

furnace, and all workers of impiety will be like tow, and shall be consumed by fire without vestige of any root or shoot of them."

2. "However, on that day when I act as Universal Judge, the Sun of My Divine Justice shall shine brightly for those who fear My Name, bearing salvation on its wings; and you shall come out seeking Me, and on seeing Me shall leap for joy, free then from all earthly ties; and you will trample upon the godless, who shall be beneath the heels of your feet, forever undone."

3. "However, in view of that tremendous day, always take into account My Holy Law, namely My precepts and commandments which you must fulfil."

## Twelfth Part The Israelites' Captivity in Babylonia and their return to the land of Israel

### Book I The Book of Esther

#### Chapter I Esther's family and birth

1. In the year 4629, during the reign of perverse Sedecias, king of Judah and Samaria united, or reunified Kingdom of Israel, the last deportation of Israelites to the Babylonian Empire had taken place, by order of Nabuchodonozor III. Among the deportees from Jerusalem was Mardocheus, twenty-five years old, and his twenty-three-year-old brother Abihail, sons of Jair, from the tribe of Nephtali. Both settled in Babylon itself, the imperial capital, where they unreservedly remained faithful to the True God.

2. In the year 4642, Abihail married a virtuous Israelite damsel, and from their marriage Esther was born in Babylon in the year 4643. When Esther was three years old her father died, and two years later her mother. The orphan Esther, five years old, was adopted as daughter by her uncle Mardocheus, a forty-four-year-old bachelor, who gave his niece a solid religious and cultural upbringing. Both were outstanding for their exceptionally exemplary lives in the service of God, and their kindness to the poor and sick.

3. Mardocheus, an honest and prudent man of great intelligence, bore the title of Elder of Madian, was an Essenian terciario and a great-great-grandson of Tobias the Younger. Given his outstanding gifts, in the year 4651 he was summoned by King Nabuchodonozor III to occupy a key administrative post at court. This provided Mardocheus with opportunity for contact with important people from other kingdoms, especially Media and Persia.

#### Chapter II

##### Prince Assuerus' conversion to the Jewish Faith. Assuerus surnamed Cyrus, king of Persia

1. Assuerus surnamed Cyrus was the grandson of Assuerus the Elder, king of the extensive Median Empire, comprising, besides the land of Media, that of Persia. Assuerus the Elder had two sons: Darius I who was the first-born, and Xerxes. Shortly before his death Assuerus the Elder divided his empire into two: the territory of Media he gave to Darius I; and that of Persia to Xerxes, who, reigning under the name of Xerxes I, was father of the future King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus.

2. In the year 4646, the Prophet Sophonias, deportee in Babylonia from the year 4629, in his prophetic labour, after residing at Ecathana of Media, went to live in Susa of Persia, where he founded a convent of Essenian religiosos. To this prophet is due the conversion of Assuerus surnamed Cyrus to Israel's God, in the year 4648, when Cyrus was fourteen years of age and still Crown Prince of Persia. Assuerus, after his conversion, kept in continuous contact with Sophonias, who took charge of giving the prince a solid spiritual formation in the Jewish religion. Assuerus, then, was Persian by blood but Jewish by Faith. Thanks to the Prophet Sophonias's labour, Assuerus was eminent for his rectitude, piety, prudence and wisdom. The surname Cyrus signifies "God's shepherd."

3. In the year 4658, Xerxes I, king of Persia, Assuerus' father, was assassinated by over a hundred Jewish conspirators led by Rabbi Samuel, a great friend of the assassinated king. After the death of King Xerxes I, his son Assuerus, twenty-four years old, inherited the throne of the far-flung Persian Empire, more extensive still through his father's conquests, since it encompassed as well India, Ethiopia and other places.

#### Chapter III

##### Mardocheus and his niece Esther leave for Persia. Mardocheus's first interview with King Assuerus

1. In the year 4659, kings Nabuchodonozor III of Babylonia and Darius of Media became tributaries of King Assuerus. Following these vassalages, many of the Israelite deportees in the Babylonian Empire could move to live in either Persia or Media.

2. In the same year 4659, Nabuchodonozor III, king of Babylonia, sent Mardocheus, together with a group of colleagues, to settle in Susa, capital of Persia, to represent him in commercial affairs affecting the two kingdoms. Owing to this, Mardocheus and his niece Esther, sixteen years old, left for Persia and settled in Susa. Esther was a very discreet young lady, of great purity and most attractive personal qualities.

3. In the year 4659, days after their arrival in Persia, Mardocheus, accompanied by his colleagues, visited King Assuerus at his Palace in Susa, greeting him on behalf of King Nabuchodonozor III of Babylonia. Assuerus was aware that Mardocheus was of Jewish blood, that he professed Faith in the true God, and was one of the Jerusalem deportees to Babylonia. Mardocheus's sterling personal qualities did not pass unnoticed by the Persian king.

#### Chapter IV

##### King Assuerus holds a banquet to introduce his betrothed, the maiden Vasthi.

##### Assuerus rejects Vasthi for her indecent behaviour. Assuerus turns his gaze to the highly virtuous Esther

1. In the year 4660, King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus, held a great banquet in his palace, on the occasion of the official presentation of his betrothed, the maiden Vasthi. The king invited the magnates of his court and their wives; among them ministers, army generals, governors and as well illustrious people from the Median, Babylonian and other Empires. Invited also was Mardocheus, accompanied by his niece Esther. Assuerus desired the banquet to be in keeping with the wealth and splendour of his realm, and the grandeur and pomp of his great power. Banners and rich tapestries hung everywhere. To eat reclined, divans of gold and silver were arranged on esplanades paved with emerald coloured stone and whitest, elegant marble, with mosaics of admirable variety. Those invited drank from goblets of gold and silver, and each course was served on different plates. Abundant and excellent wine was also available, as befitted the magnificence of a king. Those who did not wish to drink were not compelled to do so, rather each took to his liking, according as the king had ordained. For greater decorum and moderation in drinking, Assuerus ordered that a prudent magnate preside over each of the different tables placed about his own. Mardocheus was also assigned the presidency of a table, and his niece Esther sat to his right, attired in elegant and decorous garments that enhanced yet further her exquisite purity and extraordinary beauty.

2. Powerful King Assuerus, however, not only invited great magnates to the sumptuous saloons of his palace, but also all the citizens of Susa, from the greatest to the least, organizing for them all that was necessary in the spacious gardens of his palace, which he adorned with regal magnificence.

3. King Assuerus had arranged that his betrothed, the maiden Vasthi, should enter the banquet hall after a certain time had elapsed, having reserved her presentation before the guests as the high point of the feast, since she was extraordinarily beautiful, and he desired all to honour her in accord with the rank and personal qualities of the one he had chosen to be his bride. When the moment decided by King Assuerus arrived, he ordered one of his secretaries to inform Vasthi of his desire that she come to the banquet dressed in lovely gala dress that would enhance her beauty and personal decency, in order to present her officially as his betrothed before the high dignitaries present. But Vasthi refused to go before the king robed in gala dress, having already planned to display herself at the banquet scantily dressed with the intention of dancing before all. Assuerus, alarmed at such base designs, sent her a warning that she desist from carrying them out, as being unworthy of an adorer of the true God and betrothed to the king. Vasthi, to demonstrate her pique to Assuerus, full of vanity, caprice and exhibitionism, presented herself naked before the assembly, scandalizing all and provoking effects of inflamed sensual passion in the men.

4. Vasthi's defiance and indecency implied a very grave outrage against King Assuerus; consequently, indignant and in a towering rage, he commanded his personal guard to throw her out of the palace immediately. Assuerus took counsel with his advisers on the penalty which, according to Persian law, Vasthi deserved for her abominable behaviour. They advised that she be exiled from the territories of his crown, since she had offended not only the king, but also all the magnates and others present. Without hesitation, at the banquet itself, King Assuerus issued an edict by which Vasthi was condemned to exile, and commanded it to be published in the city of Susa and other places in Persia. Then he ordered certain of his palace guards to conduct Vasthi beyond the limits of his territory, and they carried out the order with utmost rigour. Vasthi, though officially listed as a Jewish proselyte, was a false convert.

5. The presence at the banquet of the discreet and decorous Esther at her uncle's side, caused the king great astonishment owing to her extraordinary beauty and exquisite amiability. The king's admiration for the young lady increased yet further after the shameful incident that had transpired with Vasthi. Thus Assuerus, observing Esther's excellent qualities, saw her in contraposition to his rejected betrothed. Accordingly, Assuerus, sick at heart, turned his gaze to Mardocheus's highly virtuous niece, without anyone at the time perceiving his sentiments. God permitted Vasthi's deplorable conduct so that Esther might be chosen to become the Persian king's spouse. Assuerus surnamed Cyrus, knew that Esther was of Jewish family, that she had been born in Babylon and professed Faith in the true God.

#### Chapter V

##### Esther's marriage to King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus

1. The magnates of the court, seeing King Assuerus plunged into gloom over the Vasthi incident, presented various Jewish maidens of great beauty and proven virtue, for him to choose one of them to marry. But none of them drew the king's attention, as his thoughts were centred on the highly virtuous Esther.

2. Having decided, then, to unite to her in holy matrimony, Assuerus requested of Mardocheus the hand of his niece Esther. She, when aware of the king's intentions, spent several days dedicated more intensely to prayer and fasting, in order that God enlighten her on the decision she should make. Thanks to her constant and humble entreaty, the Lord God made known to her heart His will that she accept King Assuerus as her husband; since He had great plans depending on this holy marriage. Nevertheless, the damsel asked the consent of her uncle Mardocheus, who granted it with the greatest of pleasure, since it was for the greater honour and glory of the Lord God of Hosts and of the People of Israel.

3. In the same year 4660 took place the solemn ceremony of the marriage between the highly virtuous Esther, seventeen years old, and powerful King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus, twenty-six years old. After the ceremony, the king crowned his wife Queen of Persia, placing a royal crown upon her head and a sceptre in her right hand. To celebrate

such a memorable event, Assuerus ordered a very splendid banquet to be arranged for all his grandees and courtiers and those from other countries. Moreover, he granted relief from certain tributes to all provinces, and distributed gifts with a magnificence worthy of such a king. King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus, and his sole spouse Queen Esther, were Essenian terciarios.

4. Queen Esther bore her husband King Assuerus their first-born, Darius I, who would later succeed him to the throne, and subsequently many other children, boys and girls. Darius I was father of Xerxes II, who was father of Artaxerxes I; the last-named therefore was great-grandson of King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus.

#### Chapter VI

##### Mardocheus's prestige at the Persian court. Plot against King Assuerus.

Mardocheus, aware of the plot, reveals it to the monarch through the queen

1. Mardocheus's prestige at the Persian court grew day by day, given his extraordinary gifts of prudence, wisdom and fidelity to the king, as the following incident well proves. Months after Assuerus' and Esther's wedding, two captains of the royal guard, who were entrusted with the custody of the palace, and who had their quarters at the main entrance, schemed to kill Assuerus. This treason had been plotted by one of the foremost magnates at court, Amman, an Amalechite, who, with the most underhand guile, and without revealing his perverse intentions, had instigated the two captains. Amman, son of Amadati, by his secret plan sought to kill King Assuerus, and afterwards Queen Esther, in order then to proclaim himself king of Persia, repudiate his wife Zares, bring Vasthi back from exile, marry her and reign with her over the Persian Empire. In this way the magnate would succeed in satisfying his burning ambition: to gain the crown, possess the woman towards whom he felt irresistibly drawn, and topple from the throne two monarchs most true to the Jewish Faith. It was precisely Amman who had also induced the conceited Vasthi to exhibit herself naked before the guests at the royal banquet, telling her that her beauty well deserved to be admired and praised by all. By this Amman sought to have her rejected by the king, so as later to make her his own.

2. One of the palace servants, however, learning of the subversive and regicidal plan the two captains were scheming, made it known to Mardocheus, who transmitted it to Queen Esther, and she to the king in her uncle's name. Assuerus gave orders to Amman, whom he considered a man of complete confidence, to investigate the case. Amman, with the greatest alacrity, had the two captains hanged on a gallows. Later, lying to the king, he told Assuerus that after a rigorous investigation, he had interrogated them in the presence of witnesses, and that the regicides had confessed their crime, and for that reason had already been executed. In this way, the treacherous magnate freed himself from any possible accusation or suspicion against himself. Besides, he passed himself off before the king as a truly faithful courtier in defence of his royal person. The hypocrite Amman, his wife Zares, his children and closest followers were apostate Jewish proselytes, who officially worshipped the God of Israel, but secretly adored the idol Zoroaster. The exiled Vasthi was also a secret adorer of this idol.

3. The king caused this episode to be inscribed in the annals. Afterwards, he rewarded Mardocheus for his loyal intervention granting him a high post at court, and invited him to reside in the palace as often as he wished.

#### Chapter VII

##### King Assuerus names Amman prime minister of the court. Amman plots Mardocheus's downfall

After the frustrated conspiracy, the king named Amman prime minister of the court, office immediately below that of empire prince, vacant at the time. At his appointment, Amman's arrogance reached such heights that he shrewdly demanded of the other courtiers and of the public the treatment pertaining in protocol to the rank of prince, when he was solely prime minister. Mardocheus, a simple, humble and balanced person, abstained from giving proud Amman the reverence he demanded, as it did not accord with his office. Furious, Amman threatened Mardocheus, branding him as insubordinate, without Mardocheus yielding, since it would have been repugnant to his upright conscience. At this, Amman swore interiorly to take revenge on Mardocheus at the most suitable opportunity, and thus put an end to him; since Amman, moreover, secretly hated him for his status as Jew by both Faith and blood, and also for his growing prestige before Assuerus.

#### Chapter VIII

##### Amman slanders Mardocheus and the whole Jewish People in captivity as conspirators against the king.

King Assuerus summons the Prophet Sophonias to the palace to interrogate him on the regicidal conspiracy

1. Preference towards the Jews residing in the Persian Empire, shown both by King Assuerus, who was a Jewish proselyte, and by Esther, who was Jewish by Faith and origin, became increasingly unbearable for Amman and his closest associates, who secretly resolved to put an end to Mardocheus and the other Jews of the captivity.

