

CHIEF-PRIESTS OF JUDAH

CHAPTER 1 [Ant11:297-303]

Now after the chief-priest Eliashib had died, his boy Judah succeeded in the chief-priesthood. **2** Now after Judah had also come-to-his-end, his son Johanan assumed this honor. **3** And it was through him that Bagohi,¹ the general of Artaxerxes, defiled the inner-sanctum and imposed tributes upon the Judeans, so that prior to offering the daily sacrifices, they were required to pay 50 shekels out of the public treasury for every lamb.

4 Now Johanan had a brother named Jeshua, who was a friend of Bagohi. *Bagohi* promised to obtain the chief-priesthood for Jeshua. Therefore, with this assurance, Jeshua quarreled with Johanan in the inner-sanctum, provoking his brother so far that, in his anger, Johanan² even did away with him. **5** The fact that Johanan committed such an impious deed against his brother while serving as priest was terrible enough, *but* it was even more *terrible* that neither among Hellenes³ nor barbarians had such a savage and impious deed been committed. **6** However, the Deity was not indifferent to it; instead, it was also for this very reason that the people were enslaved, and that the inner-sanctum was defiled by the Persians.

7 Now when Bagohi, the general of Artaxerxes, learned that Johanan, the chief-priest of the Judeans, had murdered his own brother Jeshua in the temple, he immediately came upon the Judeans. **8** In fury, he began to say to them, “You have had the impudence to commit a murder in your own temple?”

9 But when he attempted to enter the inner-sanctum, they forbade him to do so. But he declared to them, “Am I not more pure than he who was done away with⁴ in the inner-sanctum?”

And after speaking these words, he went into the inner-sanctum. **10** Therefore, this was indeed the pretext Bagohi used in order to punish the Judeans for seven years on account of the end of Jeshua.

11 Now when Johanan had reached the end his life, his son Jaddua succeeded in the chief-priesthood. Now he also had a brother named Manasseh. **12** There was a certain Sanballat, who had been sent into Samaria by Darius, the last king of *Persia*. He was a Cuthean by race, from whom the Samaritans also descended. **13** This *man* knew that Jerusalem was a famous city, and that its kings had caused a great deal of trouble to the Assyrians and the settlers of Coelestria. **14** He had a daughter named Nikaso. Believing that a connection by marriage would be a pledge of *security* for the Judean nation to continue their goodwill toward him, he willingly gave his daughter in marriage to *Manasseh*.

CHAPTER 2 [Ant11:304-325]

About this time, Philippos, king of Makedon, was treacherously murdered *and* died at Aigai by Pausanias *son* of Kerastos, who was of the race of Orestae. Now Philippos' boy Alexandros succeeded him in the kingdom. **2** And after crossing the Hellespontos, he indeed defeated Darius' generals in a battle fought at Granikos; **3** but he invaded Lud, and enslaved Ionia, and overran Karia, *and* threw *his army* upon the region of Pamphylia.

4 Now the elder Jerusalemites resented the fact that the chief-priest Jaddua's brother (*that is, Manasseh*), was a partner with him in the chief-priesthood while being married to a foreigner. **5** So they quarreled with *Manasseh*. For they considered this marriage to be a stepping-stone for those who might be desirous to transgress the laws against taking *foreign* women, and that this would be the beginning of a common society with foreigners. **6** However, they believed that their former captivity and miseries had been caused by some who had caused offense by marrying and taking women who were not of their own country. **7** Therefore, they directed Manasseh either to part from his wife or to not approach the sacrificial-altar. **8** Now the chief-priest himself shared the indignation of the people against his brother, and *together*, they drove him away from the altar.

9 After this, Manasseh went to his father-in-law, Sanballat, *and* said to him, “Indeed, I am fond of your daughter Nikaso; yet however, I am unwilling to be deprived of the priestly honor on her account.” For this *honor* was the highest in their nation, and had always belonged to his race.

10 But Sanballat promised, “If you will keep my daughter as your wife, I will not only preserve the priesthood for you, *but* instead will also procure for you the power and honor of the chief-priest, and will appoint you as leader of all the places over which I myself now rule.” **11** And he further told him, “I will build an inner-sanctum on Mount Gerizim, like the one at Jerusalem.” For this mountain is the highest of all those in Samaria. And he professed, that he would do these *things* with the consent of King Darius.

12 Elated by these promises, Manasseh stayed with Sanballat, supposing that he would obtain the chief-priesthood as bestowed upon him by Darius. For it even happened that Sanballat was now an elderly-*man*.⁵

13 But great confusion seized the Jerusalemites, because many of those priests and Israelites were entangled in such *unlawful* marriages. For all of these deserted to Manasseh. **14** And Sanballat supplied them with money, and divided a country among them for cultivation, and assigned them a settlement; all this was done in order to gratify his son-in-law.

15 Now about this time, Darius was informed that Alexandros had crossed the Hellespontos and had defeated his satraps in the battle of Granikos, *and* was advancing further. **16** After this, *Darius*, being determined to encounter the Makedonians before they would subdue all Asia, gathered together an army of both cavalry and infantry. **17** Therefore, he crossed the Euphrates⁶ River, and passed over Taurus, the Kilikian mountain. *And* at Issus in Kilikia, he waited for his foes, ready to give them battle there.

18 Now Sanballat, who was glad that Darius had come down, told Manasseh, “I will fulfill my promises as soon as Darius returns from conquering his foes.” **19** For not only he himself, rather all those in Asia, were convinced that the Makedonians would not even come to a *hand-to-hand combat* with the Persians on account of their great number. **20** But the event proved other than they expected; for King Darius engaged the Makedonians but was beaten, and lost a great part of his army. His mother and *his* wife, and his children were taken captive, while he fled into Persia.

21 But when Alexandros came into Syria, he took Damasek. And once he had obtained Sidon, he besieged Tsor. **22** Now from there, he dispatched documents to the Judean chief-priest, requesting him both to send some auxiliaries, and to supply his army with provisions; **23** and *also requesting them* to choose the friendship of the Makedonians, by giving him the gifts which they had formerly sent to Darius. For he said that they would never change their mind *and cease* from *following* this course.

24 But the chief-priest answered the document-bearers, declaring to him, “I have given my oath to Darius not to bear arms against him. And I will not transgress this *oath* while Darius remains alive.”

25 When Alexandros heard this, he was provoked. And indeed, he decided not to leave Tsor, which was on the verge of being taken, **26** but threatened, “Once I have taken it, I will advance with my army against the Judean chief-priest, and through him⁷ teach all *men* to whom they must keep their oaths.” **27** For this reason, continuing the siege with greater effort, he took Tsor. **28** Now after he had settled affairs there, he advanced against the city of Gaza and besieged it together with the fortress-chief, whose name was Babemesis.⁸

29 Now before the destruction of Tsor, Sanballat, believing that he had a favorable opportunity for his design, indeed renounced Darius. **30** But taking with him 8,000⁹ of his own subjects, he came to Alexandros, and found him beginning the siege of Tsor. **31** Now Sanballat told him that he was delivering up to him the places under his government, and gladly accepted him as his master in place of Darius.

32 Now when Alexandros had kindly received him,¹⁰ Sanballat now felt confident about his place *and* spoke to him about his present affair. **33** He explained to *Alexandros*, “Indeed, I have a son-in-law, Manasseh, who is the brother of Jaddua the chief-priest. But there are also many others of his countrymen with him who now desire to build a temple in the regions subject to you. **34** But this would also be to your advantage, O king, for the power of the Judeans to be divided into two *factions*, **35** in order that the nation might not, in the event of a revolution, be of one mind and stand united, and so become troublesome to the kings, as it has formerly been to the chiefs of Assyria.”

36 Now when Alexandros had given his consent, Sanballat, with utmost diligence, built the inner-sanctum and appointed Manasseh as chief-priest. He considered this to be the greatest distinction that his daughter's descendants could *ever* have. **37** Now after seven months had been spent on the siege of Tsor, and two months on the siege of Gaza, Sanballat died. But Alexandros, after taking Gaza, made haste to go up to the Jerusalemites.

