righteous in all ways, <sup>2</sup> recognizing that Inspired Reason is lord over the passions, and over pains, not only from within, <sup>3</sup> but from without ourselves; by which means those men, delivering up their bodies to the torture for righteousness' sake, not only won the admiration of mankind, but were deemed worthy of <sup>4</sup> a divine inheritance. And through them the nation obtained peace and restoring the observance of the Law in our country hath captured the city from the enemy. <sup>5</sup> And vengeance hath pursued the tyrant Antiochus upon earth, and in death he suffers punishment. For when he failed utterly to constrain the people of Jerusalem to live like Gentiles and abandon the customs of our fathers, he thereupon left Jerusalem and marched away against the Persians. <sup>6</sup> Now these are the words that the mother of the seven sons, the righteous woman, spake to her <sup>7</sup> children: 'I was a pure maiden, and I strayed not from my father's house, and I kept guard over <sup>8</sup> the rib that was builded into Eve. No seducer of the desert, no deceiver in the field, corrupted me; <sup>9</sup> nor did the false, beguiling Serpent sully the purity of my maidenhood; I lived with my husband all the days of my youth; but when these my sons were grown up, their father died. Happy was <sup>10</sup> he; for he lived a life blessed with children, and he never knew the pain of their loss. Who, <sup>11</sup> while he was yet with us, taught you the Law and the prophets. He read to us of Abel who was slain by Cain, and of Isaac who was offered as a burnt-offering, and of Joseph in the prison. <sup>12</sup> And he spake to us of Phineas, the zealous priest, and he taught you the song of Ananias, Azarias, <sup>13</sup> and Mishael in the fire. And he glorified also Daniel in the den of lions, and blessed him; and <sup>14</sup> he called to your minds the saying of Isaiah, "Yea even though thou pass through the fire, the

XVIII. 5. εθων V Syr. 9. επιζητας N c-a V

extolled them to his troops. The text here is practically the same as that of the Strasburg LXX, and also as that of Lloyd, but Erasmus, followed by Lloyd, takes the latter part of the sentence in a way that is hard to reconcile with the original: 'videns namque Antiochus magnitudinem fidei mortisque contemptum peditum sibi legiones ex Hebraeorum numero congregat, per quas hostem perculit, et laudis plurimum cepit.' If this be so the Syrian king would have understood William III's feeling, when he met in battle the brave exiles whom the penal laws had driven from Ireland, and cried, 'Cursed be the laws that deprive me of such soldiers.' But history knows nothing of these Hebrew legions, and Antiochus, like William, had to do without the soldiers whose religion he could not shake.

**all his enemies.** καὶ ἐκπορθήσας ἐνίκησεν πάντας τοὺς πολεμίους. This is one way of drawing a moral from history. Whether Antiochus fired his soldiers by the martyrs' example or not, he did certainly after leaving Jerusalem conquer Armenia and no small part of Persia. And as it would rather spoil the moral to say that in the full tide of success he failed miserably in an attack on an obscure Persian temple and died almost immediately after, the fatal ending is quietly dropped just for the moment. But of course the audience knew perfectly well the story of Antiochus' death, so the author covers himself by deftly alluding to it five verses later, where he says that vengeance pursued the tyrant upon earth, and in death he suffers punishment still. It is a neat rhetorical turn.

XVIII. 2. **from within.** οἱ ἐνδοθεν πόνοι are mental sufferings, οἱ ἐξωθεν πόνοι are physical: see on xv. 29 and vi. 35. **4. restoring the observance,** ἀνανεωσάμενος. If we keep this reading we must take it that some masculine word like Israel equivalent to τὸ ἔθνος is the subject understood. The alternative is to read the plural forms given in N and V both for the participle and the verb, and make the subject simply 'they', or even 'the Maccabees' understood. Historically the statement is correct; for the Maccabees truly did recapture Jerusalem and restore the Law and win Jewish independence.

**7. I strayed not,** οὐχ ὑπερέβην πατρικὸν οἶκον. Erasmus translates word for word, 'domum patriam non reliqui'. This home-keeping habit was of course a virtue highly extolled in a Jewess, and certainly the race seems to have found a certain profit in the strictness with which it has been practised.

**the rib that was builded,** τὴν ὀκοδομένην πλευράν. In the translation I have added *into Eve* to make the sense clear. Grimm at one time held the idea that the phrase might mean 'the woman's side of the house', but he gave it up. The allusion to the Garden of Eden and the creation of Eve is infinitely more in keeping with Jewish style and taste. The actual words in Genesis are καὶ ὀκοδόμησεν ὁ θεὸς τὴν πλευράν, ἣν ἔλαβεν ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἀδάμ. The moral of the passage is that a woman gets her body, as it were, direct from God, and should therefore keep it worthy of Him.

**8. No seducer of the desert,** λυμεὼν τῆς ἐρημίας φθορεὺς ἐν πεδίῳ. This is a curious instance of the Jewish belief that evil spirits haunted the waste, to which we have references in the New Testament. It seems hardly credible to us, but the Jews did actually believe that out in the desert there were demons who would lie in wait for women and lead them astray. The Australian Arunta similarly hold that certain rocky places in their deserts are the habitation of wanton spirits, and that women venturing near them may become mothers, apparently without knowing it. And for the Jew the Prince of the demons was Satan, the λυμεὼν ἀπάτης ὄφεις who had started his campaign against mankind by corrupting Eve. The authors of *Synagogue Religion and Worship*, already quoted, say, 'Jewish traditions vary, however, as to the reason of Satan's tempting Eve; in several passages it is stated that Satan's lust towards her brought about her fall; see *Bereshith rabbah*, c. 18, 19; *Sanhedrin* 59<sup>b</sup>; *Sotah* 9<sup>b</sup>; *Yebamoth* 103<sup>b</sup>; *Abodah zarah* 22<sup>b</sup>.' Philo has some curious remarks about the woman and the serpent in *Sacr. Leg. All.* iii. 20, 21. He calls ἡδονή snakelike, and declares that ἡ ἡδονὴ ἐξ ἐαυτῆς ἐστὶ μαχηθρὰ.

**9. these my sons.** It looks as though some phrase such as 'and bore him seven sons' were omitted between 8 and 9. It is therefore necessary to insert 'my sons' in 9 to explain τοῦτων.



# THE FOURTH BOOK OF MACCABEES 18. 15-24

15 flame shall not hurt thee." He sang to us the words of David the psalmist, "Many are the afflictions  
16 of the just." He quoted to us the proverb of Solomon, "He is a tree of life to all them that do his  
17, 18 will." He confirmed the words of Ezekiel, "Shall these dry bones live?" For he forgot not the  
19 song that Moses taught, which teaches, "I will slay and I will make alive. This is your life and the  
blessedness of your days."

20 Ah, cruel was the day, and yet not cruel, when the cruel tyrant of the Greeks set the fire blazing  
for his barbarous braziers, and with his passions boiling brought to the catapult and back again to his  
21 tortures the seven sons of the daughter of Abraham, and blinded the eyeballs of their eyes, and cut  
22 out their tongues, and slew them with many kinds of torment. For which cause the judgement of  
23 God pursued, and shall pursue, the accursed wretch. But the sons of Abraham, with their victorious  
mother, are gathered together unto the place of their ancestors, having received pure and immortal  
24 souls from God, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

21. ἐπηρώσεν Ν<sup>1</sup>

23. **having received**, &c. These words point to an original difference between good and bad souls before their incorporation in the body. Cp. Wisd. viii. 19.