2. In the year 4662, the treacherous prime minister Amman and his conspirators, in a secret meeting, resolved to calumniate Mardocheus and the other Jews of the empire as plotters against the king. To this end Amman appeared before Assuerus and told him: "*O my king and lord! The Jewish people of the captivity who are scattered throughout all the provinces of your empire, secretly despise your authority and laws; and led by Mardocheus, who is ambitious for the throne of Persia, are plotting a revolt to dethrone you and take your life. It is expedient, then, that you issue a decree so that the Jews perish before they can carry out this subversive and regicidal plan.*"

3. King Assuerus was stunned at the unexpected news, since it had never occurred to him that the Jews, least of all Mardocheus, would devise plans against his crown, above all since he was a proselyte and his wife Esther a Jew by Faith and origin. Amman, to move the will of the king more promptly in accord with his subversive plans, presented false but powerful evidence of his accusations against Mardocheus and the members of his people as traitors; thus, organized by the perverse Amman, a good number of influential men, Jews by blood but apostates from the Jewish Faith, from the towns neighbouring the city of Susa, came to the palace to communicate to King Assuerus that a conspiracy

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was afoot among the Jews to kill him; these influential Jews said nothing to the king of their friendship with Amman. Assuerus, with unspeakable bitterness and consternation, listened to the false testimonies deeming them to be true. He concealed this information from his beloved wife Esther so as not to cause her deep affliction of heart.

4. King Assuerus, before deciding to issue the decree of extermination against the Jews, summoned the Prophet Sophonias to the palace to interrogate him on the regicidal conspiracy. The prophet came to the palace and sincerely answered that he knew nothing of any such thing. He also told the king that many prophets of the Lord God of Israel had been killed by the Chosen People; that King David had suffered many attempts on his life by members of the People of God itself, but that the Lord had always protected David's life. The Prophet Sophonias continued, saying: "*I am sure that no one will be able to kill you, because the Lord God of Hosts protects you, since you are reserved for great enterprises according to the divine plan.*" The prophet, before leaving, told the king that he would pray for him. The king said: "*Since you do not make the conspiracy matter clear to me, do not come again.*"

5. After the interview between the Prophet Sophonias and King Assuerus, that same day, providentially, the Prophet Sophonias and Mardocheus met together and spoke of the supposed Jewish conspiracy against the king, this news already having reached Mardocheus through one of the court magnates of his complete confidence. The Prophet Sophonias sought to reassure Mardocheus saying to him: "*Through Queen Esther, God shall resolve everything. Be at peace, and do not attempt to go to the palace, since that would be counterproductive.*"

6. Several days following the Prophet Sophonias's royal interview in Assuerus' palace, the king sent emissaries to Mardocheus to come to the palace for interrogation concerning the Jewish conspiracy against him. After a careful search, the emissaries failed to find Mardocheus, who was neither at home nor at any other place where he usually stayed, they communicating this to Assuerus. Owing to Mardocheus's disappearance, the king decided to speed up the promulgation of his edict against the Jews.

#### Chapter IX

King Assuerus issues an edict decreeing the extermination of the Jews residing in his empire.

The edict is conveyed in all haste to the different authorities of the empire.

The king forbids the entry of Mardocheus into the palace, and keeps him under strict vigilance

1. So convinced was King Assuerus that the plots concocted against him were true, that he decided to let the full weight of his justice fall upon Mardocheus and the other Jews; accordingly, he ordered his prime minister Amman, whom he considered completely trustworthy, to act in his name. Assuerus, removing from his finger the royal ring, with which edicts and other official documents were sealed, gave it to Amman, saying: "*Act in consequence against the traitors who plot my death and disturb the peace of the empire.*" On the 1<sup>st</sup> of February in that year 4662, Amman convoked the other palace ministers and secretaries, and in the king's name issued an edict which revealed to the provincial governors, magistrates, army generals and other authorities of the empire, that Mardocheus and the other resident Jews plotted a conspiracy against King Assuerus and against the peace of the realm. They were moreover ordered, with the utmost rigour and discretion, to mount a very strict surveillance over the said plotters, and thus prevent them from carrying out their subversive and regicidal plans. They were also given orders that, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February that same year, all Jews resident in the different provinces of the kingdom, men and women, from the youngest to the oldest, were to be exterminated as traitors to king and empire and their goods confiscated. Finally, the said authorities of Persia were required to act with the utmost secrecy, so as to conceal from the Jews all knowledge of the extermination planned against them in order to catch them by surprise, thus avoiding disorder and insurrection in advance. The edict was sent out with the greatest alacrity and discretion to the provincial governors, magistrates, army generals and other authorities of the empire, for which purpose the postal services hastened to deliver it to their appropriate destinations. Assuerus' edict was aimed only at the Jews of the captivity residing in the Persian Empire. Were King Assuerus to have had the prudence to consult his spouse Queen Esther before taking the decision concerning the decree of extermination of the Jews, God would have enlightened him by means of her, in order that he might not take such an inhuman and erroneous step. Besides, if Assuerus had entertained the slightest suspicion that it was a plot concocted by Amman, he would not have issued such an execrable decree.

2. Following the edict against the Jews, Mardocheus, trusting in the words of the Prophet Sophonias, returned to his home in the city of Susa. When King Assuerus learned of this, he gave orders to his palace guards to forbid Mardocheus entering the palace, and to place him under strict surveillance. Though Mardocheus at times resided in quarters attached to those of the king, nevertheless he customarily lived at his own home.

#### Chapter X

Consternation of Queen Esther and her uncle Mardocheus in view of the decree of extermination against the Jews of the captivity

1. When the highly virtuous Queen Esther, through one of her most faithful courtiers, learned of the royal edict against the Jews of the captivity, she was utterly consternated. After praying to God, she went hurriedly to meet with Assuerus her husband, but was told that there was an order of the king for her not to appear before him. Esther, weeping bitterly, implored God for the protection of her uncle Mardocheus and of the other Jews of the empire, since she felt in her heart that it was all an intrigue by the enemies of the People of Israel. The fact that Assuerus rejected the presence of his beloved wife was due to the monarch's deplorable state of mind, as he wished to avoid any reaction that might afflict her, knowing her to be completely innocent. For several days he lived like a recluse in his chambers, and permitted entrance only to some of his most trusted courtiers.

2. When Mardocheus, by way of the referred magnate of his confidence, knew of the royal edict against the Jews of the captivity, and that Amman had accused him of being the leader of the conspiracy, he was deeply shaken. Rending his garments, he dressed in hairshirts, covered his head with ashes and at home clamoured to God beseeching protection

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for his people. He was desirous of an interview with the king, but did not dare because of the advice given him by the Prophet Sophonias; knowing, besides, that he was forbidden to enter the palace. Mardocheus was subjected to strict surveillance at home by the royal guard.

3. Mardocheus did not reveal to his compatriots of Susa that part of the edict which referred to the extermination of the Jews, thus to avoid anticipated and bloody disorders, above all as he had full confidence that the Lord God of Hosts would provide a favourable solution to His people's cause. Nevertheless, the Jewish citizens of Susa, like those of other cities in the empire, noticing the strict surveillance mounted on them, understood that something very grave was in the offing. They felt as well a premonition that death stalked them, since the continuous rumours that reached them from the royal palace increasingly confirmed this. So then, the Jews prayed ceaselessly to God in their homes to be freed from the very grave evil that threatened them, many donning sackcloth and covering their heads with ashes.

#### Chapter XI

##### Mardocheus asks Esther to intercede before King Assuerus in defence of the Jews of the captivity

As King Assuerus had forbidden Mardocheus to enter the palace, the highly virtuous Queen Esther sent her most faithful secretary Attac to her uncle's home, in order to ascertain his opinion about the edict, and in order that he instruct her on how to proceed in this case for the greater service of God and of His people. Mardocheus, through Attac, sent the queen a letter with the following private message: *"Remember, O Esther, the time when you were of humble condition, and how you were brought up in my arms. See how Amman, prime minister of the court, has slandered us before the king so that our lives be taken. But you must invoke the Lord God and speak in our favour to King Assuerus, and thus free us from death. O queen! You alone are excluded from the edict of death issued against me and the other children of our people. Only you can assert our innocence before King Assuerus; since I am sure he will not disregard your plea, for in his eyes you are that which he prizes most. Well can it be seen that, among other purposes, you have been placed on the throne so that, as mother of the Chosen People, you be God's instrument in defence of your children, interceding for them in this hour of bitterness."* Attac, back in the palace, gave the letter to the queen, who, after reading it, sent the following message to her uncle: *"Mardocheus, how can I go to the king when he has forbidden me to appear before him, and for days has not required my presence? But let us trust in the help of the Lord God Almighty. Go, assemble all the Jews you can find in Susa, and pray for me. Fast for three days and nights, and I and my maidservants will do likewise, and afterwards I will present myself before the king."* Mardocheus did all that Esther had bidden him.

#### Chapter XII

##### Mardocheus's prayer imploring the salvation of his people

Mardocheus, in the apartments of his own home, in union with a group of faithful Jews presided over by the Prophet Sophonias, made the following prayer to God: *"Lord God, Almighty King, on Your power all things depend, and no one can resist Your will if it be Your wish to save the People of Israel. You made Heaven and Earth and all the wonderful things under the heavens. You are Master of all, and no one can resist Your majesty. Well You know, Lord, that for the salvation of my people I would willingly lay down my life. I offer it to You, O Lord, King of kings! Accept it, if it be pleasing to You. O God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob! Take pity on Your people, as our enemies desire to ruin us and put an end to Your heritage. Forget not Your people, rescued by You from Egypt. Hear my supplication and be propitious to the nation You have chosen as Your inheritance, and transform our grief into joy, so that living we may glorify your Holy Name, O Lord, with songs of praise."* At the same time as Mardocheus, the Prophet Sophonias, and the other children of Israel with him, clamoured to the Lord God with one accord.

#### Chapter XIII

##### Queen Esther's prayer imploring the salvation of her people

Likewise Queen Esther, fearful of the imminent danger threatening her people, had recourse to the Lord; and laying aside her royal garments, she put on mourning attire. And instead of anointing herself with perfume, she covered her head with ashes and rubbish, and mortified her body by fasting. And she prayed to the Lord God of Israel saying: *"O my Lord and God! You who are our King, succour me in this desolation I find myself in, since I have no other protector apart from You. The danger to the children of my people is imminent. You chose Israel from among all the nations to possess her as Your heritage, and conducted Yourself towards her as You had promised. Remember us, Lord, and benignly show us Your Face in this hour of tribulation, and give me fortitude, Lord and King of infinite Majesty. Put the right words on my lips when I find myself in the presence of powerful King Assuerus, my spouse; enlighten his heart to make him see that the decree of death against the children of my people is the work of our enemies, and cause all who do not repent of their iniquity to perish. O my God! Free us by Your powerful hand and help me, O Lord, since You are my only succour, and knowing all things, You know how I abhor the glory of the iniquitous. You are aware of my need. Well You know that the crown I wear is not for my vainglory but for Your glory, and that since the day I was raised to the throne of Persia, I never had any pleasure other than in You, O Lord God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob. O God, strong and powerful over all, hear the voices of those who hope in You alone, free us from the hands of the wicked and draw us out of the fear that assails us."*

#### Chapter XIV

##### Amman prepares the gibbet to put Mardocheus to death

Amman saw with great jubilation how his perverse plans against Mardocheus and the other Jews were being successfully carried out. To celebrate this he gave a banquet in his home to his closest friends, at which his wife Zares and their children were also present. Before all he boasted of his great wealth and of the lofty degree of glory to which he had

been raised by the king, over and above the other grandees and courtiers. But he also said: *"Though I enjoy many satisfactions, I lack that of doing away with Mardocheus."* Zares then said to him: *"Order a great gibbet to be prepared in the main square of the city, and tomorrow tell the king that Mardocheus will be crucified there."* Amman was pleased at his wife's counsel, and ordered it to be prepared forthwith.

#### Chapter XV

##### Esther presents herself before Assuerus

1. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of February in that year 4662, having spent three days in rigorous prayer and penance, Esther took off her mourning attire, donned regal garments and adorned herself with precious jewellery. After having invoked the Lord God of Hosts, Guide and Saviour of her people, Esther went to seek out her husband. Assuerus was found seated on his throne vested in royal attire and surrounded by some ministers of his court, among them Amman, who had gone to suggest that the king order Mardocheus to be crucified on the gibbet prepared for him. The figure of the king shone with the gold and precious stones of his robes, but his countenance betrayed extreme concern and deepest sorrow. At the presence of King Assuerus, Queen Esther turned pale with anguish, and her face took on the colour of death, but at no time did she faint. Esther, the resolute woman, figure of the Divine Mary, fulfilled her lofty mission unwaveringly, without fainting, without falling down, like the Virgin Mary at the foot of the Cross on Calvary.

2. On seeing the altered countenance of his beloved wife, King Assuerus, surmising it was because of the edict against the Jews, hastily and fearfully rose from the throne, and taking Esther in his arms, caressed her saying: *"What troubles you Esther? I am your husband and brother in the Faith. Fear not. You shall not die, because the edict that has been issued is not for you, but for the other Jews of the captivity, because of their conspiracy against me. Come then, touch the sceptre in token of my favour towards you."* But as she remained standing and silent, the king took the golden sceptre and placed it on the head of his spouse, and kissed her on the forehead saying: *"Why do you not speak to me?"* Esther replied: *"I saw you, lord, as if you were an avenging angel of God, and for that reason my heart has become troubled at your majesty. But you, O king my husband, are exceedingly admirable, and your countenance is favourable to benevolence."* After these words, Queen Esther kept deep silence, with her eyes downcast and her hands in attitude of supplication. Seeing her thus, the king was troubled, and the ministers with him looked upon Esther with great compassion, except Amman, who hated her even more seeing her in that posture.

