



2 Maccabees

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From Maccabees to Masada: Jews, Christians and Romans (167 BCE—73 CE)
(HPRS5008)

what is 2 Maccabees?

2 Maccabees is seen by many as a deuterocanonical book.

The author of 2 Maccabees is unknown. However, it is known that 2 Maccabees is based on the notes of an historian named Jason of Cyrene.

It is thought to have been written circa 124 BCE in Alexandria, Egypt.

2 Maccabees is seen as an expanded version of 1 Maccabees 1-7.

the style of 2 Maccabees suggests it was written in Greek.

This differs from 1 Maccabees which was written in Hebrew.

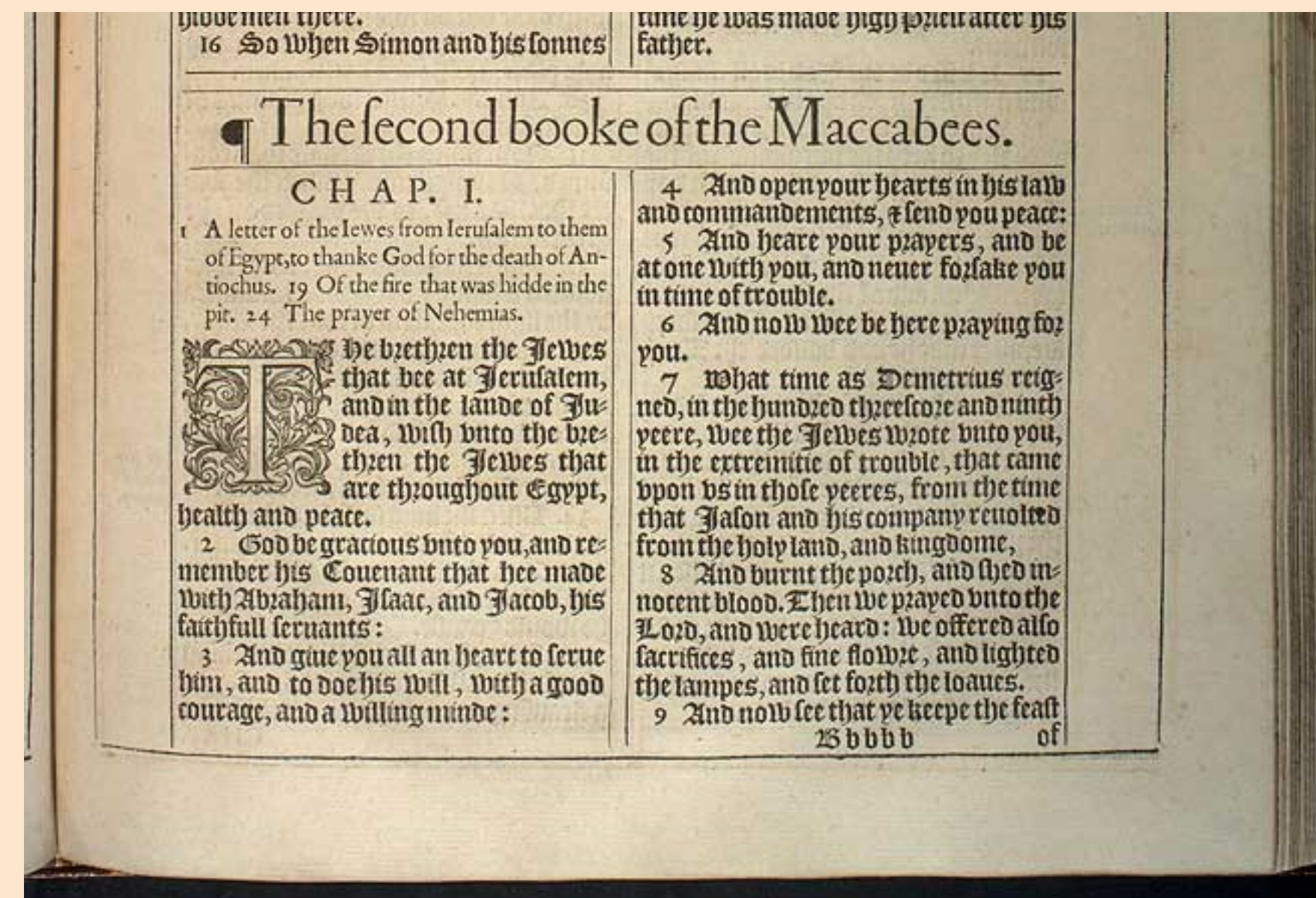
This fact shows the Hellenisation occurred in Jerusalem in the period.

what is it all about?

The focus of 2 Maccabees is the Maccabean Revolt of 161 BCE.

The revolt was against Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

2 Maccabees concludes with the defeat of Nicanor, the Seleucid empire general, by Judas Maccabeus (the hero of the book) in 161 BCE.



2 Maccabees, shown above, included in the first printing of the King James Bible in 1611 CE. Photo scan from kingjamesbibleonline.org

scholarly thoughts

Opinions on the validity of 2 Maccabees (as well as 1 Maccabees) and whether or not they are canon.

One modern scholarly argument is by James B. Jordan in 2007.

Jordan argues that 2 Maccabees is a *"far more accurate picture of the situation is given in 2 Maccabees"* when compared to 1 Maccabees.

References

2 Maccabees.

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Himmelfarb, M. (1998). Judaism and Hellenism in 2 Maccabees. Poetics Today, 19(1), 19-40.

Jordan, J. B. (2007). The Handwriting on the Wall: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel. American Vision.