CHAPTER 3 [Ant11:326-345 / Apion1:192-193]

But when the chief-priest Jaddua heard about this, he was in an agony and anxious, not knowing how he could meet the Makedonians. For their king was angered by his former disobedience. **2** Therefore, he had a message transmitted to the people, *ordering them* to make supplications. And he joined together with

⁵ may also be translated “an elder”

⁶ Greek / from Persian “Ufratu” / Hebrew “Furat”

⁷ PV omit “through him”

⁸ F “Babimisis” / P “Babemesis” / A-margin “Babisis” / O “Babimises” / possibly original form is “Bagamisa”

⁹ PFO(V) “16,000”

¹⁰ one “when he had kindly received Alexandros”

¹ Persian / Hebrew “Bigvai” / Greek “Bagoses” or “Bagoas”

² literally “his brother”

³ traditionally translated “Greeks”

⁴ P2,L,E “he who did away with”

them in offering sacrifice to God, whom he besought to shield the nation and to deliver them from the dangers which were coming upon them.

3 But after the sacrifice, God spoke to him in a dream, telling him to take courage, and to adorn the city, to open the gates *and* go out to meet them; 4 and that, indeed, the others should appear in white garments, but that he himself along with the priests should be in robes prescribed by the law; 5 *and* that they should not be anxious to suffer any ill consequences, for God had *already* foreseen this.

6 Now when he rose from his sleep, he both greatly rejoiced and declared to everyone the revelation which he had received from God. 7 And after doing everything which he had been told to do, he awaited the coming of the king.

8 Now when he learned that *Alexandros* was not far from the city, *Jaddua* went out with the priests and the multitude of the citizens. 9 The procession was venerable, and its manner different from that of the other nations. 10 Now they met him at a certain place called Zophim (which means "Lookout"). For, as it happened, both Jerusalem and the inner-sanctum could be seen from there.

11 Now the Phoinikians and the Chaldeans who followed *Alexandros* thought to themselves that the king in his anger would naturally give them liberty to both plunder the city and destroy the chief-priest by torment, *but* the very reverse happened. 12 For *Alexandros*, while still far off, indeed saw the multitude in white garments, while the priests were clothed in fine linen. But the chief-priest was *clothed* in hyacinthine raiment which was interwoven with gold; and upon his head, he wore the turban which also bore the golden plate inscribed with the name of God. 14 *Alexandros* approached alone and prostrated himself before the Name and greeted the chief-priest before he could greet him.

15 But all the Judeans, together with one voice, *also* greeted *Alexandros*, and surrounded him. 16 Indeed, the kings of Syria and the others were struck with astonishment at his action and supposed that the king's mind was deranged. 17 But Parmenion alone went up to him and asked, "Why is it, that while all *men* prostrate themselves before you, that you have prostrated yourself before the chief-priest of the Judeans?"

18 But to this he said, "It was not before him that I prostrated myself, but before the God who has honored him with the chief-priesthood. 19 For I also saw this very *man* in a dream, dressed as he is now, when I was at Dion in Makedonia. 20 And as I was considering with myself how I might become master of Asia, he urged me not to delay,¹¹ *but* instead to cross over with good-courage; for he himself would conduct my army and would give me the Persian government. 21 Indeed, I have seen no one else in such robes; but now, seeing this man, I am reminded of both that vision and the exhortation *which I had in my dream*. So I believe that I have made this expedition under divine conduct, 22 and that I shall defeat Darius and destroy the power of the Persians, and succeed in carrying out all the things which I have in mind."

23 After saying these things to Parmenion, he gave his right hand to the chief-priest. And with the Judeans¹² running beside him, he entered the city. 24 Then he went up to the temple, where he indeed sacrificed to God under the direction of the chief-priest, but showed due honor to the priests and¹³ to the chief-priest himself. 25 Now when the book of Daniel was shown to him, in which Daniel had declared that one of the Hellenes would destroy the Persian government, he supposed that he himself was the one indicated. 26 Indeed, in his joy, he dismissed the multitude for the time being.

27 But on the following day, *Alexandros* *once again* summoned them, directing them, "Ask for any gifts which you might desire."

28 But the chief-priests asked, "Let us observe the laws of our fathers, and that in the seventh year we might be exempt from tribute."

Now *Alexandros* granted all this. 29 And when they entreated him to permit the Judeans in Babel and Media to enjoy their own laws *as well*, he willingly promised to do as they desired. 30 Now when *Alexandros* informed the multitude, "If anyone desires to enlist themselves in my army, while still adhering to the customs of their fathers, I am willing to take them," many were eager to accompany him in his expedition.

31 Therefore, having regulated these matters at Jerusalem, *Alexandros* indeed marched out with his army into the neighboring cities. But all the inhabitants to whom he came received him with a loving-mind. 32 The metropolis of the Samaritans at that time was Shechem. *This city* lay beside Mount Gerizim, and was inhabited by apostates from the Judean nation. 33 When *the Samaritans* saw that *Alexandros* had so splendidly honored the Judeans, they decided to profess themselves Judeans.

34 For such is the nature of the Samaritans. Indeed, when the Judeans are in adversity, they deny that they have any kinship with them, thereby confessing the truth. 35 But whenever they perceive that some *good* fortune has befallen the Judeans, they immediately¹⁴ grasp at the connection with them, saying that they are related to them and derive their genealogy from the descendants of Joseph: Ephraim and Manasseh.

36 Therefore, they made their address to the king with splendor, and showed great eagerness on his behalf by meeting him when he was but a little distance from Jerusalem. 37 Now when *Alexandros* had commended them, the Shechemites approached him, and brought along with them the soldiers which Sanballat had sent to him; 38 and they invited him to come to their city and honor the temple there *as well*. But indeed, he promised to grant this request¹⁵ another time, when he would come back to them.

39 But when they petitioned him to remit their tribute in the seventh year, explaining that they did not sow in it, he inquired whom they were who made such a petition.

40 But when they said that they were Hebrews, but had the name of Sidonians of Shechem, he asked them again, "Are you Judeans?"

41 But when they said, "We are not Judeans," he said, "It was instead to the Judeans that I have given these privileges. Yet however, when I return and have more exact information from you of this matter, I will do as I think best."

42 Therefore, with these words, he indeed took leave of the Shechemites. But he directed Sanballat's soldiers to accompany him into Egypt, for he said, "There I will give you allotments of land in the Thebais." (As in fact he did shortly afterwards). *And* he ordered them to guard this country.

43 Now there were certain Judeans who accompanied *Alexandros* on his conquest of Babel. After capturing the city, he intended to restore the ruined temple of Bel. 44 And when he ordered all his soldiers, without distinction, to bring materials for the earthworks, the Judeans alone refused to comply with *the command*; 45 instead, they even submitted to severe floggings and paid heavy penalties, until the king agreed to grant them amnesty. 46 Yet truly, when others arrived in the country *and* built inner-sanctuaries and altars against them, the *Judeans* demolished all of them—and indeed, in some cases, *on account of this behavior*, they paid a fine to the satraps, but in others, they even obtained pardon.

CHAPTER 4 (Ant11:346-347; 12:1-10 / Apion1:184-187, 189, 200-204)

Now having overthrown the Persian leadership and settling the affairs of Judah, *Alexandros* the king of Makedon came to the end of his life, after reigning twelve years. Indeed, after he had come-to-his-end, his government was partitioned *out* among his successors. 2 Indeed, Antigonos became the master of Asia. But Seleukos became the master of Babel and the nations thereabouts. Also, Lysimachos ruled the Hellespontos, but *Kassandros* held Makedonia, but *Ptolemaios son of Lagos*, took Egypt.

3 Now the temple upon Mount Gerizim remained. But whenever anyone was found guilty by the Jerusalemites of having eaten common food, or transgressing the law of the sabbath, or committing any other such sin, he would flee to the Shechemites, saying that he had been unrighteously expelled.¹⁶ 4 Now about this time, the chief-priest *Jaddua* came-to-his-end, and boy, Honijah, succeeded to the chief-priesthood.

5 And while the *previously-mentioned* princes ambitiously¹⁷ strove against one another, each for his own government, it came to pass that continual and prolonged wars arose. 6 And the cities suffered in these times of distress and lost a great many of their inhabitants, so that all of Syria at the hands of *Ptolemaios son of Lagos*, who was then called *the Savior*, suffered the reverse of what was indicated by his surname.

7 But this king seized Jerusalem by resorting to deceit and treachery. For he entered the city on a sabbath as if to sacrifice. 8 As a result, the Judeans did not oppose him, for they did not suspect him to be their foe. 9 And because of their lack of suspicion and the nature of the day, they were enjoying rest and quietness. 10 Unwilling to take up arms, they allowed the city to fall into the hands of *Ptolemaios* without difficulty; and he ruled it with cruelty.