3. King Assuerus then said to her: *"What do you wish, Queen Esther? What is your petition? All that you ask of me, I will give you."* To which she replied: *"O powerful King Assuerus, my spouse! If I have found grace in your eyes, save the children of my people for whom I intercede; since being innocent, they have been condemned to ruin, to massacre, to extermination, because of unjust accusations which brand them as traitors to your royal person; since at court there is a powerful enemy of the Jewish People, one in whom you have placed all your confidence, whose cruelty could even harm you, O my king! I make known to you that our persecutor and enemy is the utterly perverse Amman, here present, who has defamed the Jews and likewise seeks your death also."* On hearing this, Assuerus, completely stunned, looked with unspeakable rage at Amman, who became as one petrified. Then Esther, with abundant tears, besought Assuerus: *"If I have found grace in your eyes, O my king, I supplicate that, with the greatest urgency, you revoke by a new edict the one which Amman, persecutor and enemy of the Jews, has sent to the authorities of the empire in your name to put them to death on the date determined by him in the edict. Because, how can I suffer the extermination of my people, being as they are innocent?"* The king preferred not to reply or take any decision without first thinking it over well; so that, withdrawing, he went out alone to the garden.

#### Chapter XVI

##### Amman implores Queen Esther to intercede for him before King Assuerus. All of Amman's wickedness is unmasked

1. While the king was outside in the garden, the astute Amman, with refined hypocrisy, sought to profit from the deep kind-heartedness of the queen. So taking advantage of Assuerus' absence, he prostrated himself before her, pleading with her to free him from the death sentence the king might dictate against him for his most grievous crime. While Amman, in the presence of other ministers, knelt before Esther, Assuerus returned from the garden, and with deep anger said to his perverse prime minister: *"Do you perhaps now seek to use the queen's favour to escape the just chastisement you deserve? Depart at once from my presence and that of my highly virtuous spouse."* Despite Amman's perverse behaviour, never did it occur to him to attempt in any way sexually to abuse the most chaste Queen Esther, who instilled such respect and veneration that no one would have dared approach her with improper intentions. Amman, then, limited himself to beseeching the queen to free him from the just anger of the king.

2. Assuerus gave orders that his prime minister Amman be confined to the palace under strict surveillance until he decide the chastisement that should be given him. When the latter's wife Zares learned of this she hurried to the palace, and Amman told her all that had happened. She said to him: *"Give yourself up for lost, because if besides having discovered your plans against the Jews, the king comes to know that you have apostatized from the Jewish Faith and are an adorer of Zoroaster, he will surely crucify you on the gibbet in place of Mardocheus."*

3. While Amman was confined to the palace, King Assuerus learned through secret and reliable sources that the treacherous prime minister had been the instigator of the conspiracy planned by the two captains, which later failed thanks to Mardocheus. In addition, the king learned that Amman, as likewise his wife, their children and closest followers, had apostatized from the Jewish Faith and become adorers of the idol Zoroaster, though officially continuing to render worship to the Lord God of Israel. Assuerus had irrefutable proof of the truth of all these very serious crimes of his prime minister.

**Chapter XVII**

**King Assuerus revokes the edict of extermination against the Jews of the captivity.**

**King Assuerus decrees the death of the traitor Amman**

1. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of February that same year 4662, Assuerus decided to revoke the edict of death against the Jews. He therefore he convoked the ministers and secretaries of the court, in order that they be personal witnesses and record it in writing. Here are the contents of the edict: *"I, King Assuerus of Persia by the Grace of God, by this edict, make known to ministers, governors, military men, magistrates and other subjects of my empire: A certain individual has availed himself of my benevolence and the honours I conferred upon him, to exalt himself and abuse the liberal confidence that I placed in him. And not only does he seek to oppress vassals, but abusing the glory received, plots treason against me as well, who gave that glory to him. Not content with being ungrateful for benefits and violating just human rights, he furthermore presumes to be able to escape the judgment of the all-seeing God. Such a point of folly has he reached that, by his lying artifices, he has endeavoured to ruin those loyal to me. There is proof in history that, owing to the evil suggestions of some, the good inclinations of kings have been undone. Accordingly, in the interests of justice, I find myself faced with the unavoidable duty of restoring the honour of those who, innocent, have been defamed. That all may understand my words clearly, know that my prime minister Amman, son of Amadati, Amalechite by origin and at heart, and who has nothing in common with Persian blood, has sullied our clemency by his cruelty. And this after I had welcomed him and given him so many demonstrations of benevolence, regarding him as if he were my father, he being venerated by all in the first place after the king. The arrogance of his heart, however, reached such heights that, with new and unheard of treachery, he plotted the death of Mardocheus, to whose loyalty and good service I owe my life, as also the death of all the Jews of the captivity. Moreover, in this way he endeavoured to deprive me of the kingdom, and kill me and also Queen Esther my spouse. And this he schemed with his mind set on wearing the crown of Persia."*

2. *"I, King Assuerus by the Grace of the Lord God of Hosts, find free from all guilt the Jews of the captivity, my brothers in Faith, whom the perverse Amman had destined for death; and who are children of the God of Israel, Most High and Ever-Living Lord, by whose benevolence I was given the kingdom and am conserved until the present day. Therefore, know that by my royal authority I revoke the edict that, in my name, Amman issued against the innocent Jews of the captivity that they be exterminated on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February of the current year. Publish this edict in the city of Susa and throughout the other cities of my empire, so that all may know that the Almighty Lord God of Israel has disposed that on this day the affliction and tears of the children of His people be converted for them into joy."*

3. *"By this present edict, I condemn to death the traitor Amman, commanding that he be crucified on the gibbet he prepared for Mardocheus. Besides, I order the extermination of the members of his family and subjects of the empire who have taken part in the plot against the Jews of the captivity and in the conspiracy against the kingdom. It is not I, but the God of Israel Himself who gives the traitors their deserts."* King Assuerus later ratified the contents of the revoking edict with his personal seal.

**Chapter XVIII**

**King Assuerus honours Mardocheus and humbles Amman through the city of Susa.**

**Promulgation of Assuerus' edict in favour of the Jews of the captivity. Amman is crucified on the gibbet**

1. Before the public lecture of the revoking edict, and the crucifixion of Amman on the gibbet, Assuerus wished to raise up the figure of Mardocheus, and at the same time humble that of his treacherous enemy. For the king thought to himself: *"What honour and reward has Mardocheus received in proportion to his great fidelity? Until now he has not been honoured according to his merits."*

2. Assuerus ordered Amman to be brought, and once before him said: *"Amman, according to the custom in my kingdom, what should be done to one whom the king wishes to honour above all his subjects?"* Amman replied: *"He whom the king wishes to honour should be dressed in the cloak of empire prince, mount one of the king's own horses, and wear the princely crown upon his head. Then the most noble magnate of the court should take the horse's bridle in his right hand and lead him out to the city square, crying out in a loud voice: 'Thus is honoured he whom the king wishes to honour.'" The king then said: "I command that Mardocheus be honoured exactly as you have said."* Once Mardocheus was dressed in the cloak of prince and his head adorned with the crown, he mounted one of the king's horses. Following this, Assuerus told Amman to take the horse's bridle in his right hand and lead Mardocheus through the main streets of Susa, crying out in a loud voice: *"Behold Mardocheus in princely attire. Thus is honoured he whom the king wishes to honour."* Amman offered no resistance to what the king ordered, complying with it in all rigour, thinking that by this humiliation he might perhaps be pardoned for his crime. Behind the humbled page and the honoured rider there followed a numerous entourage of the king's court guards. The procession ended in the main square of the city, where the gibbet stood that Amman had prepared for Mardocheus. Then, that same day, the 17<sup>th</sup> of February in the year 4662, one of the principal magnates of the court publicly read the edict of the king, in which the previous edict against the Jews of the captivity was revoked and in which Amman was sentenced to death. Immediately the palace guards, complying with the orders they had received from Assuerus, crucified Amman on that gibbet in the presence of the multitude.

**Chapter XIX**

**Propagation of Assuerus' edict in favour of the Jews of the captivity**

1. Following the death of Amman, King Assuerus commanded that the edict favouring the Jews of the captivity be taken with utmost urgency to the provincial governors, magistrates, army generals and other authorities of the empire, so that all might know that the previous edict of extermination had been revoked and communicate this to the people.

All was fulfilled in accordance with the king's commands, so that copies of the new edict arrived at their respective destinations days before the 28<sup>th</sup> of February in that year 4662, the date indicated in the condemnatory edict for carrying out the extermination.

2. In all the provinces, cities and towns the repealing edict of Assuerus was received by the Jews with great jubilee, festivities, banquets and parties. Such was the Jews' praise of God for His infinite mercy, and for the miracles and prodigies God worked, that many from different sects embraced the Faith of the children of Israel.

**Chapter XX**

**King Assuerus designates Mardocheus Prince of the Persian Empire**

1. In that same year 4662, the king generously rewarded the loyalty of Mardocheus, raising him to the rank of Prince of the whole Persian Empire, which post far surpassed that of prime minister in authority and power. Mardocheus became, after the king and queen, the person of greatest prestige in the empire. At solemnities he dressed in a gold and sky-blue coloured tunic, donned a silken purple cloak, and girded his brow with the princely crown incrustated with precious stones. King Assuerus granted to Mardocheus all the vast properties and wealth that had belonged to Amman. In the city of Susa there were feasts and rejoicing at the exaltation of this most faithful servant of God and the king. It seemed to the Jews that with him a new light was born to them. Mardocheus was everywhere loved by his brothers in the Faith, since like a highly zealous father he concerned himself with the good of all and the prosperity of the empire.

2. King Assuerus sent a decree to all ministers, magistrates and governors of all the provinces, designating Mardocheus as Prince of the Persian Empire, having the greatest authority after himself and the queen. So then, the fame of Mardocheus grew day by day, and spread from mouth to mouth everywhere.

**Chapter XXI**

**Institution of the Feast of Purim**

1. In the year 4663, King Assuerus, through the initiative of Prince Mardocheus, established the Feast of Purim, as yearly remembrance of God's infinite mercy on the members of His people, delivering them from the massacre plotted against them by the wicked Amman.

2. Mardocheus, by letters, made known to all Jews of the Persian Empire the establishment of this feast in honour of the Lord God of Israel. The Feast of Purim was to be celebrated over two days in the months of February or March, according to the Jewish calendar. In the letters, Mardocheus said among other things: *"In remembrance of all that the children of my people suffered by the edict of extermination, and the happy change brought about afterwards by the edict of repeal, we exhort the Jews, both they and their descendants, and all those desiring to embrace our religion, to be sure to celebrate this feast each year by two days of great solemnity. These two days, which must never be forgotten, shall be celebrated from generation to generation by the Jewish people. They should be two days of special adoration of God, and of holy jubilee and rejoicing."* Queen Esther and Prince Mardocheus took great pains for this feast to become established from then on.

**Chapter XXII**

**Official promulgation of the Jewish Faith in the vast territory of the Persian Empire.**

**Opposition and resistance by many non-Jewish subjects**

1. In the year 4664, King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus promulgated a law for the entire Persian Empire establishing the Jewish religion as the sole and obligatory one. By this law was excluded, then, any other religion or worship other than the Jewish Faith, which all subjects of the empire were ordered to profess; and those unwilling to obey the law, and therefore to observe the true religion, were to leave the domains of King Assuerus, otherwise they would be put to death.

2. Many of the non-Jewish subjects resisted the observance of the said law, considering that it implied the supremacy, not only political and social, but also religious, of the Jewish people over the other subjects of the empire, and also the extirpation of their religious beliefs. In not a few provinces, cities and towns there were some who rebelled against the royal dispositions, wreaking havoc among the Jews living with them, even killing a good number of them. Prince Mardocheus, by order of King Assuerus, urgently sent letters to all provinces in the empire, calling for the Jews to arm and confront those who sought to kill them. Thus encouraged, the Jews gathered in different cities, towns and villages to confront their enemies and persecutors, who found it difficult to resist the reprisals of their victims; since the governors, magistrates and military and all those constituted in authority, also gave their protection to the Jews, knowing that Mardocheus was the king's right-hand-man and enjoyed his absolute confidence.

3. The attitude of the Jews towards their enemies was not vengeful, but defensive, and although there were certain excesses, clemency prevailed over rigour. The lives of many of the Jewish People's enemies were spared at their showing repentance. Thanks to the great apostolate of Queen Esther and Prince Mardocheus, conversions to the Jewish Faith were innumerable, quite apotheotic, since God worked great miracles and wonders for the purpose. Pagan temples, their altars, idols and the multiple depravities which idolatry brings in its wake were completely eradicated throughout the empire. Those who had no desire to be converted to the Jewish Faith were compelled to leave Persia, and those who refused to leave were put to death. Nevertheless, some were falsely converted to the Jewish Faith in order not to abandon the land of Persia and their properties.

**Chapter XXIII****Mardocheus's prophetic dream and its explication**

1. In the year 4662, when appointed prince of the Persian empire, Mardocheus told King Assuerus and Queen Esther: "In the year 4659, I was living in Susa of Persia and had the following prophetic dream. I dreamt that I heard voices, disturbances, thunder, earthquakes and alarm on earth. Then there appeared two lion whelps in the posture of fighting each other, whose roaring stirred up all the nations to fight against the nation of the righteous; that day was one of darkness, of danger, of tribulation, of anguish and of great fear upon earth. The nation of the righteous became troubled, fearful of the evils threatening her, deeming herself destined to die. However, the children of this nation clamoured to God; and at their clamours, a small wellspring began to grow, until it became a large river, which, for its teeming waters, overflowed in greatest abundance. This wellspring later turned into a light and into a sun, and the humble were exalted and devoured the proud. When I awoke from this dream, I rose from bed and began to think what it was that God might wish to do, and kept the dream engraved in my heart desirous of knowing its meaning. Well then, it is now that I understand my dream, for it is the Lord God of Hosts who has done this to me, for none of these things has failed to come true: The small wellspring that grew to become a river, and was transformed into light, into a sun, and that poured out waters in great abundance, is Esther, whom the king took to wife, and wished her to be queen; the two lion whelps are myself and Amman; the people in coalition against the nation of the righteous are those who endeavoured to annihilate us, the Israelites of the captivity; we clamoured to the Lord God, and He delivered us from death, working great miracles and wonders for His people, which were observed by the pagans. By the help of God, the humble children of my people prevailed against the proud enemy who wished to devour them. God remembered His people, and had mercy on His heritage." The two lion whelps are also, respectively, figures of Christ and Antichrist.