11 Now after *Ptolemaios* had taken a great many captives, both from the mountainous *regions* of Judah and the regions around Jerusalem, and from Samaria and those near Mount Gerizim, he brought them all into Egypt and settled them there. 12 But he knew that the *people* of Jerusalem were most faithful in the keeping of their oaths and pledges, as shown by the reply they had given to *Alexandros* when he had sent an elder to them after defeating Darius in the battle. 13 Because of this, *Ptolemaios* assigned many of them to his fortresses, and at *Alexandria* gave them equal civic rights with the Makedonians themselves, and exacted oaths from them that they would keep faith with the descendants of those who had placed them in a position of trust.

14 In the eleventh year of his reign, *Ptolemaios son of Lagos* defeated *Demetrios* son of Antigonos, surnamed *the Besieger*, in a battle at Gaza. 15 But *following this victory*, many of the Judeans heard of his kindness and humaneness; *and* being attracted by the excellence of the regions and *Ptolemaios'* love-of-honor, they desired to accompany him to Egypt and to take part in the affairs *of the kingdom*. Indeed, there were not a few who went into Egypt of their own accord.

¹¹ PFLV "remain" / Lat "neglect"

¹² FAVW "priests" / Lat "rest of the priests"

¹³ PFVE omit "to the priests and"

¹⁴ PFLV omit "immediately"

¹⁵ P "to see them" / FVE, Lat "to come" / W "to hold"

¹⁶ WE "called in" (or "charged") / V "called out" / Lat "blamed"

¹⁷ literally "love-of-honorly"

16 Among these was Hezekiah, a chief-priest of the Judeans, a human who was indeed about 66 years old. Now he was highly esteemed by his countrymen, and not unintelligent in his soul, but also an able speaker and an experienced *man* in the affairs of the nation. 17 This human, after obtaining this honor and having been well-acquainted with the *Egyptians*, assembled some of his *men* and read to them a *statement showing* all the advantages of *immigration*; for he possessed, in writing, the *conditions attached* to their settlement and civil-polity. 18 In this way, tens of thousands more migrated to Egypt and Phoinike in consequence of the disturbed condition of Judah.

19 Yet however, their descendants had quarrels with the Samaritans on account of their resolution to preserve their customs which were handed down to them by their fathers. So they fought with each other. 20 Indeed, the Jerusalemites said that their temple was the holy one and required sacrifices to be sent there, while the Shechemites directed that the sacrifices should be sent to Mount Gerizim.

20 Accordingly, during one of Ptolemaios' campaigns, when Hekataios of Abdera was marching to the Sea of Reeds, a human, whose name was Meshullam, accompanied them, together with the rest of the Judean cavalry who served them as an advance force. *Meshullam* was a human with a robust soul, and agreed by all of them as the very best archer among both Hellenes and barbarians. 21 Therefore, while many were passing along the road, a certain diviner, who was watching some flight-of-birds, begging all of them to halt.

22 But when *Meshullam* asked why they were waiting, the diviner pointed out the bird to him, and declared, "Indeed, if it remains there, it is expedient for everyone to stand still; but if it rises and flies ahead, to advance; but if it flies behind, to withdraw at once."

23 Now *Meshullam* became silent, and drawing his bow, shot, striking the bird and killing it. But when the diviner and some others became indignant and cursed him, he declared, "Why are you raving, you evil-demon-possessed men?" Then, taking the bird in his hands, he declared, 24 "For how could this *bird* provide us with any sound message about our march, when it could not provide for its own salvation? For had it been able to foreknow the future, it would not have come to this spot, fearing that *Meshullam* the Judean would draw his bow and kill it."

CHAPTER 5 [Ant12:11-119 (abridged)]

And after Ptolemaios the Savior had reigned forty-one¹⁸ years, Ptolemaios the Brother-lover took the kingdom of Egypt, and held it thirty-nine years. 2 He also had the law translated, and granted freedom to some 120,000 natives of the Jerusalemites who were enslaved in Egypt. 3 The reason was this:

Demetrios of Phaleron, who was in charge of the king's library, was eager to collect, if it were possible, all the books in the inhabited earth. 4 Now on one occasion, *Demetrios* informed Ptolemaios that among the Judeans there were also many compositions on their law, which were both worthy of study, and worthy of the king's library. 5 But since these were written in the script and language of the Hebrews, it would make it terribly difficult to have them translated into the Hellenic¹⁹ language. 6 Therefore, *Demetrios*, on behalf of the king, decided to contact the Judean chief-priest to have this done.

7 Now before this could be done, a certain *Aristeas*, who was one of the king's most intimate friends, had, even before this affair, made up his mind to petition the king to set free the Judean captives throughout the kingdom. 8 Now judging this to be a convenient opportunity for his petition, he suggested that the king release these captives in exchange of having the Judeans translate their own laws into Hellenic. 9 So the king agreed to this task, setting free over 100,000 Judean slaves, and even paying the price to redeem them from their masters out of his own revenues. And *Demetrios* composed a letter to the Judean chief-priest.

10 For by that time, the chief-priest *Honijah* had come-to-his-end, and he had been succeeded by his boy *Simon*, who was surnamed *the Righteous*, because of both his piety toward God, and his benevolence to his fellow-tribesmen. 11 Now after he had died, because his son named *Honijah* was but an infant, *Simon's* brother *Eleazar* took the chief-priesthood. 12 This was the *Eleazar* to whom *Demetrios* sent many gifts and a letter, asking that in exchange for the release of these slaves, that they would send to him seventy elders to translate the Judean law from Hebrew into Hellenic. 13 Now *Eleazar* agreed to this, and seventy elders were sent to *Alexandria*, where they translated the law.

14 After the elders had translated these books, the king received them and he adored these works. 15 He also invited the translators to come to him often from Judah, for this would be profitable for them both on account of the honor to be received from him and the gifts they would gain. But for now, he sent them home, along with an abundance of gifts. 16 And these indeed were the things done by Ptolemaios the Brother-lover in appreciation and honor of the Judeans. But the rest of these things, the letters they wrote, the gifts he brought, and the wisdom of the Judeans, are written in the Letter of *Aristeas* to *Philokrates*.

17 Now the Judeans also received honors from the kings of Asia when they became their auxiliaries. 18 For even *Seleukos* the Victor granted them citizenship in the cities which he founded in Asia and in Lower Syria, and in the metropolis itself, *Antiocheia*. 19 And he gave them honors equal to their inhabitants, that is, the *Makedonians* and *Hellenes*. And these privileges remained for a long time.

CHAPTER 6 [Ant12:129-153 / Apion2:48]

Now during his reign, Ptolemaios III, surnamed *the Benefactor*, was victorious over all Syria by force. 2 But instead of sacrificing thank-offerings to the gods of Egypt for his success, he came to Jerusalem. 3 And there, according to our own laws, he offered numerous sacrifices to God, and dedicated votive-offerings appropriate to the victory.

4 Now it happened during the reign of *Antiochos* the Great, who reigned over all Asia, that both the *Judeans*, as well as the inhabitants of *Coelesyria*, suffered greatly through the devastation of their land. 5 For while he was at war with Ptolemaios the Father-lover and with his son, surnamed *the Illustrious*, these nations suffered, no matter whether he was victorious or defeated. 6 So they were like a ship distressed by winter,²⁰ which is tossed by the waves on both sides, finding themselves crushed between the successes of *Antiochos* and the adverse turn of his fortunes.

7 However, when *Antiochos* was victorious over Ptolemaios, he annexed Judah. 8 But after *The Father-lover* had come-to-his-end, his boy sent out a great force under the general *Skopas* against the inhabitants of *Coelesyria*. 9 He went in haste to the upper regions, and, during winter,²¹ subdued the Judean nation. 10 He took both many of their cities, and, in particular, our nation, which went over to him after being attacked. 11 But not long afterwards, *Antiochos* had a victory over *Skopas* in an engagement near the fountains of the Jordan, and utterly destroyed a great part of his army.