**Chapter XXIV****The third Zorobabel succeeds Mardocheus in the post of Prince of the Persian Empire**

The third Zorobabel, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel, son of the Levitical priest Fadaya and of Mara, grandson of Salathiel, nephew of the second Zorobabel and grand-nephew of the Holy Prophet Ezechiel, in the year 4692 succeeded Mardocheus as Prince of the Persian Empire when the last named voluntarily resigned the post at the age of eighty-eight.

**Book II****First part of the Book of Esdras.****Zorobabel, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel****Chapter I****Genealogy and birth of the third Zorobabel, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel**

1. The history of the third Zorobabel, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel, is to be found in the Book of Esdras, written entirely by Esdras himself, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel. Later this book was greatly adulterated.

2. The third Zorobabel, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel, was born in 4659 in the city of Susa, capital of the Persian Empire. He was the son of the Levitical priest Fadaya and of Mara, and therefore from the tribe of Levi. Fadaya was son of the Levitical priest Azarias, brother of the Prophet Ezechiel, a Levitical priest. Mara, from the tribe of Judah, was daughter of the second Salathiel and granddaughter of perverse King Jechonias; thus Fadaya was the second Salathiel's son-in-law. Mara was the second Zorobabel's sister; thus the third Zorobabel was a nephew of the second Zorobabel, who was son of the second Salathiel and grandson of Jechonias. When Fadaya died, his son, the third Zorobabel, still a child, was adopted as son by his grandfather the second Salathiel, Mara's father. The Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo Zorobabel was an Essenian terciario, married and with sons and daughters.

3. When Zorobabel was born, virtuous King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus reigned in Persia; and virtuous Viceroy Goniel governed in the land of Israel.

**Chapter II****Zorobabel is anointed prophet in minor grade. Zorobabel is sanctified and anointed prophet in major grade.****The Prophet Zorobabel receives the rank of levite minister. Zorobabel receives the rank of Levitical priest**

1. In the year 4671, when twelve years old, Zorobabel was anointed prophet in minor grade by Most Holy Melchisedech in the city of Susa.

2. In the year 4675, when sixteen years old, Zorobabel was sanctified and anointed prophet in major grade by Most Holy Melchisedech in the city of Susa.

3. In the year 4676, when seventeen years old, Zorobabel received the rank of levite minister, when anointed by the Prophet Sophonias in the chief synagogue of Susa.

4. In the year 4680, when twenty-one years old, Zorobabel received the rank of Levitical priest, when anointed by the Prophet Sophonias in the chief synagogue of Susa.

**Chapter III****Zorobabel, Prince of the Persian Empire. Assuerus surnamed Cyrus, annexes the Median-Babylonian Empire to the Persian Empire**

1. In the year 4692, Zorobabel, thirty-three years old, was named Prince of the Persian Empire by King Assuerus, after Mardocheus had voluntarily resigned this post at the age of eighty-eight.

2. In the year 4699, Assuerus surnamed Cyrus, king of Persia, inherited the throne of the Median-Babylonian Empire, annexing it to his empire. As a result of this annexation, King Assuerus established his court in the city of Babylon.

**Chapter IV****Edict of King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus granting liberty to the Israelites or Jews of the captivity**

1. In the year 4699, forty-first of his reign in Persia, and first in Babylonia, virtuous King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus, moved by the Spirit of God and at the request of the Prophet Daniel, decreed the return of the Israelites of the captivity to the territory of Israel, the rebuilding of God's Temple in Jerusalem and that of the city walls. Virtuous King Assuerus was then sixty-five years old, and his spouse virtuous Queen Esther fifty-six.

2. Here is Assuerus surnamed Cyrus's edict: "The Lord God of Israel, who has given me the vast empire I possess, has commanded me, through the Prophet Daniel, that His Holy Temple in Jerusalem and the walls of this city be rebuilt. Therefore, the Israelites, my brothers in the Faith, residing in my empire, who desire to leave for the territory of Israel, may go and settle there. Also communicated to me, on behalf of the Most High God, was His desire that the Prince of my empire, Zorobabel, be Caudillo of the territory of Israel, and the one to lead and guide those wishing to go there. I, Assuerus surnamed Cyrus, King by the Grace of God, designate Zorobabel as Caudillo of the People of Israel and command that under his orders a count be made of all the Israelites of Jewish origin and Faith, as likewise of the proselytes, who wish to accompany him. I also command that all those who remain here, in addition to the alms they customarily send to the territory of Israel for God's worship, give donations of gold, silver, livestock and other goods to those returning to that territory, to be put at the disposal of the grandiose work of the Temple of the Lord God of Hosts to be carried out in Jerusalem, and that of the city walls." The seventy years of captivity were completed, then, with this edict of Assuerus in the year 4699, that is thirty-three years after the Prophet Daniel's vision, and five hundred years before Christ's birth.

3. Carrying out King Assuerus' orders, Caudillo Zorobabel made a count of the men and women of all ages who expressed their desire to leave on the expedition under his guidance and settle in the territory of Israel. Including the Prophets Daniel, Aggeus, Zacharias, High Priest Joshua, and Queen Esther's uncle Mardocheus, the total number of Israelites in the census of the thirteen tribes, including proselytes, accompanying Caudillo Zorobabel, came to one million four hundred thousand; among whom were a good number of Levitical priests and levite ministers.

4. Those who still chose to stay behind helped their departing brethren, giving them objects of gold and silver, jewels, animals and many other goods for the building work and the maintenance of God's worship. King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus had the sacred vessels of the Temple of God in Jerusalem, removed by Nabuchodonozor III, brought up from the coffers of the palace treasury, and gave them to Zorobabel, for him to take and place in the new Temple of God to be rebuilt there. The total number of these vessels and other sacred utensils of gold and silver, brought by Nabuchodonozor III and returned by King Assuerus, came to five thousand four hundred. King Assuerus and Queen Esther made substantial and valuable donations to Zorobabel to be employed in the rebuilding of the Temple of God in Jerusalem and of the city walls.

**Chapter V****The Prophet and Levitical priest Esdras is translated to Mount Sinai in bilocation. Esdras, on Mount Sinai, receives from Most Holy Ananias the Pentateuch and new Tablets of the Decalogue.****Missions entrusted on Mount Sinai to Esdras by the Most Holy Trinity and Most Holy Essenia**

1. In the year 4699, the Prophet and Levitical priest Esdras was translated by God in bilocation to Mount Sinai, or Mount Horeb, or Mount of Ananias, where he remained for the forty days and forty nights preceding the final week prior to the departure of the Israelites of the Babylonian Captivity under the command of Caudillo Zorobabel.

2. The Prophet Esdras, on arriving at the summit of Mount Sinai, over it saw the Divine Soul of Mary under the figure of Queen Essenia with Her Heart open, and within three thrones, upon which were seated: in the centre Most Holy Ananias, to His right Most Holy Melchisedech and to His left Most Holy Malachias. Suddenly, from the Heart of Queen Essenia the Three Divine Persons and Their thrones disappeared, and in Her Heart appeared: a cerebrum, representing the Eternal Father; to His right an open mouth with a tongue inside, representing the Divine Word; and between the two, in the apex of the triangle, an index finger representing the Holy Spirit. After this vision images of all kinds disappeared, and the Prophet then saw God face to face, just as He is, that is, the Divine Essence.

3. During those forty days and forty nights, Most Holy Ananias dictated to the Prophet and Levitical priest Esdras the entire contents of the Pentateuch, as the extant copies had been considerably adulterated, since the Ark of the Covenant with the Pentateuch written by Moses and the Tablets of the Law which God had bestowed upon him on Mount Sinai had been secretly removed by the Prophet Jeremias prior to the siege of Jerusalem in the year 4627 by order of God, with the help of the angelic hosts, faithful priests and Essenian religiosos, and hidden on Mount Nebo in the same cave from which Moses was translated to Mary's Planet. On the fortieth day of his sojourn, Most Holy Ananias gave Esdras the new Tablets of the Decalogue, exactly as taught now in Palmarian Doctrine. That is to say, he was given them in the order and content in which they are to be found at the present in the Catechism and Morals of the Church, One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Palmarian:

**First:** To love God above all things.

**Second:** Not to swear in vain by the Holy Name of God.

**Third:** To sanctify Holydays.

**Fourth:** To honour father and mother.

**Fifth:** Not to kill.

**Sixth:** Not to commit acts of impurity.

**Seventh:** Not to steal.

**Eighth:** Not to bear false witness nor to lie.

**Ninth:** Not to commit idolatry.

**Tenth:** Not to desire espoused persons nor covet the goods of others.

Thus were the Commandments in the times of Christ and apostolic times, but sadly, this new Pentateuch dictated to Esdras by Most Holy Ananias, and the different biblical texts of the Old and New Testaments, were later considerably falsified by freemasonry and different heretical currents, and came to be grievously adulterated up till the revision and redaction of the present Palmarian Bible.

The bilocation of Esdras on Mount Sinai began on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June in that year 4699 and ended on the 6<sup>th</sup> of August.

4. On the fortieth day of the Prophet Esdras' sojourn on the summit of Mount Sinai in bilocation, after Most Holy Ananias had given him the new Tablets of the Decalogue, Most Holy Melchisedech asked him for the goblet he had with him for his personal use. After handing it over, Most Holy Malachias asked the prophet for the staff he carried. After handing it over, Most Holy Essenia asked the prophet for the cape he wore. Forthwith, Most Holy Melchisedech said to the prophet: "Receive with love the cape Essenia bestows upon you." After he had receiving it, Most Holy Melchisedech said to the prophet: "Receive with love the staff Malachias bestows on you." After he had received it, Most Holy Melchisedech said to the prophet: "With your staff, cleave the terrain here before you, and you shall find deep down a piece of manna which My servant Moses kept for this glorious day." Having found the piece of manna, the Prophet Esdras took it in his hand and showed it to Most Holy Melchisedech, who said to the prophet: "Put it into this goblet of yours," and forthwith bestowed the goblet on the prophet. All this accomplished, Most Holy Ananias said to the prophet: "Give to My servant Zorobabel the Pentateuch, the new Tablets of the Decalogue, the goblet containing the manna, the cape and the staff." Following this, Most Holy Ananias added: "This goblet and this staff shall be for the use of Zorobabel until the day he shall return them to you again, through My servant High Priest Joshua; and later on you shall give them to another servant of Mine through the same High Priest." Most Holy Ananias continued speaking to the Prophet Esdras: "One day not far off, this Pentateuch, these new Tablets of the Decalogue and the goblet containing the manna, will be placed in the Ark of the Covenant that shall be enthroned when My new Temple is solemnly inaugurated." When Most Holy Ananias had finished speaking, the Three Divine Persons and Most Holy Essenia disappeared from the Prophet Esdras' sight. Subsequently, the prophet prostrated himself on the ground and became enraptured in a sublime ecstasy, again seeing God face to face. This vision ended, the Prophet Esdras carried out all that was ordered. The goblet, the cape and the staff, after having been bestowed on Esdras by the heavenly personages, possessed sacred character.

5. In the Pentateuch received by Esdras, among other things the Lord said: "Marriages between Israelites and pagans, besides being abominable before My Face, are invalid. From now on a man is permitted to have only four wives, instead of thirteen, and what is perfect is to have only one. The man caught in adultery should die, as one accused, crucified. A wife should repudiate her husband caught in adultery."

6. The Prophet Esdras, on God's behalf, gave a copy of the new Pentateuch and the new Tablets of the Decalogue to King Assuerus, so that its precepts be rigorously imposed throughout his empire.

#### Chapter VI

The Israelites or Jews of the captivity, before leaving for the territory of Israel, concentrate on the east bank of the River Euphrates, beside Lake Ahava. The Prophet and Levitical priest Esdras is translated in bilocation to Mount Carmel. On Mount Carmel he is visited by Elias, Henoch and Moses. The Prophet and Levitical priest Esdras is translated in bilocation to Mount Sion. The finding, on Mount Sion, of eight Books with the Psalms of King David

1. In that year 4699, the Israelites who had decided to leave with Zorobabel for the territory of Israel, coming from different parts of the Persian Empire, assembled beside Lake Ahava, formed on the east bank of the River Euphrates, on the outskirts of the city of Babylon. The Prophet Esdras, on God's behalf, communicated to everyone the contents of the Holy Law in the new Pentateuch, and of the new Tablets of the Decalogue received by him. Furthermore, the Prophet Esdras, in the name of the Lord God of Hosts, stressed to all the following: "In the new Pentateuch, God forbids the menfolk of the People of Israel to have more than four wives. Therefore, all those who are married to more than this number of women, shall retain only the first four, dismissing the others. This is an indispensable condition for entering the territory of Israel, and even for remaining in the Persian Empire from now on." The great majority of Israelites concentrated there for departure, accepted the divine disposition on the new number of wives permitted to men; so that those who had more than this number kept only the first four wives. Nevertheless, a minority did not accept the divine disposition, and so were expelled from the Holy People of God and compelled to leave the Persian Empire immediately, under pain of death.

2. One week prior to the departure of the Israelites of the captivity under the command of Zorobabel, the Prophet Esdras, in the name of Most Holy Ananias, Lord God of Hosts, said to them: "I made pacts with My servants your fathers, Noah, Heber, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses; I brought you out of Egypt; I miraculously took you across the waters of the Red Sea; I led you through the desert where I nourished you, sometimes with manna, at others with good fruits of the earth; I covered you in the desert with shady trees, protecting you in the heat of summer; I caused you to enter the land I promised to your fathers and their posterity; I caused you miraculously to pass over the River Jordan; I made a pact with My servant David, and now I make a pact with My servant Zorobabel; and I will bring you

again into the land I gave to your fathers and their descendants, more extensive than it was under the reign of My servant Josias. Adore only Me, your God and Lord, and do not return to idolatry and other depravities!" Hearing all this, the Israelites rent their garments, dressed in sackcloth, covered their heads with ashes and fasted for three days, to ratify in this way the pact with the Lord God of Israel.