12 Now having defeated *Skopas*, *Antiochos* took possession of the cities in *Coelesyria* which *Skopas* had held, along with *Bashan*, and *Samaria*, and *Abel*, and *Gader*. 13 And after a short time, the Judeans who lived near the temple of Jerusalem, on their own accord, went over to him and received him into their city. 14 They made an abundant provision for both his entire army and for his elephants, and they readily assisted him when he besieged the garrison which had been left by *Skopas* in the citadel of Jerusalem. 15 Therefore, *Antiochos*, considering it righteous to requite the effort and love-of-honor of the Judeans in his service, wrote to both his generals and his friends, 16 testifying to the Judeans concerning the good treatment which he had received at their hands, and announcing the rewards which he had decided to bestow upon them for their treatment.

17 This is one of the letters of King *Antiochos*, written to his generals concerning the Judeans:

King *Antiochos* to Ptolemaios, greetings.

18 Since the Judeans, indeed, even from the moment we entered into their country, demonstrated their love-of-honor, and, when we came to their city, gave us a splendid reception, and came to meet us with their body of seniors, but also furnished an abundance of provisions to our soldiers and to our elephants, but also helped us to eject the Egyptian garrison in the citadel, 19 we have also thought it fit on our part to reward them and to restore their city which had been destroyed by the hazards of war,²² and to repopulate it by bringing back to it those who have been dispersed abroad.

20 Now in the first place, we have decided, on account of their piety, to bestow upon them an allowance for their sacrifices of livestock which are fit for sacrifice, and for wine, and olive-oil, and frankincense to the value of 20,000 pieces of silver, and consecrated artabans of fine-flour in accordance with their native law, and 1,460 medimni of wheat, and 365 medimni of salt. Now it is my will that these things be fully paid to them as I have ordered.

21 It is also my will to have the work on the temple completed, including both the porticoes and any other part which ought to be rebuilt. 22 But let the timber be brought from both Judah itself and from other nations, and from Lebanon without tolls. But I also want the same to be done with the other materials which are necessary for making the restoration of the temple more glorious. 23 Now let the entire nation live according to the laws of their own fathers. 24 But let the body of seniors, and of priests and scribes of the temple, and of the temple-singers, be relieved from the poll-tax, and the crown-tax, and the other taxes. 25 But, in order that the city may more quickly be settled, I grant tax-exemption for three years, both for the present inhabitants and to those who may return before the month of

¹⁸ E, Lat omit "-one"

¹⁹ traditionally translated "Greek"

²⁰ may also be translated "a ship distressed by a winter-storm"

²¹ may also be translated "during a winter-storm"

²² FV "men"

Hyperberetaios. **26** But we also relieve them in the future from a third part of their tribute, so that the losses they have sustained may be repaired. **27** And as for those who were carried off from the city *and* are *now* enslaved, we grant freedom to both them and their offspring, and direct that their property be restored to them.

28 Therefore, these were indeed the contents of the letter. But out of reverence for the temple, he also published a proclamation throughout the entire kingdom. Its contents were as follows:

29 It is unlawful for any foreigner to enter the enclosure of the temple, which is forbidden even to the Judeans, with an exception of those who are accustomed to enter after having purified themselves in accordance with the law of their fathers. **30** Nor let any flesh of horses, nor of mules, nor of wild or tame donkeys; *nor* of leopards, and foxes, and hares, but, even in general, any animal²³ which is forbidden for the Judeans *to eat*, be brought into the city. Nor is it lawful for their skins to be brought into it, nor, instead, even to breed any such *animal* in the city. **31** But let only the sacrifices which are known to their ancestors, and which are necessary for the propitiation of God, be permitted to use. **32** But the *man* who transgresses any of these statutes will pay to the priests *a fine* of 3,000 drachmas of silver.

33 Now this Antiochos testified in writing to our piety and faithfulness. This occasion was during the time when he was in the upper satrapies, when he was informed of revolutions in Phrygia and Lud, *and* directed Zeuxis, his general and one of his most intimate friends, to send some of our *people* from Babel into Phrygia. **34** Now he wrote the following:

King Antiochos to Zeuxis his father, greetings.

If you are in good health, it is well. Now I also am in *good* health.

35 Having been informed that a revolution has arisen in Lud and Phrygia, I have come to consider this matter as requiring very serious attention on my part. **36** And upon taking counsel with my friends as to what should be done, I determined to transport 2,000 Judean families with their effects from Mesopotamia and Babel to the fortresses and most important places. **37** For I am convinced that they would be well-disposed guardians of our interests due to their piety toward *their*²⁴ God; but also because I know that my predecessors have testified that they are faithful and eager to do as they are asked.

38 Moreover, it is my will, though it may be a laborious task, that these Judeans be transported; *and*, since I have promised it, that they be permitted to use their own laws. **39** Now when you have brought them to the regions mentioned, you shall give each of them a region to build a house, and a country for cultivation and for the plantation of their vines.

40 And you shall exempt them from payment of taxes upon the fruits of the earth for ten years. **41** But also, until they have received fruits from the earth, let them have grain measured out for the feeding of their servants. **42** But also, to those engaged in public service, let a sufficient share be given for their needs, that by receiving *this* humaneness from us, they may show themselves more willing and eager in our cause. **43** Now, as far as you are able, also take care of that nation, that it may not be molested by anyone.

Therefore, these testimonies indeed demonstrate the friendship which Antiochos the Great bore toward the Judeans.

CHAPTER 7 [Ant12:154-185]

Now after this, Antiochos made a friendship and treaty with Ptolemaios, and gave him his daughter Kleopatra in marriage. As her dowry, Antiochos yielded up to him Coelesyria, and Samaria, and Judah,²⁵ and Phoinike. **2** And when the tribute was divided between the two kings, all the distinguished *men* purchased the right to farm the taxes in their several fatherlands; and collecting the fixed sum, they paid it to the *two* kings.

3 At this time, the Samaritans were flourishing. They did much mischief to the Judeans by both laying waste to their country and carrying off slaves. **4** Now this happened in the chief-priesthood of Honijah. For after Eleazar had come-to-his-end, his uncle Manasseh took the chief-priesthood. **5** *And* after he had departed this life, the honor came to Honijah, who was the son of Simon, surnamed The Righteous. Now this Simon was brother of Eleazar.

6 This Honijah was insignificant and passionately fond of money. And for that reason, he did not pay the tax of 20 talents of silver, which his fathers had paid to

the kings out of their own revenues. **7** This roused the anger of King Ptolemaios the Benefactor, who was the father of The Father-lover.²⁶ And the *king* sent an elder to Jerusalem to denounce Honijah for not paying his taxes, and threatened, "If I do not receive them, I will parcel out your land and send my soldiers to settle on it." **8** Now when the Judeans heard the king's message, they were dismayed. But so sordid was Honijah's love-of-money, that none of these threats made him ashamed.

9 Now there was a certain Joseph, who was indeed still young in age, but because of his dignity and foresight had a reputation for righteousness²⁷ among the Jerusalemites. **10** Indeed, his father was Tobiah, but his mother was a sister of the chief-priest Honijah. **11** When his mother informed him of the elder's arrival (for he himself happened to be sojourning in the village of Phichola), he went to the city of *Jerusalem* and reproved Honijah for not regarding the safety of his countrymen, and for being willing, instead, to bring danger upon the nation by withholding the money. **12** For Joseph said to him, "You have received authority over them, and have been made chief-priest, in order to provide safety for them. **13** But if you are so passionately-fond of money, so that you can endure to see your fatherland endangered and your citizens suffer all sorts of things, go to the king *and* petition him to remit either the whole, or a part, of the money demanded."

14 But Honijah answered, saying, "I do not desire to hold office. But I am ready to lay-aside the chief-priesthood if possible." **15** And *he also said*, "I will not go-up to the king, for I am in no way concerned at all about these matters."

16 So Joseph asked him, "Will you grant me permission to go as an elder to Ptolemaios the Benefactor²⁸ on behalf of the nation?"

17 Now when Honijah granted him permission, Joseph went up to the temple and called the multitude together in assembly. **18** He exhorted them, "Do not be disturbed or fearful because of the carelessness of my uncle Honijah. Instead," he begged them, "be at peace, and do not be make yourselves anxious with dark forebodings." **19** For he was professing to them, "I myself will go as an elder to the king and persuade him that we are not doing *anything* unrighteous." And indeed, when the multitude heard this, they thanked Joseph.

20 But he went down from the temple and treated Ptolemaios' elder with hospitality. He also presented him with valuable gifts and entertained him lavishly for many days. **21** The elder greatly admired his love-of-honor *and* the dignity of his character. In this manner, the elder encouraged Joseph, urging him to go into Egypt, and promised him that he would obtain from Ptolemaios whatever he desired. Because of this, he became even more eager to meet the king. **22** Afterward, Joseph sent the elder on ahead to the king, telling him that he himself would soon follow.

23 And indeed, when the elder arrived in Egypt, he sent a message to the king *telling* about the arrogant behavior of Honijah, and about Joseph's uprightness, and that Joseph intended to come to him to ask that the sins of the multitude be excused, for he was their foremost *man*. **24** The elder continued to use such extravagance of speech in praising the youth, with the result that he disposed the king and his wife Kleopatra to have kindness toward Joseph *even* before his arrival.

25 Now Joseph sent to his friends in Samaria and borrowed silver from them, and *then* prepared the things necessary for his journey: both garments, and cups, and beasts of burden, which amounted to about 20,000 drachmas. *Then* he went to Alexandria.

26 But it happened at this time, that all the principal *men* and the chiefs of the cities of Syria and Phoinike were coming up there to bid for their tax-farming rights, which the king used to sell every year to the most powerful *men* in each city. **27** Therefore, when these men saw Joseph on the road, they ridiculed him for his poverty and bareness. **28** But when he arrived at Alexandria, he heard that Ptolemaios was in Memphis. *So* he went up to meet with them there.

29 Now the king was sitting in a chariot along with his wife and with his friend Athenion (now this *man* was the *very man* who had been *sent* as an elder to Jerusalem and had been entertained by Joseph). **30** *So* as soon as Athenion caught sight of him, he immediately introduced Joseph to the king, saying, "This is the *man* whom I told you about, in my message which I had sent when I returned from Jerusalem, as being both a good and honor-loving youth."

31 Now Ptolemaios took the initiative both to greet him, and *even* invited him to come up into his chariot. **32** And when Joseph was seated, Ptolemaios began to complain about Honijah's management.

33 But Joseph answered him, "Forgive him on account of his age; for surely you are not unaware that the elderly and the infants are exactly alike in their minds. **34** But from us who are youths, you will obtain everything you desire, *and* will have no cause to complain."

35 Now being delighted with the charm and ready wit of the youth, Ptolemaios began to have a still greater fondness for him, as though he were an old and tried *friend*, so much so that he directed him both to take up his residence

²³ more literally "living-creature"

²⁴ FLV add

²⁵ P "Edom"

²⁶ PLAW add

²⁷ FLVE "because of his dignity and care for righteousness he had a reputation"

²⁸ PAW add

in the royal *palace* and to be a guest at his own table every day. **36** But when the king arrived at Alexandria, and the principal *men* of Syria saw Joseph seated at his side, they found it very distasteful.

37 Now when the day came on which the tax-farming rights in the cities were to be sold, bids were made by the worthy *men* in the various fatherlands. **38** Now the total sum of the taxes from Coelesyria, and from Phoinike, and Judah with Samaria, came to 8,000 talents. **39** At this time, Joseph indeed came forward, slandering the bidders of having made an agreement to estimate the value of the taxes at too low a rate; **40** but he promised *the king*, "I will give double that amount for them. And I will send you the entire property of those who have been remiss toward your house." **41** For even this *right* was²⁹ sold along with that of the farming taxes.

42 Now the king was pleased to hear this offer. And because it was likely to increase his revenue, he said, "I will confirm the sale of the tax-farming rights to *Joseph*." **43** But when *the king* also asked him, "Do you also have any men to give surety for you?" *Joseph* answered very cleverly, "Yes, I will offer humans who are good and fair, and whom you will have no reason to distrust."

44 Now when the king asked him, "Who are they?" he answered, "O King, I will offer you no other *persons* who will give surety for me, than both you yourself, and your wife, each to guarantee the other's share."

45 At this, *Ptolemaios* laughed and granted him the tax-farming rights without any sureties. This act was a sore grief to those who had come into Egypt from the cities, for they considered themselves slighted. And indeed, each of them returned to their respective fatherlands in shame.

46 But *Joseph* asked to have some assistance, in order that he might be able to use force against any in the cities who treated him with contempt. **47** Indeed, the king granted him 2,000³⁰ infantry. And after borrowing 500 talents from the king's friends at Alexandria, he made haste back into Syria.

48 Now when *Joseph* arrived at Ashkelon, he demanded tribute from the Ashkelonites. They not only refused to pay anything, but instead even insulted him. **49** Therefore, he arrested about twenty of their principal *men*³¹ and killed them, and sent their property, which all together was worth 1,000 talents, to the king, and informed him of what had happened. **50** But *Ptolemaios*, who admired his mind and commended his actions, permitted him to do as he pleased.

51 When the Syrians heard of this, they were struck with astonishment. And having a severe example of the consequences of disobedience in the men of Ashkelon who were done away with, they opened their gates and willingly admitted *Joseph*, and paid the tribute.

52 But the inhabitants of Beth-Shan³² also attempted to insult him, and would not pay him the tribute which they had formerly paid without any dispute. So he killed their principal *men* as well, sending their property to the king.

53 Now by this means, he collected lots of money and made great profits from this tax-farming. **54** He used his wealth in order to make the authority he now had permanent, thinking that it was sensible to preserve the source and foundation of his present good-fortune by means of the wealth which he had himself acquired. **55** For he surreptitiously sent many gifts to the king, and to Kleopatra, and to their friends, and to all those who were powerful at court, thereby purchasing their goodwill through these *gifts*.

CHAPTER 8 [Ant12:186-209]

Now *Joseph* enjoyed this good-fortune for twenty-two years. **2** Indeed, he became the father of seven boys by one wife, but also begat another *boy*, named Hyrkanos, by the daughter of his brother Solymius, whom he married for the following reason:

3 He once came to Alexandria with his brother, who had along with him a daughter who was of marriageable age, in order that he might give her in marriage to one of the worthy Judeans there. **4** And when *Joseph* was dining with the king, he began to passionately-desire an attractive dancing-girl who had come into the banquet room. **5** He told his brother of this, and, since the Judeans were forbidden by their law to have intercourse with a foreign woman, begged him to aid in concealing his sin, and to be a kind minister to him by making an opportunity for him to satisfy his desire.

6 Now at this, his brother, willingly undertaking to be of service, ornamented his own daughter and brought her to him by night to sleep with him. **7** But *Joseph* in his drunken state did not know who she was, and so he had intercourse with his brother's daughter. But when this had happened several times, he fell still more violently in *love with her*.

8 Now *Joseph* also declared his brother, "In my passionate-desire, I am risking my life for a dancing-girl whom the king will probably not *even* allow me to have."

9 But his brother urged him not to be uneasy, but told him, "Enjoy the woman whom you love without any anxiety, and make her your wife." **10** And he

revealed the truth of the matter to him, how he had chosen to dishonor his own daughter, *rather* than to see him fall into disgrace. **11** So *Joseph* commended him for his brotherly-love, and married his daughter. And he begat a boy by her, whose name was Hyrkanos.

12 Now while this boy was still a youth of thirteen years, he had such a mind of natural manliness and intelligence that he became an object of violent jealousy to his brothers because of his great superiority and enviable qualities. **13** Now *Joseph* desired to learn which of his sons was naturally well-disposed to excellence, so he sent them one after another to those who presently had the best reputation for the disciplining of boys. **14** The rest of *his sons*, indeed, because of their laziness and disinclination³³ for a love-of-working, returned to him foolish and unlearned.

15 But afterwards, he sent out his youngest *son* Hyrkanos a two days' journey into the wilderness to sow the ground. He gave him 300 yoke of oxen, but hid the yoke-straps. **16** But *Hyrkanos* came to the region, and discovered that he had no yoke-straps with him. Indeed, the oxen-drivers counseled him, "Send some *men* to your father to fetch the yoke-straps." **17** But he disregarded their counsel, thinking that he should not lose time while waiting for those who might be sent to return. Instead, he thought like a general and *conceived a plan* worthy of a man older than himself.

18 For he slaughtered ten yoke of oxen; indeed, he distributed their meat among the workmen, but cut up their hides into several pieces in order to make straps with which he yoked the oxen together. **19** And using this means, he sowed as much ground as his father had appointed him to sow. Afterward, he returned to him.