3. Three days prior to the departure of the Israelites from the Babylonian captivity under the command of Caudillo Zorobabel, the Prophet Esdras, in bilocation, spent eight hours on the summit of Mount Carmel, where he was visited by the Prophet Elias, Patriarch Henoch and Caudillo Moses. Elias presented to the Prophet Esdras a flaming sword, to be given to Zorobabel for his use. Moses imposed his hands upon the Prophet Esdras' head, transmitting to him his own prophetic spirit, charging him to do likewise upon Zorobabel's head, in order to transmit to him that same prophetic spirit. Henoch presented to Esdras his own prophetic Book, to be given to Zorobabel. The vision concluded, the Prophet Esdras carried out all that had been commanded.

4. Two days prior to the departure of the Israelites of the Babylonian Captivity, the Prophet Esdras, in bilocation, spent seven hours on Mount Sion of Jerusalem, where Elias, Henoch and Moses appeared to him, each with a spade, and they gave a fourth spade to the Prophet Esdras. The four of them began to dig down in that spot, finding intact King David's sumptuous and artistic sepulchre. The four entered the sepulchre, discovering the incorrupt body of the holy king; and near the sepulchre they found a small coffer containing eight books free from falsification, each containing all the Psalms of King David. Forthwith, Elias charged the Prophet Esdras to communicate the happy discovery to Zorobabel, also directing him to hand over the coffer containing the eight books so that, during the departure of the Israelites of the Babylonian Captivity, eight Levitical priests might sing David's Psalms. All the work concluded, the prophet carried out everything commanded.

#### Chapter VII

First expedition of Israelites or Jews of the captivity to the territory of Israel under the command of Caudillo Zorobabel.

Israel's territory expands under Zorobabel's caudilloship

1. The day prior to the departure of the Israelites from the Babylonian Captivity, the Prophet and Priest Esdras gave to Caudillo Zorobabel the new Pentateuch, the new Tablets of the Decalogue, the goblet containing the piece of manna, and the cape and staff which he had received on the summit of Mount Sinai. Esdras also gave to Zorobabel the flaming sword and Henoch's prophetic book, which he had received on the summit of Mount Carmel, as well as the coffer containing the eight books of David's Psalms found on Mount Sion.

2. In the early morning of Sunday the 14<sup>th</sup> of August in that year 4699, taking with him the edict of King Assuerus, Caudillo Zorobabel, like a new Moses, departed with the Israelites from the east bank of the River Euphrates. On the way to the land of Israel, Levitical priests bore in procession a golden casket containing the new Pentateuch, the new Tablets of the Decalogue, the goblet containing the piece of manna, Henoch's prophetic Book, along with the staffs of the Prophets Ezechiel, Baruch and Sophonias, which had been kept in the convent of Essenian religiosos founded by Sophonias in the city of Babylon. The empty coffer of King David's eight books of Psalms was also carried in procession. During the departure eight Levitical priests chanted these Psalms.

3. The Most Holy Trinity, Ananias, Melchisedech and Malachias, waited on the west bank of the River Euphrates. The Three Most August Persons were accompanied by the seven Archangels and by myriads of angels triumphantly sounding trumpets while the Israelites miraculously crossed the River Euphrates, as centuries before they had crossed the River Jordan when entering the Promised Land; since God formed a pathway of dry land over the river course in the form of a bridge amid the waters, which remained divided until all had crossed. This heavenly Trinitarian and angelic presence was seen by twenty-four persons, men and women, among them Caudillo Zorobabel, High Priest Joshua and the Prophets Daniel, Aggeus and Zacharias. After some months, many Israelites attributed the heavenly vision on the west bank of the River Euphrates to magic performed by virtuous Caudillo Zorobabel, so that a good number of them no longer gave credence to the majestic vision.

4. By command of the Lord God of Hosts, the itinerary, from the city of Babylon, followed by the Israelites at the orders of Caudillo Zorobabel, was across the Arabian desert, where the most provident Lord God of Israel worked great miracles so that His People might not lack the means necessary for their subsistence. Crossing the desert, they arrived at the east bank of the River Jordan, to the south of Lake Genesareth, in the middle of October that same year. After crossing the river from the east bank to the west, the expedition at the orders of Zorobabel camped beside Mount Thabor. While they were there, Most Holy Malachias presented Himself, accompanied by the Prophet Ado, Superior General of the Essenes. Later, guided by Most Holy Malachias, before making their way up to Jerusalem, all went to Mount Carmel, arriving there on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December of that year 4699. Three days prior to Caudillo Zorobabel's arrival in the land of Israel, virtuous Viceroy Goniel died in Mapha.

5. The Prophet Elias, in the company of Henoch and Moses, from the Planet of Mary returned to Mount Carmel when Zorobabel arrived with the Israelites of the Captivity.

6. King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus placed under the caudilloship of Zorobabel the same extensive territory of Israel that had been under the crown of virtuous King Josias, plus further territory to the north of Cilicia, today belonging to Turkey.

7. With the beginning of Zorobabel's caudilloship in the land of Israel, God re-established theocratic government, though ensuring that neither of the two principal lineages of the House of David be extinguished from which Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of kings, was to descend.

8. Caudillo Zorobabel, during his caudilloship, was obliged to give the symbolical tribute of an annual silver coin to the kings of the Persian Empire; and was required to conserve Faith in the One True God of Israel in the whole territory.

**Chapter VIII**

**The Prophet Daniel enters Mount Carmel as an Essenian religioso. Daniel receives the first three grades of the Essenian priesthood**

1. In the second half of October in the year 4699, when Zorobabel and the Israelites were camped beside Mount Thabor, the Prophet Daniel disclosed to the Prophet Ado his desire to become an Essenian religioso. Ado acceded willingly, and Daniel left with him for Mount Carmel, entering as an Essenian religioso on the 20<sup>th</sup> of that same month at the age of eighty-two.
2. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of October of the same year 4699, in the Cave of Elias on Mount Carmel, the Prophet Daniel received the first grade of the Essenian priesthood, or priestly coadjutor.
3. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November of the same year 4699, in the Cave of Elias on Mount Carmel, the Prophet Daniel received the second grade of the Essenian priesthood, or priest.
4. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of November of the same year 4699, while still eighty-two years old, in the Cave of Elias on Mount Carmel, the Prophet Daniel received the third grade of the Essenian priesthood, or chief priest.

**Chapter IX**

**The portable Tabernacle and the replica of the Ark of the Covenant kept on Mount Carmel are brought to Jerusalem, and are both installed on Mount Zion**

1. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of December that year 4699, Caudillo Zorobabel, guided by the Most Holy Prophet Malachias, ordered that the portable Tabernacle and the replica of the Ark of the Covenant in which the Sacred Fire was kept, be taken from the Cave of Elias on Mount Carmel. Afterwards, Caudillo Zorobabel, guided by Most Holy Malachias, headed for Jerusalem with the accompanying multitude, among whom also went the Prophet Ado, Superior General of the Essenes, the Prophet Daniel and numerous Essenes of the three branches. The replica of the Ark of the Covenant was carried on the shoulders of Levitical priests, and the portable Tabernacle by levite ministers. The translation was carried out with great solemnity.
2. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of December in that year 4699, guided by Most Holy Malachias, Caudillo Zorobabel and the entire numerous throng, solemnly entered Jerusalem with the portable Tabernacle and the replica of the Ark of the Covenant. As they passed through, the inhabitants of the city, with unspeakable joy and abundant tears, sang hymns of gratitude to the Lord God, saying among other praises: *"May the Lord God of Hosts be glorified, because He is good and His mercy is eternal, and He works so many wonders for His people."* Caudillo Zorobabel, in the presence of High Priest Joshua, before the numerous crowd assembled there, read the edict of King Assuerus of Persia in which he was designated Caudillo of the People of Israel.
3. While the levite ministers installed the portable Tabernacle on Mount Zion, Caudillo Zorobabel, assisted by High Priest Joshua and many other priests, was busy imparting God's Holy Law from the new Pentateuch and the new Tablets of the Decalogue, to the Israelites in Jerusalem, whether city residents or outsiders from other parts of Israelite territory, and to demand fulfilment of the divine disposition on the new number of wives permitted to men. The vast majority accepted the disposition; but there were also those who rejected it, who found themselves obliged to leave Israel's territory.
4. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of December in that year 4699, the portable Tabernacle was finally installed on Mount Zion of Jerusalem, and within it was enthroned the Ark of the Covenant with the Sacred Fire in its interior. The new Pentateuch, the new Decalogue or Tablets of the Law, the goblet containing the manna and the staffs of the Prophets Ezechiel, Baruch and Sophonias were placed in another reserved part of the portable Tabernacle.
5. That same day, the 25<sup>th</sup> of December, worship to the Lord God of Israel was resumed, presided by Caudillo Zorobabel and High Priest Joshua, son of High Priest Saraias. From then on, all sacrifices were performed in the portable Tabernacle on Mount Zion, including the morning and evening sacrifices, and other worship prescribed in Holy Law, until the rebuilding and inauguration in Jerusalem of the permanent Temple to the Lord God of Hosts. The portable Tabernacle containing the Ark of the Covenant was located where King David had installed the provisional Temple centuries before, and where later the Cenacle stood in which Christ instituted Holy Mass.

**Chapter X**

**The second Zorobabel, legitimate Head of Our Lord Jesus Christ's dynasty**

1. That day, the 25<sup>th</sup> of December in the year 4699, in the city of Jerusalem, before the portable Tabernacle on Zion, Caudillo Zorobabel, as Prophet of the Lord, by order of Most Holy Malachias, anointed as Vice-Caudillo and Prince of the People of Israel, his thirty-three-year-old uncle according to the flesh, the virtuous second Zorobabel, from the tribe of Judah, eighth and last of the second Salathiel's sons, and grandson of perverse King Jechonias.
2. By this anointing, the second Zorobabel was constituted the dynastic head from whom the throne of David would legitimately descend, through Saint Joseph, to Our Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, by blood, Our Divine Lord, through the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, descends from the first Zorobabel, son of the first Salathiel, and grandson of Neri. Caudillo Zorobabel, from the tribe of Levi, is also in Christ's genealogy through two daughters: one married Resa, son of the first Zorobabel; and the other married Abiud, son of the second Zorobabel.
3. That same day, the 25<sup>th</sup> of December in the year 4699, in the city of Jerusalem, Caudillo Zorobabel named as Governor of Sichem the first Zorobabel, son of the first Salathiel and grandson of Neri.

**Chapter XI**

**The Israelites or Jews arriving from the captivity are distributed throughout the sundry towns of Israel's territory. The works of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem begin, and later the rebuilding of the Sacred Temple of God.**

**Many Israelites from the thirteen tribes take part in the works**

1. Some days after the installation of the portable Tabernacle on Mount Zion, many of the Israelites who had accompanied Zorobabel left Jerusalem to settle in other towns of the very extensive territory of Israel.
2. In the same year 4699, the works of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem began by order of Caudillo Zorobabel. Although God's plan was for the rebuilding of His Sacred Temple to begin immediately, this work was delayed, not through the fault of the great Caudillo Zorobabel, but because of the selfish and procrastinating attitude of the people, who put more interest into building their homes than raising up the Temple of God. Thanks, then, to the help which Caudillo Zorobabel received from God through the Prophet Aggeus, the work of rebuilding the Jerusalem Temple began in the year 4701, in which the foundations of the new building were laid. Many Israelites from the thirteen tribes took part in both works.

**Chapter XII**

**Arrival of many morally corrupt Israelites or Jews in the land of Israel from countries outside the Persian Empire.**

**Illegal marriages of many of these Israelites. Men married to more than four wives**

1. The first three years of Zorobabel's caudilloship in the land of Israel having elapsed, many Israelites arrived there from other countries outside the Persian Empire. A large number of them were married to pagans, contrary to the norms established in the Law of God. For that reason, some of the chief priests approached Zorobabel, saying: *"Many of the children of Israel arriving from outside the Persian Empire, including priests and levite ministers, have come married to persons not of our Faith, thus mixing the holy lineage of the People of God with the pagan lineage of other peoples."* These abominable marriages were due, in some degree, to the adulterations of God's Law effected in Israel in the final years of corruption preceding the Israelites' Babylonian captivity, since in those adulterations marriages of members of the People of Israel to pagans were not forbidden.
2. Zorobabel, inflamed with zeal for the glory of God and the observance of His Holy Law, summoned the children of his people before the portable Tabernacle of Jerusalem. In the presence of High Priest Joshua and of a great number of priests, magistrates, governors and other authorities, he read out the Divine Law of the new Pentateuch in all that concerned marriage. Zorobabel ordered those illegally married to amend their situation in conformity with the Holy Law of God, if they wished to remain united, putting as an indispensable condition that the pagan partner be converted to the Jewish Faith. A good number of those present responded in a loud voice: *"We wish to be faithful to the Lord God of Israel!"* Accordingly, many of those illegal marriages, after the conversion of the pagan partner, were rehabilitated as legal marriages. Nevertheless there were also Israelites married to pagans who separated from those respective partners of theirs who were unwilling to accept the Law of God or be converted to the Faith of Israel. Zorobabel, by the authority of the Lord God of Hosts, dissolved the marriages of those who did not accept the conditions required by him. With regard to the children of these dissolved marriages, those who had not yet attained the use of reason remained in Israel with their fathers or mothers, according to case; and as for those who had reached the use of reason, some decided to remain in Israel and others left with their pagan fathers or mothers, according to case. Those who remained obstinate in paganism were compelled to leave the territory of Israel immediately; and those who refused to do so were exterminated by Zorobabel's just wrath.
3. Since among the Israelites who had arrived in Israel's territory from outside the empire there were also men married to more than four wives, Zorobabel told them that, in conformity with the new Pentateuch, they could retain only the first four wives, and would therefore have to dismiss the others. There were those who obeyed; but also those who did not accept the divine disposition, who were obliged to leave Israelite territory.