20 Now when he had returned, his father was mightily delighted with his sagacity, and commended the sharpness of his intelligence combined with his boldness. **21** And he was *even* more fond of him than before, as if he were his only genuine *son*; and this vexed his brothers.

22 Now about this time, someone brought a message to *Joseph* which stated that a son had been born to King *Ptolemaios*, and that all the principal *men* of Syria and the other countries subject to him were setting out in haste with great retinues to Alexandria to celebrate the little-one's birthday. **23** Indeed, he himself was hindered from going on account of his old age, but he tried his sons to see whether any of them would be willing to go abroad to the king.

24 But the elder *sons* begged to be excused, and said that they were too rough for such company, but they counseled him to send their brother Hyrkanos. **25** Therefore, gladly listening to them, he called Hyrkanos and asked him, "Are you able and willing to travel to the king?"

26 Now after Hyrkanos professed that he would go, he said, "I will not need much money for the journey. For I will live moderately. 10,000 drachmas will be sufficient."

So *Joseph* was pleased with his boy's prudence.

27 But a little while later, the boy counseled his father, "Indeed, do not send gifts to the king from where you are, but give me a letter to your steward at Alexandria, in order that he might provide me with money to purchase the most beautiful and precious things which can be found."

28 Now *Joseph*, thinking that the cost of the gifts for the king would be ten talents, commended his son for his excellent suggestion. And he wrote to his steward Arion, who managed all the money which he had at Alexandria. There were not less than 3,000 talents on his account. **29** For *Joseph* used to send the money he collected in Syria to Alexandria. And when the appointed day came on which he was required to pay tribute to the king, he would write to Arion to do this. **30** Therefore, the *son* had asked his father for a letter to the steward. Having received it, *Hyrkanos* made haste to Alexandria. **31** But when he was gone, his brothers wrote to all the king's friends that they should utterly-destroy him.

32 Now when he arrived at Alexandria, he delivered the letter to Arion, who asked him, "How many talents do you desire to have?" Now he hoped that he would ask for no more than ten, or a little more. But when Hyrkanos said that he wanted 1,000, the steward became angry and rebuked him for having chosen a dissolute way of life. **33** And *Arion* explained to him how his father had amassed his wealth by working hard and restraining his desires; and he advised *Hyrkanos* to imitate the examples of his parent. But he added, "I will give you no more than ten talents, and these for presents to the king."

34 But at this, the boy was irritated and threw Arion into chains. **35** But Arion's wife informed Kleopatra of this and begged her to rebuke the boy, for Arion was held by her in great esteem. So Kleopatra made the matter known to the king. **36** Now *Ptolemaios* sent for Hyrkanos, and said to him, "I am surprised, that having been sent to me by your father, that you have not yet appeared before me; and, moreover, that you have imprisoned the steward." Therefore, he directed him to come and give an account for the reason of his conduct.

37 But Hyrkanos made the following answer to the king, telling him, "There is a law in my country that forbids the celebrant of a birthday from partaking of a sacrifice before he has gone into the temple and sacrificed to God. **38** It is in

²⁹ E "For he" / P "For it"

³⁰ FL(V) "1,000"

³¹ PE "he arrested their principal men, as was natural"

³² Hebrew equivalent / Greek "Skythopolis"

³³ literally "malady" or "softness"

accordance with this same principle that I have not come to the king, *but* was waiting to bring the gifts to you, as to one who has been my father's benefactor. **39** But as for the slave, I have chastised him for disobeying the orders which had been given. **40** For it makes no difference whether a master is small or great. Therefore, if we do not chastise such *men*, even you may expect to be held in contempt by your subjects.³⁴

41 When Ptolemaios heard this, he fell to laughing, and admired the boy's high-mindedness.³⁴ **42** But when Arion learned that this was the king's disposition, and that there was no help for him, he gave the thousand talents to the boy, *and* was released from chains.

43 So after three days had passed, Hyrkanos came, paying his respects to the royalties. Now they were glad to see him and entertained him with a loving-mind out of the honor which they bore toward his father. **44** But he secretly went to the slave-dealers and indeed bought from them, at a talent a piece, a hundred boys who were well-educated and in the prime of their youth, but *also* a hundred virgins at the same price.

CHAPTER 9 [Ant12:210-222]

Now once when *Hyrkanos* was invited together with the principal *men* of the country to feast with the king, he was placed at the foot of the table, being slighted as still a boy by those who assigned the places according to their dignity. **2** Now all those who sat with Hyrkanos piled up before him the bones of their portions (from which they themselves had removed the flesh), until the table where he sat was covered with them.

3 The king's jester Tryphon was there, who was appointed to make jokes and raise laughter when there was drinking. **4** With the encouragement of those who sat at the table, he stood up before the king *and* said, "My master, do you see the bones that lie before Hyrkanos? By this similitude, you may conjecture that his father has stripped all Syria in the same way as Hyrkanos has left these bones bare."³⁵

5 But the king laughed at what Tryphon had said, and said to Hyrkanos, "How did you come to have so many bones lying before you?"

6 He answered, "It is natural, my master. For indeed, dogs eat the bones together with the flesh, as these *men* do." **7** He looked toward those who sat there, indicating that there was nothing lying before them. "But humans eat the flesh and throw away the bones, exactly as I, being a human, have done."³⁵

8 Now at this, the king, who marveled at his clever response, and showing approval of his wit, directed them all to applaud.³⁵

9 But on the next day, *Hyrkanos* went to each of the king's friends and the powerful *men* at court, *and* indeed paid his respects to them. But he inquired of their domestic-slaves what gift their masters were going to give the king for the boy's birthday. **10** But when some indeed declared that they were going to give gifts worth ten talents, but that others of greater dignity would give according to the quantity of their riches, he pretended to be grieved at not being able to bring such a large present; for *he said* that he had no more than five talents. **11** Now when the servants heard this, they brought a message about it to their masters. But they rejoiced at the thought that Joseph would be judged unfavorably and would offend the king by the smallness of his present.

12 When the day came, indeed the others brought their offerings to the king, which in the case of those who believed themselves to be unusually munificent, were not worth more than twenty talents. **13** But Hyrkanos brought the hundred boys and hundred virgins whom he had purchased, *and* giving each of them a talent to carry, presented them: indeed, the *boys* to the king, but the *virgins* to Kleopatra. **14** Now everyone, including the royalties themselves, were astonished at the unexpected lavishness of his presents; and he gave to the king's friends and his attendants gifts worth many talents, so that he might escape any danger from them. **15** For these were the *men* whom Hyrkanos' brothers had written to in order to dispose of him.

16 Now Ptolemaios admired³⁶ the stripling's magnanimity, *and* ordered him to take whatever present he pleased. But he desired that the king do no more for him than to write to his father and brothers about him. **17** Therefore, after the king had showed him his love-of-honor and had given him splendid presents, he wrote to both his father and brothers and to all his leaders and procurators, *and* sent him away.

18 But when Hyrkanos' brothers heard that he had received these favors from the king and was returning home with great honor, they went out to meet him and to utterly-destroy him, **19** and this was not without their father's full knowledge. For he was angry at him because of the money which had been spent for the presents, *and* felt no concern for his salvation. **20** However, out of fear of the king, Joseph concealed the anger he had toward his son.

21 Now when Hyrkanos' brothers encountered him in a battle, he killed both many of the *men* who were with them, and also two of his brothers themselves. **22**

But the rest of them escaped to their father in Jerusalem. Now *Hyrkanos* went to that city, *but* no one would admit him. **23** So he withdrew in anxiety to the country across the Jordan River, where he made his home, levying tribute upon the barbarians.

CHAPTER 10 [Ant12:223-236]

Now at this time, Seleukos, surnamed The Savior, began to reign over Asia. He was the son of Antiochos the Great. **2** Now Hyrkanos' father Joseph also came-to-his-end. He had been a good man and one of magnanimity, and had brought the Judean people out of a state of poverty and weakness to one which was more splendid during the twenty-two years when he controlled the taxes of Syria, and Phoinike, and Samaria.

3 Now his uncle Honijah also died, who left the chief-priesthood to his boy Simon. Now when he also came-to-his-end, his son Honijah succeeded him in that honor. **4** It was to him that Areios, king of the Lakedaimonians, sent an elder with the following letter:

Areios, king of the Lakedaimonians, to Honijah, greetings.