**Chapter XIII**

**The Prophet Daniel, founder and Superior of the Essenian convent in Jerusalem.**

**Death of Assuerus, king of the Persian Empire. Queen Esther is rapt up to Mary's Planet**

1. In the year 4702, Prophet Ado, Superior General of the Essenes, designated Prophet Daniel, who was an Essenian chief priest, to be Founder and Superior of the new convent of Essenian religiosos in the city of Jerusalem, where he remained until his death, at the age of ninety-nine, in the year 4716.
2. In the year 4706, in the city of Babylon, after reigning for forty-eight years, King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus died a holy death when seventy-two years old. His virtuous son Darius I, forty-five years old, succeeded him on the throne of the Persian Empire.
3. In the year 4713, seven years after the death of King Assuerus, Queen Esther, seventy years old, was rapt up to Mary's Planet from the city of Babylon.

**Chapter XIV**

**Mardocheus enters as an Essenian religioso on Mount Carmel. Mardocheus is anointed prophet in minor grade.**

**Mardocheus is anointed prophet in major grade. The Prophet Mardocheus receives the first three grades of the Essenian priesthood**

1. In the year 4703, Mardocheus, Queen Esther's uncle, disclosed to the Prophet Ado, Superior General of the Essenes, his desire to become an Essenian religioso. Ado admitted him, and Mardocheus became an Essenian religioso on Mount Carmel that same year when ninety-nine years old.
2. In the year 4704, when one hundred years old, Mardocheus was anointed prophet in minor grade on Mount Carmel by Most Holy Melchisedech.

3. In the year 4705, when one hundred and one years old, Mardocheus was anointed prophet in major grade on Mount Carmel by Most Holy Melchisedech.

4. In the year 4707, when one hundred and three years old, in the Cave of Elias on Mount Carmel, Mardocheus received the first grade of the Essenian priesthood, or priestly coadjutor.

5. In the year 4711, when one hundred and seven years old, in the Cave of Elias on Mount Carmel, Mardocheus received the second grade of the Essenian priesthood, or priest.

6. In the year 4715, when one hundred and eleven years old, in the Cave of Elias on Mount Carmel, Mardocheus received the third grade of the Essenian priesthood, or chief priest.

7. In the year 4719, when Mardocheus was one hundred and fifteen years old, in the Cave of Elias on Mount Carmel, the Prophet Ado, Superior General of the Essenes, designated him as Founder and Superior of a convent of Essenian religiosos in Nazareth.

8. Mardocheus, Founder and Superior of the convent of Essenes in Nazareth, enthroned the main altar in the cave where later stood the house in which the Divine Word became incarnate in the most pure Womb of the Virgin Mary.

#### Chapter XV

**Caudillo Zorobabel lives anticipatively, in mystical form, the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Zorobabel is rapt up to Mary's Planet**

1. Caudillo Zorobabel, every 25<sup>th</sup> of March during his twenty-four years of caudilloship in the land of Israel, from 12 o'clock midday until three in the afternoon, on Mount Calvary, in the presence of numerous Essenes from the Order's three branches, and of others not Essenes, anticipatively lived, in mystical form, the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Among other stigmas were impressed those of His five wounds, His right Shoulder wound and the crowning with thorns' wounds, until six in the morning of the 27<sup>th</sup> of March.

2. Days before Zorobabel was rapt up to Mary's Planet, knowing that his caudilloship was coming to an end, he presented to High Priest Joshua the cape, staff and flaming sword, for him pass on to Esdras at his arrival in the land of Israel as the new Caudillo.

3. In the year 4723, Zorobabel, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel, after ruling his people for twenty-four years, was rapt up from the Mount of Olives to Mary's Planet in the sight of the city's inhabitants, from whom he took his leave. In this aspect Zorobabel is figure of Christ's admirable Ascension into Heaven. Zorobabel will return to Earth at the beginning of the first half of the final week of years preceding the Return of Christ to establish His Messianic Kingdom on Earth, and will die martyr of Antichrist's power at the end of the first half of that final week of years.

#### Chapter XVI

**The works of the rebuilding of the Temple of God in Jerusalem and of the city walls during Zorobabel's caudilloship**

During the Caudilloship of Zorobabel, the rebuilding of the Temple of God in Jerusalem, and also the city walls, advanced considerably. Once started, these works never came to a standstill.

### Book III

#### Second Part of the Book of Esdras.

#### Esdras, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel

##### Chapter I

**Genealogy and birth of Esdras, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel**

1. The history of Esdras, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel, is found in the Book of Esdras, written in its entirety by the caudillo. This book was later considerably falsified.

2. Esdras, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel, was born in the year 4666 in the city of Susa, capital of the Persian Empire. He was High Priest Saraia's son and High Priest Joshua's brother, and therefore from the tribe of Levi. Esdras was an Essenian terciario and remained ever single.

3. When Esdras was born, virtuous King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus, and virtuous Queen Esther, reigned in Persia; and in the territory of Israel virtuous Goniel ruled as viceroy.

##### Chapter II

**Esdras is anointed prophet in minor grade. Esdras is sanctified and anointed prophet in major grade.**

**The Prophet Esdras receives the rank of levite minister. Esdras receives the grade of Levitical priest**

1. In the year 4680, when fourteen years old, Esdras was anointed prophet in minor grade by Most Holy Melchisedech in the city of Susa.

2. In the year 4683, when seventeen years old, Esdras was sanctified and anointed prophet in major grade by Most Holy Melchisedech in the city of Susa.

3. In the year 4684, when eighteen years old, Esdras received the rank of levite minister, when anointed by the Prophet Sophonias in the chief synagogue of the city of Susa.

4. In the year 4687, when twenty-one years old, Esdras received the rank of Levitical priest, when anointed by the Prophet Sophonias in the chief synagogue of the city of Susa.

#### Chapter III

##### Esdras, Prince of the Persian Empire

In the year 4699, when thirty-three years old, Esdras was designated Prince of the Persian Empire by King Assuerus, to occupy the post left vacant by Caudillo Zorobabel, sent to the land of Israel at the head of the first Israelite expedition.

#### Chapter IV

**King Darius I's edict authorizing the return of another expedition of Israelites or Jews of the captivity to the territory of Israel**

1. In the year 4723, seventeenth of the reign of virtuous King Darius I in Persia, the return of the second expedition of Israelites of the captivity to the land of Israel took place, by virtue of an edict issued by the king and delivered to Esdras.

2. Here is the edict of King Darius I: "*I, Darius I, king of the Persian Empire by the Grace of God, at the request of Esdras, prophet and priest most wise in the Law of the God of Heaven, issue the following edict: Anyone from the People of Israel, including their priests and levite ministers, residing in my empire, who wishes to leave for the land of Israel to settle there, may do so. I, by this edict, designate Prince Esdras as Caudillo of Israel's territory to occupy the post left vacant by the previous Caudillo Zorobabel. Caudillo Esdras will be, then, the leader and guide of those who wish to go with him. Under his orders a count will be made of all those Israelites of Jewish Faith and origin, as well as the proselytes, who wish to go to the land of Israel. Furthermore, Caudillo Esdras will take with him abundant gold and silver, which I the king, and my counsellors, have offered to the Lord God of Israel, whose Tabernacle is in Jerusalem, so that the work of rebuilding the Temple of God and the city walls may advance yet further. Before leaving, Esdras shall visit the most important provinces of my empire to collect all the voluntary offerings of gold, silver and other goods made by the people. He shall use these freely, making sure to buy with them calves, lambs, rams and libations in order for them to be offered on the altar of the Tabernacle of our God in Jerusalem. I, Darius I, king of the Persian Empire, command and ordain all the treasurers of public finance, to give without delay all that Caudillo Esdras, Prophet and priest of the Lord of Heaven asks of them, since all that pertains to the worship of the Lord God of Hosts must be supplied punctually. Caudillo Esdras, in accordance with the wisdom of the Lord God of Hosts, in which he is versed, shall see to it that in the territory of Israel upright men occupy the posts of judges and presidents to administer justice to all the people in conformity with the Law of God, which he shall have to teach to those ignorant of it; so that, whoever does not fulfil the Law of the Lord God of Hosts, shall be condemned to death or to exile, or to imprisonment or to a pecuniary fine, according to the gravity of his offence.*"

3. Carrying out the orders of King Darius I, Caudillo Esdras made a count of the men and women of different ages who expressed their desire to leave on the expedition guided by himself to settle in the land of Israel. The total number of Israelites counted from the thirteen tribes, including the proselytes, accompanying Caudillo Esdras, was four hundred thousand, and included a good number of Levitical priests and levite ministers.

4. When Esdras had finished reading the edict of King Darius I, he cried out, saying: "*Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, Who has moved the heart of the king for the glory of the Temple of the Lord God being rebuilt in Jerusalem.*"

#### Chapter V

**Second expedition of Israelites or Jews of the captivity to the territory of Israel under the command of Caudillo Esdras**

1. In that same year 4723, three days prior to his departure to exercise his caudilloship in the land of Israel, the Prophet Esdras, by divine inspiration, imposed his hands upon the head of the Prophet Nehemias, imparting to him Moses' same prophetic spirit.

2. Esdras, taking with him the edict of King Darius I, left the city of Babylon, heading for the land of Israel, as he himself relates in his book: "*Comforted by the hand of the Lord God of Hosts who assisted me, beside Lake Ahava on the outskirts of Babylon city, I assembled a great multitude of Israelites who expressed their desire to accompany me. There we remained three days during which I read to them the Holy Law of God which He had given me on Mount Sinai, ordering them to fast and say special prayers, with the aim of humbling ourselves before the presence of the Lord God of Israel and beseeching of Him a happy journey for ourselves, our children and all our belongings. The hand of the Lord God of Hosts assists all those who sincerely seek Him, and His indignation is felt by those who abandon Him.*"

3. "*The three days having elapsed, leaving the banks of Lake Ahava we headed for Jerusalem, and the Lord God miraculously provided us with all we needed to subsist along the way. When we arrived at Jerusalem, I ordered the children of Israel to assemble before the portable Tabernacle, and in the presence of High Priest Joshua, I read before the numerous crowd gathered there the edict of King Darius I of Persia, in which I was designated Caudillo of the People of Israel. High Priest Joshua presented to me the cape, staff and flaming sword that had been in the keeping of the previous Caudillo. I then bestowed on High Priest Joshua the objects of silver and gold we had brought to be deposited in the Tabernacle of God, in which holocausts and other sacrifices were offered to the Lord God of Hosts. Afterwards, part of the Israelites accompanying me settled in Jerusalem city, and the rest went to other towns in the immense territory of Israel in order to settle in them.*"

4. With the start of Esdras' caudilloship in the land of Israel, God continued theocratic government, though ensuring that neither of the two principal lineages of the House of David be extinguished from which Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of kings, was to descend.

5. Caudillo Esdras, during his caudilloship, was obliged to pay the symbolical tribute of an annual silver coin to the kings of the Persian Empire; and was required, in the whole territory, to conserve Faith in the One True God of Israel.



**Chapter VI**

**Arrival of many morally corrupt Israelites or Jews in the land of Israel from countries outside the Persian Empire.**

**Illegal marriages of many of these Israelites. Men married to more than four wives**

1. Following the first two years of Esdras' caudilloship, many morally corrupt Israelites arrived in the land of Israel coming from countries outside the Persian Empire. A good number of them came married to pagans. There were also men married to more than four wives.

2. Caudillo Esdras, in conformity with Holy Law established in the new Pentateuch, proposed to root out these evils by means of reproaches and fatherly admonishments, to move the individuals to conversion. Next he dissolved those marriages in which the pagan partner refused to accept the Jewish Faith. As for men married to more than four wives, they were required to retain only the first four. Esdras commanded all those who obstinately disregarded his orders to leave Israel's territory immediately under pain of death, and was obliged to use the sword against some of them.

**Chapter VII**

**Death of Darius I, king of the Persian Empire. King Xerxes II succeeds his father Darius I to the Persian Empire.**

**Esdras anticipatively lives the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ in mystical form. Caudillo Esdras is rapt up to Mary's Planet**

1. In the year 4742, after reigning thirty-six years, King Darius I, Essenian terciario, died a holy death in the city of Babylon at the age of eighty-one. He was succeeded on the throne of the Persian Empire by his sixty-one-year-old son, virtuous Xerxes II.

2. In the year 4744, after reigning two years, Xerxes II died a holy death in the city of Babylon at the age of sixty-three. He was succeeded on the throne of the Persian Empire by his forty-year-old son, virtuous Artaxerxes I.

3. Caudillo Esdras, during his twenty-four-year caudilloship in the land of Israel, every 25<sup>th</sup> of March, from 12 o'clock midday until three in the afternoon, on Mount Calvary, in the presence of numerous Essenes from the Order's three branches and of others not Essenes, anticipatively lived, in mystical form, the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Among other stigmas were impressed those of His five wounds, His right Shoulder wound and the crowning with thorns' wounds, until six in the morning of the 27<sup>th</sup> of March.

4. Days before being rapt up to Mary's Planet, knowing that his caudilloship was coming to an end, Esdras presented to High Priest Joshua the cape, staff and flaming sword for him to pass on to Nehemias at his arrival in the land of Israel as the new Caudillo.

5. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of January in the year 4747, Esdras, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel, after ruling for twenty-four years, was rapt up from the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem to Mary's Planet, in the sight of the city's inhabitants, from whom he took his leave. In this aspect Esdras is a figure of Christ's admirable Ascension into Heaven. Esdras will return to Earth at the beginning of the first half of the final week of years preceding the Return of Christ to establish His Messianic Kingdom on Earth, and die martyr of Antichrist's power at the end of the first half of that final week of years.

**Chapter VIII**

**The work of rebuilding God's Temple in Jerusalem and that of the walls during the caudilloship of Esdras**

During Esdras' caudilloship, God's Temple in Jerusalem and also the city walls, received a very notable advance in their rebuilding.

**Book IV****Book of Nehemias****Nehemias, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel****Chapter I**

**Genealogy and birth of Nehemias, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel**

1. The history of Nehemias, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel is to be found in the Book of Nehemias, written in its entirety by this same caudillo. This Book was later considerably falsified.