5 We have come upon a certain writing from which we have discovered that *both* the Judeans and the Lakedaimonians are of one race and are related by descent from Abraham. **6** Therefore, it is right that you, as our brothers, should send to us to make known to us your concerns as often as you please. **7** Now we shall also do this, and shall both consider what is yours as our own, and what is ours we shall also share with you.

Demoteles who brings these documents, will bring your letter *back* to us. This writing is quadrangular. The seal is an eagle grasping a dragon.

8 But when Joseph died, the people grew seditious on account of his boys. For the elder *brothers* made war on Hyrkanos, who was the youngest of Joseph's children, *and* the population was divided into two multitudes. **9** And indeed, the majority fought on the side of the elder *brothers*, as did the chief-priest Simon because he was kin to them.

10 Now Hyrkanos indeed relinquished his intention of returning to Jerusalem, but settled himself in the country beyond the Jordan. **11** Here he was at continuous war with the Arabians; and he killed many of them and took many captive. **12** Now he built a strong castle, which was constructed entirely of white stone up to the very roof,³⁷ and had animals³⁸ of gigantic magnitude engraved upon it. But he enclosed it with a wide and deep canal. **13** Now he cut through the projecting rock opposite the mountain, making caves many stadia in length. Then he made chambers within it, indeed some for feasting, but some for sleeping and living. **14** Now he let into it a great quantity of running water, which was *both* very delightful and an ornamentation in his court. **15** However, the mouths of the caves he made so narrow, that no more than one person could enter at one time. And he deliberately built them in this arrangement for the sake of security, in order to avoid the danger of being besieged and taken captive by his brothers. **16** But he also built courts of remarkable magnitude, and ornamented them with vast gardens. **17** And when he had completed the place in this manner, he named it Tsor. This region is between Arab and Judah, beyond the Jordan, not far from Heshbon. **18** Now he ruled over these parts for seven years, even during all the time that Seleukos reigned over Syria.

19 But when this king had died, his brother Antiochos, surnamed the Illustrious, took the kingdom. **20** But Ptolemaios, the king of Egypt, who was also surnamed the Illustrious, also came-to-his-end. **21** He left two boys who were still both young in age. Indeed, the eldest was called the Mother-lover, but the younger the Pot-bellied.

22 But as for Hyrkanos, when he saw that Antiochos had a great force, he was terrified that he might be captured by him *and* chastised for what he had done to the Arabians. **23** Because of this, he ended his own life by his own hand. But all his property was seized by Antiochos.

CHAPTER 11 [Ant12:237-247; 257-264; 383-385]

Now about this time, the chief-priest Honijah also died, *and* Antiochos gave the chief-priesthood to his brother *Jeshua*;³⁹ for the boy which Honijah left was still an infant. **2** But this *Jeshua* (for he was the brother of Honijah) was deprived of the chief-priesthood when the king became angry with him and gave it to his younger brother, whose name was *also* Honijah. **3** For Simon had three boys, and the chief-priesthood came to all three of them.

4 Therefore, indeed *Jeshua* changed his name to Jason, while Honijah was called Menelaos. **5** Therefore, the former chief-priest *Jeshua* raised a sedition against Menelaos, who was ordained after him, and the multitude was divided

³⁴ literally "great-mindedness"

³⁵ Others "response, ordered them all to applaud to show their approval of his wit." (others have slight differences)

³⁶ FMV "welcomed"

³⁷ PAMW, Lat "marble down to the very ground"

³⁸ more literally "living-creatures"

³⁹ PAMW add

between them both: the boys of Tobiah sided with Menelaos, but the majority of the people supported Jason.

6 And being hard pressed by him, Menelaos and the boys of Tobiah withdrew, retiring to Antiochos. **7** They informed him that they desired to abandon the laws of their fathers and the way of life prescribed by these, in order to follow the king's polity and adopt the Hellenistic polity. **8** Therefore, they petitioned him to permit them to build a building for practicing naked-athletics in Jerusalem. **9** But when he had granted this, they also concealed the circumcision of their genitals, so that even when they were naked, they might appear to be Hellenes. They also gave up the other customs of their fathers, and imitated the practices of foreign nations.

10 But Antiochos, in whose own kingdom the situation of the affairs was going well, determined to advance with his army against Egypt, both because he coveted it, and also because he held the boys of Ptolemaios in contempt, who were still weak and not yet able to manage the affairs of such a great state. **11** Therefore, he arrived at Pelusium with a great force, and circumvented Ptolemaios the Mother-lover by treachery, and occupied Egypt. **12** And after he had arrived around the regions of Memphis and had taken possession of this city, he made haste for Alexandria, in hopes of reducing it by siege and subduing Ptolemaios who was reigning there. **13** But he was not only driven from Alexandria, but instead even out of all Egypt, for the Romans had a message transmitted to him, with orders to leave that country alone.

14 When King Antiochos returned out of Egypt in anxiety of the Romans in the year 143 of the kingdom of the Hellenes, he marched out with his army against the city of the Jerusalemites. **15** And he took the city without a battle, for the gates were opened to him by those who were of his own party. **16** Now having become master of Jerusalem in this way, he killed many of his opponents, and took lots of money as plunder, and then returned to Antiocheia.

17 When the Samaritans saw the Judeans suffering these misfortunes, they would no longer admit their kinship to the Judeans, nor would they admit that the inner-sanctum on Mount Gerizim belonged to the Most Great God. **18** They also said that they were colonists from the Medes and Persians (for they are, in fact, colonists from these peoples). **19** Therefore, they sent elders to Antiochos with a letter in which they made the following statements:

To King Antiochos, God Illustrious, a memorial from the Sidonians in Shechem.

20 Our ancestors, because of certain droughts in their country, and following a certain ancient terror-of-demons, made it a custom to revere the day which the Judeans call a 'sabbath'. Now our ancestors erected a nameless temple on the mountain called Gerizim, where they offered the appropriate sacrifices.

21 Now you have dealt with the Judeans as their wickedness deserves. But the king's officers, believing that we follow the same practices as the Judeans through kinship with them, are involving us in similar charges, whereas we are Sidonians by origin, as is even evident from our political public documents.

22 Therefore, we petition you, as our benefactor and savior, to command Apollonios, the meridarch of the district, as well as Nikanor, the royal agent, not to molest us in any way by attaching to us the incriminations of which the Judeans are guilty, for we are distinct from them both in race and in customs.

23 Now we also ask that the nameless temple be known as that of Zeus Hellenios. For if this is done, we shall cease to be molested; but by applying ourselves to our own works without terror, we shall make your revenues greater.

24 In reply to the Samaritans' petition, the king wrote the following reply:

King Antiochos to Nikanor.

25 The Sidonians in Shechem have submitted a memorial which has been filed. Therefore, when we were taking counsel with our friends, the men sent by them represented to us that they are in no way concerned with the charges brought against the Judeans; instead, they choose to live in accordance with Hellenistic customs. **26** Because of this, we both dismiss them of these incriminations, and permit their temple to be known as that of Zeus Hellenios, as they have petitioned.

27 Now in this fashion, he also wrote to Apollonios, the meridarch, in the year 146, on the 18th of the month Hekatombaion Hyrkanios.

28 Now later, about the year 151, after much adversity and bloodshed (all of which are mentioned in the books of the Makabim), King Antiochos the Noble-Father had Menelaos sent to Beroia in Syria, where he had him utterly destroyed. **29** For the king, wishing for the Judeans to remain quiet and to not give him any

trouble, had been counseled to do away with Menelaos. For it was this man who had been the cause of mischief by persuading the king's father to compel the Judeans to abandon their fathers' religious-ritual. **30** Indeed, Menelaos had been the chief-priest for ten years, but had been a wicked and impious man, who in order to get the government for himself, had compelled his nation to violate their own laws. **31** Now Eliakim succeeded him in the chief-priesthood, although Eliakim was not of the family of the chief-priests.

CHAPTER 12 [Ant12:386-388; 13:62-73 / War7:422-432 / Apion2:49]

Now after Antiochos made war on Philippos and killed him, Honijah, the son of the chief-priest, who had been left a mere boy when his father Honijah had come-to-his-end, saw that the king had slain his uncle Menelaos and had given the chief-priesthood to Eliakim. **2** Therefore, Honijah, fleeing from Antiochos, came to Alexandria, and he was graciously received by Ptolemaios surnamed The Mother-lover, the king of Egypt.