2. Nehemias, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel was born in the year 4690 in the city of Susa, capital of the Persian Empire. He was son of Levitical priest Archias, who was brother of Levitical High Priest Joacim, both sons of High Priest Joshua. Nehemias was the grandson of High Priest Joshua and great-nephew of the Prophet Esdras. On his father's side Nehemias was, then, from the tribe of Levi, and on his mother's from the tribe of Judah. Nehemias was an Essenian terciario and remained ever single.

3. When Nehemias was born, virtuous King Assuerus surnamed Cyrus and virtuous Queen Esther reigned in the Persian Empire, and virtuous Viceroy Goniel ruled in Israel's territory.

**Chapter II**

**Nehemias is anointed prophet in minor grade. Nehemias is sanctified and anointed prophet in major grade.**

**The Prophet Nehemias receives the rank of levite minister. Nehemias receives the rank of Levitical priest**

1. In the year 4706, Nehemias, sixteen years old, was anointed prophet in minor grade by Most Holy Melchisedech in the city of Susa.

2. In the year 4708, Nehemias, eighteen years old, was sanctified and anointed prophet in major grade by Most Holy Melchisedech in the city of Susa.

3. In the year 4709, Nehemias, nineteen years old, received the rank of levite minister, when anointed by the Prophet Esdras in the chief synagogue of the city of Susa.

4. In the year 4713, Nehemias, twenty-three years old, received the rank of Levitical priest, when anointed by the Prophet Esdras in the chief synagogue of the city of Susa.

**Chapter III****Nehemias, Prince of the Persian Empire**

In the year 4723, Nehemias, thirty-three years old, was designated Prince of the Persian Empire by King Darius I, to occupy the post left vacant by Caudillo Esdras, sent to the land of Israel at the head of the second Israelite expedition.

**Chapter IV**

**Edict of King Artaxerxes I authorizing the return to Israel's territory of the third expedition of Israelites or Jews of the captivity**

1. In the year 4747, third of Artaxerxes I's reign in Persia, the third expedition of the return to the land of Israel by Israelites of the captivity took place, by virtue of an edict issued by the king and delivered to Nehemias.

2. Here is the edict of King Artaxerxes I, issued on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 4747: "I, Artaxerxes I, king of the Persian Empire by the Grace of God, at the request of Nehemias, prophet and priest, issue the following edict: All the Israelites residing in my empire, those by Faith and origin, as well as proselytes, who wish to go to the territory of Israel are free to do so. Nehemias will conduct and guide those who wish to leave. I, King Artaxerxes I, designate Prince Nehemias Caudillo of the territory of Israel, to occupy there the post left vacant by the previous Caudillo Esdras. I entrust him with the mission of concluding in a short time the works of rebuilding the Temple of God in Jerusalem and the city walls. To this end I give orders to my royal treasurers to place the coffers of public funds at the disposal of Nehemias, so that he take from them all that, according to his sound judgment, he shall need for the conclusion of the works in Jerusalem. All the subjects of my empire shall also collaborate by their generous alms. Furthermore, I command that, under the orders of Caudillo Nehemias a count be made of those Israelites, men and women of all ages, who express their desire to leave on the expedition guided by him to settle in the territory of Israel. I, King Artaxerxes I, by this edict, make known to all residents in the territory of Israel that they are subject to the authority of Caudillo Nehemias, who will ensure with exacting ardour that the Holy Law of God be fulfilled by all his subjects, that the worship of God be observed by priests with the rigor demanded by the Law, and that justice be administered uprightly and prudently."

3. Complying with the orders of King Artaxerxes I, Caudillo Nehemias made a census of the men and women of all ages who expressed their desire to leave on the expedition guided by him to settle in the land of Israel. The total number of Israelites from the thirteen tribes, including the proselytes, in the census to leave with Caudillo Nehemias was two hundred thousand, and included a good number of Levitical priests and levite ministers.

**Chapter V**

**The third expedition of Israelites or Jews from the captivity to the territory of Israel under the command of Caudillo Nehemias.**

**Nehemias finds the Sacred Fire**

1. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of January of that same year 4747, Nehemias, taking with him the edict of King Artaxerxes I, departed from Babylon for the land of Israel with the third expedition of Israelites of the captivity, arriving at Jerusalem on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February the same year. Once in Jerusalem, High Priest Joshua passed on to Nehemias the cape, staff and flaming sword that had been in the keeping of the previous caudillo. Nehemias ordered the children of Israel to assemble before the portable Tabernacle, and in the presence of High Priest Joshua, read to the numerous crowd congregated there the edict of King Artaxerxes I of Persia, in which he was designated Caudillo of the People of Israel, and in which all were admonished that the works of the rebuilding of the Temple of God in Jerusalem and that of its walls were to be concluded shortly, since God's highest majesty thus demanded, as did the defence and decorum of the Holy City of Jerusalem. The members of the People of Israel received the contents of the edict of Artaxerxes I read by Nehemias very enthusiastically, and dedicated themselves body and soul to the works prescribed in the royal edict.

2. On the very day of his arrival in Jerusalem, the Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo Nehemias miraculously found the Sacred Fire from which the firewood used for the sacrifices in the Temple built by Solomon was kindled until the Temple's destruction. Nehemias found this Sacred Fire in a deep dry well located in a valley, where it had been hidden by God-fearing priests shortly before Nabuchodonozor III destroyed God's Temple. When taken from the dry well by order of Nehemias, it did not have the form of fire, rather it was like greasy liquid, but at dawn on the following day, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February, on being placed by High Priest Joshua in the Temple under reconstruction, it miraculously took on the form of Fire again in the sight of a great crowd.

3. From the start of Nehemias' caudilloship in the land of Israel, God continued theocratic government, though ensuring that neither of the two principal lineages of the House of David be extinguished from which Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of kings, was to descend.

4. Caudillo Nehemias, during his caudilloship, was obliged to pay the symbolical tribute of an annual silver coin to the kings of the Persian Empire; and was required, in the whole territory, to conserve Faith in the One True God of Israel.

**Chapter VI****Conclusion of the works of God's Temple in Jerusalem and of the city walls**

1. After the Sacred Fire found by Nehemias had been placed in the Temple of God under reconstruction, the works accelerated prodigiously, so that the rebuilding of Jerusalem's Sacred Temple together with the city walls was completed in fifty-two days, work continuing day and night to achieve this.

2. The rebuilding of God's Temple in Jerusalem and that of the city walls were completed on the 25<sup>th</sup> of March in that year 4747, that is, fifty-two days after the arrival of Nehemias in Jerusalem. Forty-six years of uninterrupted work were required for the rebuilding of the Temple, that is, from the year 4701 until 4747.

### Chapter VII

#### Inauguration of God's new Temple in Jerusalem

1. Though the rebuilding of the Temple of God in Jerusalem was completely finished by the 25<sup>th</sup> of March of that year 4747, its inauguration was to take place seventeen days later, that is, on the 11<sup>th</sup> of April, when the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan fell. From the day of its completion until the inauguration, many sacred objects due to be placed in the new Temple of God were brought there from the portable Tabernacle on Mount Sion.

2. While these removals were taking place, the Prophet Aggeus, accompanied by a fair number of Levitical priests and levite ministers, and also by many Israelites, Essenes and non-Essenes, left for Mount Carmel to fetch the Sacrament of the Triple Benediction. Once there, Most Holy Malachias removed It from the reserved place where the Most Holy Sacrament was venerated and, within the Chalice of Melchisedech, entrusted It to the Prophet and Levitical priest Aggeus, who placed the Chalice containing the Triple Benediction in a precious ark which was borne on the shoulders of Levitical priests. The Triple Benediction was translated from Mount Carmel to Jerusalem with great solemnity.

3. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of April in that year 4747, the day on which the newly rebuilt Temple of God in Jerusalem was inaugurated, the Ark of the Covenant, with the Sacred Fire in its interior, was translated in a most solemn procession from the portable Tabernacle to the new Temple. After the Ark of the Covenant was enthroned in the Sanctum Sanctorum, that same day of the inauguration, the exterior Sacred Fire present in the portable Tabernacle was brought in most solemn procession to the new Temple. This exterior Sacred Fire, on arriving at the Temple, without the slightest intervention of those congregated there, and in sight of all, miraculously fused with the other external Sacred Fire placed there, which had been found by Nehemias in a dry well.

4. Also on that same 11<sup>th</sup> of April in that year 4747, date of the inauguration of the new Temple of God, the procession with the Triple Benediction coming from Mount Carmel arrived in Jerusalem, guided by Most Holy Malachias. Caudillo Nehemias, High Priest Joshua, the Prophets Zacharias and Mardocheus, many Levitical priests and levite ministers, musicians, singers, Essenes and non-Essenes, governors, magistrates and other authorities of Israel, waited at the Golden Gate of Jerusalem city. The procession entered the city of Jerusalem in triumph. The multitude of the children of Israel's People gathered there, with indescribable joy and abundant tears, blessed the Lord God of Hosts and sang praises to His Divine Mercy.

5. Once in the Temple, the Prophet and Levitical priest Aggeus placed the Triple Benediction in the hands of High Priest Joshua, who became sanctified. Joshua placed the Triple Benediction in the Ark of the Covenant, beside the Sacred Fire already there, also placing inside the new Pentateuch, the new Tablets of the Decalogue or Tablets of the Law, the goblet containing the manna and the staffs of the Prophets Ezechiel, Baruch and Sophonias. The Sacred Fire within the Ark of the Covenant and also the external Sacred Fire in the place of sacrifices both became extinguished at the moment Christ expired on the Cross of Calvary.

6. The following day, the 12<sup>th</sup> of April that year 4747, on which date the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan or principal feast of the Passover fell, the Pasch was celebrated with great solemnity, with the offering in God's Temple of holocausts and other sacrifices and libations as prescribed in the Holy Law. A Levitical priest and scribe called Esdras, read before the people different passages from the new Pentateuch, and more especially those relating to the feast of the Passover. This Esdras bore no relationship to Caudillo Esdras previously rapt up to Mary's Planet.

### Chapter VIII

**Prayer of Caudillo Nehemias to the Lord God of Hosts. The People of Israel's most solemn renovation of their Covenant with God**

1. The most solemn celebration of the Passover concluded with the following prayer to the Lord God of Hosts made by Caudillo Nehemias in the presence of the vast multitude who assisted at this great event:

2. *"Children of the People of Israel, bless the Lord God of Hosts for ever and ever. May Your Glorious Name, O Lord God, be blessed and exalted by every manner of blessing and praise; since only You, O Lord God Most High, made Heaven and Earth and all contained in it. You give life to and conserve all things, and are adored by the angelic hosts. You, O Lord God, chose Abram, took him out from Ur of Chaldea, gave him the name of Abraham, found him faithful of heart in Your presence, and made with him the covenant to give him the land of Canaan, for him and his posterity to possess; and later You kept Your word, since You are Righteous. You, O Lord, saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt and heard their clamour, and You worked miracles and wonders against the Pharaoh and his Egyptian vassals, because You knew that they treated the children of Your people with pride and insolence. Later You drew the children of Your people out of slavery and divided the Red Sea before them, and they passed through the sea by means of a bridge You stretched out over the waters; and You hurled their persecutors violently into the watery abyss. You were the guide of Your people, by day from a column of Cloud, and by night from a column of Fire, to show them the route they were to follow. You yourself, O Lord God of Hosts, descended to the summit of Mount Sinai and spoke to Caudillo Moses, giving him Your Holy Law so that Your people might observe it and thus serve You faithfully. You taught Your people to consecrate Saturday to You, and promulgated to them Your instructions and ceremonies through the ministry of Your servant Moses. You nourished Your people in the desert when they were hungry, some times with manna, and at others with good fruits from the land, and made water spring forth from a rock when they were thirsty, and shielded them with verdant trees to protect them during the summer. How often Your people acted with pride! Their hearts hardened, they refused to obey Your commandments, or listen to You, or remember the wonders You did for them, but instead even made a golden calf to render it adoration! Nevertheless, O gracious God, clement and merciful, long-suffering and so benevolent, though You justly chastised the obstinate rebels, You did not thereupon*

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*abandon the rest of Your people; rather, during forty years You nourished them in the desert, and they wanted for nothing. You, O Lord of Israel, provident and faithful to Your covenant, told Your people to enter and possess the land You had promised to give them. You, O Lord God of Hosts, at the head of Your people, overthrew the enemies who dwelt in the Promised Land, delivering it up to Your children with its cities, lands, livestock, crops, and many other goods and riches. Nevertheless, the children of Your people often provoked Your Holy Wrath, severing themselves from You, trampling Your Holy Law underfoot and killing the prophets You sent to convert them from their abominations. For their great sins, You permitted that Your children be delivered up into the power of their enemies. Yet, whenever they clamoured to You, from Heaven You listened to them, and by Your bountiful mercy, gave them saviours who freed them from the power of their enemies. Once they were at peace they went back to committing evil in Your presence, and You abandoned them again into the hands of their enemies, who enslaved them. Again the children of Israel were converted and clamoured to You, and from Heaven You listened to them, and by Your great mercy freed them repeatedly, exhorting them through Your prophets to return to Your Holy Law. For many years, You, O Lord God, patiently bore the iniquity of many of the children of Your people, admonishing them through Your prophets, but they did not want to listen. Yet, by Your very great mercy You neither put an end to them nor did You abandon them, because You are a benign and clement God. Now then, O God of Ours, Great God, strong and terrible, who keeps the covenant made with Your people, not banishing mercy from Your sight, have pity on us all; since You are just in all the evils that have rained down upon us, because You have kept Your promises faithfully; we, however, have proceeded iniquitously. How often have our kings, magnates, priests and people not kept your Law, paying heed neither to Your commandments nor to the warnings with which You reprimanded them! On this account, Your people found themselves in captivity for seventy years. But, through Your people in captivity, You caused multitudes of Babylonians, Medes and Persians to be converted, and afterwards You brought us into our land again. All these things considered, then, we, the children of the People of Israel, on this glorious day of the solemnity of the Passover in Your new Sacred Temple, solemnly renew our covenant with You, O Lord God of Hosts, promising You fidelity until death."*

### Chapter IX

**The Prophet Ado goes to Jerusalem and makes the foundation of a convent of Essenian religiosas.**

**Death of Levitical High Priest Joshua. Joacim, new Levitical High Priest**

1. After the rebuilding of God's Temple in Jerusalem, High Priest Joshua requested from the Prophet Ado, Superior General of the Essenes, the foundation of a community of religiosas from Mount Carmel in the chambers adjoining the new Temple of Jerusalem. The Prophet Ado went to Jerusalem and made the foundation. The purpose of this convent was to direct and educate, according to their vocation, the young religiosas there consecrated to the service of God, for among pious Israelites existed the silent expectation that from one of these virgins educated in the Temple the Messiah was to be born. After a certain time some of the religiosas being educated there were definitively incorporated into the Essenian religiosas' community, taking their perpetual vows; others married and left, which was the more usual case.