3 Now about the time when Demetrios marched into Media and was defeated by Arshak, king of Persia, Honijah saw that Judah was being ravaged by the Makedonians and their kings. **4** Out of a desire to acquire a perpetual glory and memorial, he determined to send to King Ptolemaios and Queen Kleopatra (for he was worthily honored by them), requesting authority from them to build a temple with an inner-sanctum in Egypt similar to the one at Jerusalem, and to appoint Levites and priests of his own race. **5** Now the primary reason he desired to do this was because he was encouraged by the words of the prophet Isaiah. **6** This prophet had foretold that an inner-sanctum and a sacrificial-altar to the Most High God would certainly be built in Egypt by a man who was a Judean:

In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear by Yahweh of hosts; one will be called the City of the Sun. **7** In that day there will be a sacrificial-altar to Yahweh in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to Yahweh at its border. And it will be a sign and a witness to Yahweh of hosts in the land of Egypt, when they cry out to Yahweh against their oppressors, and he sends them a savior who will go down and deliver them. **8** Then Yahweh will be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know Yahweh in that day. And they will offer sacrifices and oblations; indeed, they will fulfill the vows which they make to Yahweh.

9 Therefore, being excited by these words, Honijah desired permission to build an inner-sanctum in the district of Heliopolis (which translated is "City of the Sun"), and to worship God after the customs of his fathers.

10 And owing to the enmity Ptolemaios bore toward Antiochos, Honijah assured Ptolemaios, "If you comply with my proposal, I will make the Judean nation your ally." **11** For Honijah indeed knew that the Judeans were still involved in a war against Antiochos for having demolished their inner-sanctum at Jerusalem, but that they would be more amicably disposed toward him; and that many of the Judeans would come over to him if he allowed them to engage in their piety toward God without terror of the consequences.

12 Now when the king promised to do what was in his power, Honijah wrote the following letter to Ptolemaios and Kleopatra:

Many and great are the services which I have rendered to you in the affairs of the war, by the assistance of God, and when I was in both Coelesyria and Phoinike, and when I came with the Judeans both to Leonton (which is a city in Heliopolis) and to other places where our nation is settled. **13** And I have found that most of them have temples contrary to what is proper, and that on this account, they are ill-disposed toward one another, as is also the case with the Egyptians, because of the multitude of their temples and their varying opinions about the forms of worship.

14 Now I have found a most suitable place, in a stronghold whose name is derived from Bubastis-of-the-Fields,⁴⁰ which abounds with various kinds of trees and is full of sacrificial⁴¹ animals.⁴² **15** Therefore, I beg you to permit me to cleanse this consecrated place, which belongs to no master and is in ruins, **16** and to build an inner-sanctum there to the Most High God after the likeness of the one at Jerusalem, and with the same dimensions. **17** I desire to do this on behalf of you and your wife and your children, in order that the Judeans who dwell in Egypt may be able to come together in mutual harmony in order to be subservient to your interests.

18 For this is even what the prophet Isaiah foretold: "There will be an altar to Yahweh in the midst of Egypt." But he also prophesied many other such things concerning this place.

⁴⁰ Bubastis is the Greek equivalent of the Egyptian "Per-Bast" ('House of Bast') (referred to as 'Pi-Beseth' in Hebrew, see Ezekiel 30:17 ["Bubastis" in LXX])

⁴¹ may also be translated "consecrated"

⁴² more literally "living-creatures"

19 Induced by what Honijah had said, and having placed the blame for the sin and transgression against the law on the head of Honijah, the king and his sister and wife Kleopatra, wrote the following letter in reply:

King Ptolemaios and Queen Kleopatra to Honijah, greetings.

20 We have read your petition, in which you asked that permission be granted for you to cleanse the ruined temple in Leonton, a city in Heliopolis, called Bubastis-of-the-Fields.

21 And we wonder, whether it will be pleasing to God for a temple to be built in a region so wanton and so full of sacrificial⁴³ animals.⁴⁴

22 But since you say that the prophet Isaiah foretold this long ago, we grant you permission, if this may be done in accordance with the law, so that we may not appear to have sinned against God in any way.

23 Therefore, Ptolemaios gave Honijah a country, 180 stadia away from Memphis, in the district of Heliopolis. **24** He took over the region and erected a fortress; indeed, he built an inner-sanctum, which was not like the one in Jerusalem. But instead, it was smaller and poorer, *and* resembled a tower of huge stones to the height of sixty cubits.

25 Now the altar was made in imitation of that in the home *country*. And he ornamented it with similar votive-offerings, with an exception of the furnishing of the lampstand. **26** For he did not make a lampstand, but he had a lamp wrought of gold which shed a brilliant radiance, *and* was suspended by a golden chain. **27** Now the sacred-precincts were entirely encompassed with a wall of baked brick, though the gates were of stone.

28 But Honijah also found some Judeans of his own kind, together with priests and Levites to minister there. **29** Now the king also assigned him an extensive country as a source of revenue, so that the priests might have an abundance, along with everything required for *showing* piety toward God.

30 Truly, in all this, Honijah was not actuated by honest motives; instead, his aim was to rival the Judeans at Jerusalem. *For* because of his exile, he harbored anger against them. **31** And he hoped that, by erecting this temple, he would draw away a multitude of them to himself.

32 Later, Ptolemaios the Mother-lover and his wife Kleopatra entrusted their entire kingdom to Judeans, and placed their entire force under the generals of the *following* Judeans: Honijah and Dositheos.

CHAPTER 13 [Ant13:74-79, 285 / Apion2:50-53]

Now it came to pass that a quarrel arose between the Judeans in Alexandria and the Samaritans who worshipped at the temple on Mount Gerizim, which had been built in the time of Alexandros. And they disputed about their respective temples in the presence of Ptolemaios himself. **2** Indeed, the Judeans asserted that it was the *temple* at Jerusalem which had been built in accordance with the laws of Moses, but the Samaritans said that it was the *temple* on Gerizim. **3** Therefore, they requested the king to sit in council with his friends and hear the debates about these matters, and to punish those who were defeated with death.

4 Therefore, indeed Sabbaios and Theodosios made speeches on behalf of the Samaritans, but Andronikos *son* of Mesalamos spoke on behalf of the Jerusalemites and Judeans. **5** Now they swore by God and the king that they would give their proofs in accordance with the law; they also requested Ptolemaios to kill anyone whom he might find violating these oaths. **6** Therefore indeed, the king brought many of his friends into the council *and* sat down to hear the speakers.

7 Now the Judeans, who were then in Alexandria, were deeply uneasy on account of the men who were assigned to contend on behalf⁴⁵ of the temple at Jerusalem, for they were resentful that anyone should seek to destroy this temple which was so ancient and the most celebrate of all those in the inhabited *earth*.

8 But as Sabbaios and Theodosios permitted Andronikos to make the first speech, he began with proofs from the law and the successions of the chief-priests, **9** showing how each had become head of the inner-sanctum by receiving that honor from his father, and that all the kings of Asia had honored that temple with their donations and with most splendid gifts, **10** while none had shown any respect or regard for the one at Gerizim, as though it did not exist. **11** By these accounts and many similar *arguments*, Andronikos indeed persuaded the king to decide that the temple at Jerusalem had been built in accordance with the laws of Moses, but *to decide* to kill the party of Sabbaios and Theodosios.

12 And these were indeed the events which befell the Judeans at Alexandria during the reign of Ptolemaios the Mother-lover.

13 Now on the death of Ptolemaios the Mother-lover, his brother, Ptolemaios, surnamed The Pot-bellied, marched from Kyrene to Alexandria with the intention of expelling Kleopatra and the *deceased* king's sons, in order to unjustly

acquire the kingdom for himself. **14** For this reason, on Kleopatra's behalf, Honijah took up arms *and* led a small army against the city, when Thermus the Roman elder was there and actually on the spot; and Honijah waged war against *Ptolemaios*, refusing to abandon his faithfulness to the kings *even* at a crisis. But Ptolemaios the Pot-bellied was not bold enough to fight Honijah's army.

15 And later, when the Alexandreians were at war with Queen Kleopatra, and in imminent danger of annihilation, Honijah and Dositheos negotiated terms and rid them of the horrors of civil war.

16 Now before Honijah died, two sons were born to him, Hilkiah and Hananiah.

⁴³ AMWE "non-sacrificial" (may also be translated to "unconsecrated")

⁴⁴ more literally "living-creatures"

⁴⁵ PFLV "concerning"