2. The virtuous Joshua, Levitical High Priest, died a holy death when one hundred and twelve years old, in the year 4752, that is fifty-three years after the return from the Babylonian captivity, and five years after the inauguration of the Temple of God in Jerusalem. He was succeeded in the post of Levitical High Priest by his son, virtuous Levitical priest Joacim.

### Chapter X

**Arrival of many morally corrupt Israelites in the land of Israel from countries outside the Persian Empire.**

**Illegal marriages of many of these Israelites. Men married to more than four wives**

1. In the year 4754, that is, when the first seven years of Nehemias's caudilloship had elapsed, there arrived in the land of Israel many morally corrupt Israelites coming from countries outside the Persian Empire. A good number of them came married to pagans. There were also married men with more than four wives.

2. Caudillo Nehemias, in conformity with the Holy Law established in the new Pentateuch, proposed to root out these corruptions using reproaches and fatherly admonishments, to move such individuals to conversion. Next he dissolved those marriages in which the pagan partner refused to accept the Jewish Faith. As for married men with more than four wives, they were required to retain only the first four. Nehemias commanded all those who obstinately disregarded his orders, to leave Israel's territory immediately under pain of death, and found himself obliged to use the sword against some of them.

### Chapter XI

**Death of Queen Esther's uncle Mardocheus, Prophet and Essenian Chief priest. Caudillo Nehemias leaves Jerusalem to preach throughout the Israelite territory. High Priest Joacim exercises the functions of Governor of Jerusalem following the departure of Nehemias. Death of Levitical High Priest Joacim. Eleachim, Levitical High Priest**

1. In the year 4757, Mardocheus, Prophet and Essenian chief priest, died a holy death at the age of one hundred and fifty-three in the convent of Essenian religiosos in Nazareth, of which he was founder and superior.

2. In the year 4759, Caudillo Nehemias left Jerusalem for three years' preaching throughout the vast territory of Israel. Before going he left virtuous Levitical High Priest Joacim with powers as Governor of Jerusalem to take his place in diverse affairs during his absence.

3. Virtuous Joacim, Levitical High Priest, died a holy death in that same year 4759, poisoned by his son perverse Levitical priest Eleachim, seventy-two days after Caudillo Nehemias had left Jerusalem to preach throughout the land of Israel.

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4. After poisoning Joacim, his son Eleachim took over the post of Levitical High Priest and assumed the duties of Governor of Jerusalem, committing all kinds of iniquity.

5. Perverse High Priest Eliachim, to please a relative of his who supported him in his disreputable dealings, built him a large chamber in the part of God's Temple where the offerings, incense and sacred vessels, as also the tithes of wheat, wine and oil, were kept, which were the portions of the levites, singers and porters, and where the first fruits of the priests were also kept. Besides, perverse Eleachim deprived many Levitical priests, levite ministers and singers of the portions of wheat, wine and oil legally corresponding to them for their service to the Temple of God, and thus kept them for himself, selling them later for his personal gain. Perverse High Priest Eleachim also favoured marriages of the children of Israel to pagans, these unions being strictly forbidden by the Holy Law of God. His ambition reached the point where, on the holy day of Saturday, he authorized merchants, both Israelites and foreigners, to sell all kinds of merchandise in Jerusalem's streets. He went so far as to permit merchants to erect their stalls with products for sale even in the court of the Israelites in the Temple of God at Jerusalem. By granting all these licenses, High Priest Eleachim received from the merchants substantial gratuities in both money and goods.

6. Through repeated admonishments, virtuous Zacharias, Prophet and Levitical priest, rebuked the perversity of High Priest Eleachim, as well as that of those Levitical priests, levite ministers and private individuals who continued to back such wickedness. Levitical High Priest Eleachim's fury was such that, to avenge himself, he commanded the killing of the Prophet and priest Zacharias, who was sacrilegiously murdered between the altar of perfumes of the Sanctum and the door of the Sanctum Sanctorum, in the year 4762. This happened days before Nehemias returned to Jerusalem following his three years of preaching, without him having come back to visit Jerusalem during this time.

### Chapter XII

**Caudillo Nehemias returns to Jerusalem and unleashes his righteous wrath upon High Priest Eleachim and all the other prevaricators**

1. In the year 4762, when the Caudillo Nehemias returned to Jerusalem he was unspeakably consternated to learn, among other iniquities, of the shameful murder of virtuous Prophet and Levitical priest Zacharias by order of perverse High Priest Eleachim, and to learn also of the assassination of virtuous Levitical High Priest Joacim, at the hands of the high priest's own son.

2. No less consternated was he on learning that Israelite and foreign merchants, by their buying and selling, violated the Saturday law of rest and profaned God's Sacred Temple. Nehemias, confronting High Priest Eleachim, said to him: "How have you permitted evil such as this, violating Saturday, and as well profaning the Temple of God? Did not many of our fathers do the same, and the Lord God unleash His Righteous Wrath upon His people and upon this city? And now you and many of your priests further provoke the Wrath of the Lord God of Hosts violating Saturday and profaning the Sacred Temple?"

3. Then Nehemias, taking a whip, went to the court of the Israelites of the Temple of God, and unleashed his righteous anger attacking the merchants who did business there, overturning the tables and their merchandise, at the same time crying out: "The House of God is a house of prayer, and you have turned it into a den of thieves." In this action Nehemias is a figure of Christ.

4. Moreover, Caudillo Nehemias, on seeing the chamber that High Priest Eleachim had made for his relative in God's Temple, full of just wrath, threw the furniture out of the place, commanded it to be purified, and had the sacred vessels, offerings, incense and other sacred objects that had been kept there brought back again.

5. Concerning the illegal marriages between the children of the People of Israel and pagans, authorized by perverse High Priest Eleachim, Caudillo Nehemias proceeded with utmost rigour, in conformity with God's Holy Law established in the new Pentateuch.

### Chapter XIII

**Levitical High Priest Eleachim is deposed and executed by order of Nehemias**

1. Caudillo Nehemias hoped that High Priest Eleachim would reflect on his evil conduct, repent of his sacrilegious crimes and other iniquities, ask pardon of God and thoroughly reform his life. But neither the severe recriminations of Nehemias nor his kindly exhortations served to any purpose with Eleachim, since he became yet more obstinate in his wickedness. Hence virtuous Caudillo Nehemias, full of righteous anger, deposed Eleachim from the Levitical High Priesthood and condemned him to death; and he was executed. Nehemias, like the two previous Caudillos of Israel, as Caudillo, and above all as Prophet, possessed supreme authority both in the spiritual and temporal orders; therefore he was able to depose Eleachim, judge him and order his execution.

2. Perverse Eleachim was succeeded in the post of Levitical High Priest by his son, Levitical priest Joyada II.

### Chapter XIV

**Caudillo Nehemias anticipatively lives, in mystical form, the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Nehemias is rapt up to Mary's Planet. Death of Artaxerxes I, king of the Persian Empire**

1. Caudillo Nehemias, during the first twelve years and last eighteen years of his caudilloship in the land of Israel, each 25<sup>th</sup> of March from 12 o'clock midday until three in the afternoon, on Mount Calvary, in the presence of numerous Essenes from the Order's three branches, and others not Essenes, anticipatively lived, in mystical form, the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Among other stigmas were impressed those of His five wounds, His right Shoulder wound and the crowning with thorns' wounds, until six in the morning of the 27<sup>th</sup> of March.

2. In the year 4780, Nehemias, Prophet, Levitical priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel, after ruling for thirty-three years, was rapt up from the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem to Mary's Planet in the sight of the city's inhabitants, from whom he took his leave with the following prophecy: "Mark, this Temple you see and this city will be destroyed when seventy weeks of years have passed." In this aspect Nehemias is a figure of the admirable Ascension of Christ

into Heaven. The seventy weeks of years were completed when, in the year 5270, Titus, General of the Roman armies, entered Jerusalem and destroyed the city and the Temple. From the year 4780 till the year 5270, runs a span of four hundred and ninety years, that is, seventy weeks of years. Nehemias was rapt up to Mary's Planet four hundred years prior to the Immaculate Conception of the Divine Mary in Jerusalem. Nehemias will return to Earth at the beginning of the first half of the final week of years preceding the Return of Christ to establish His Messianic Kingdom on Earth, and will die martyr of Antichrist's power at the end of the first half of that final week of years.

3. In the year 4784, after reigning for forty years, King Artaxerxes I died a holy death in the city of Babylon at the age of eighty.

4. After Nehemias had been rapt up to Mary's Planet, the rule of the Essenian Religioso Caudillos began in the territory of Israel.

### Chapter XV

**Periods of Nehemias's caudilloship in the territory of Israel**

Nehemias's caudilloship of his people in the territory of Israel lasted thirty-three years: that is, from the year 4747 until 4780. The first twelve years of Caudilloship, until 4759, were spent in Jerusalem. In this same year Nehemias began his public preaching throughout the land of Israel, which lasted somewhat more than three years, the same as Our Lord Jesus Christ was later to preach, of whom Nehemias is a figure. In the year 4762, somewhat more than three years having elapsed, he returned to Jerusalem and took up the whip against the transgressors of Holy Law. As from the year 4762, he remained in Jerusalem during the last eighteen years of his life on Earth.

## Book V

**Caudilloship of the Essenian Religiosos Michael in Israel's territory**

### Chapter I

**The eight Essenian Caudillos Michael rule Israel's territory**

1. In the year 4780, after Nehemias had been rapt up to Mary's Planet, Most Holy Malachias established in Israel's territory the caudilloship of the Essenian Religiosos. Through these religiosos, the Lord God of Hosts continued to rule His people for a span of two hundred and fifty-six years. The Essenian Religioso Caudillos followed one another in eight periods, each of thirty-two years duration. So that, at the end of each caudilloship of thirty-two years, the next one began. Some commenced their caudilloship at an earlier age and others later in life, but each rule always lasted thirty-two years. The Essenian Religioso Caudillos were also Prophets. The caudilloship of Essenian Religiosos over the People of Israel lasted, then, two hundred and fifty-six years; that is, from the year 4780 until 5036, one hundred and forty-four years prior to the Immaculate Conception of the Divine Mary.

2. All the Essenian Religioso Caudillos Michael died holy deaths, without this implying that they did not make mistakes. Each one, on taking up office as Prophet and Caudillo, automatically received the name of Michael, which means "Who is like unto God?" And, once concluded the thirty-two years of caudilloship, each returned to Mount Carmel and reassumed his former name. The Essenian Religioso Caudillos were eight in number: Michael I, Michael II, Michael III, Michael IV, Michael V, Michael VI, Michael VII and Michael VIII. The Essenian Religioso Caudillos ever enjoyed ample powers, taking up the sword sometimes against their own people, at others against their enemies, rarely laying it down. Not for one moment, then, was the territory of Israel without rule, since God did not forsake His people. The Essenian Religioso Caudillos, during their respective caudilloships, had their official residence in the Holy City of Jerusalem.

3. Here are the periods of rule of each Caudillo: Michael I governed from the year 4780 until 4812; Michael II governed from the year 4812 until 4844; Michael III governed from the year 4844 until 4876; Michael IV governed from the year 4876 until 4908; Michael V governed from the year 4908 until 4940; Michael VI governed from the year 4940 until 4972; Michael VII governed from the year 4972 until 5004; Michael VIII governed from the year 5004 until 5036. When the caudilloship of the Essenian Religioso Caudillos Michael ended, the caudilloship of the Essenian Religioso Machabees began, whose first Caudillo was Mathathias.

4. The cape, staff and flaming sword used by Caudillos Zorobabel, Esdras and Nehemias, were afterwards used by each of the Essenian Religioso Caudillos.

5. By the caudilloship of the Essenian Religiosos Michael in the land of Israel, God continued theocratic government, though ensuring that neither of the two principal lineages of the house of David be extinguished from which Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of kings, was to descend.

### Chapter II

**Superior Generals of the Essenes during the caudilloship of the Essenian Religiosos Michael. The Prophet Jesus of Sirach, Vice-Superior General of the Essenes**

1. In the year 4780, in which Caudillo Michael I began to rule, the eighth Superior General of the Essenes was the Prophet Ado who, in the year 4633, at the age of one hundred and fourteen, had succeeded the Prophet Jeremias in this post. The Prophet Ado died a holy death in the year 4799, at the age of two hundred and eighty, after ruling the Order of Carmel for one hundred and sixty-six years.

2. In the year 4799, the Prophet Heli, forty years old, succeeded the Prophet Ado in the post. The Prophet Heli, ninth Superior General of the Essenes, died a holy death in the year 4852, at the age of ninety-three, after ruling the Order of Carmel for fifty-three years.

3. In the year 4852, the Prophet Ariel, forty years old, succeeded the Prophet Heli in the post. The Prophet Ariel, tenth Superior General of the Essenes, died a holy death in the year 4914, at the age of one hundred and two, after ruling the Order of Carmel for sixty-two years.

4. In the year 4914, the Prophet Zabulon, forty years old, succeeded the Prophet Ariel in the post. The Prophet Zabulon, eleventh Superior General of the Essenes, died a holy death in the year 4973, at the age of ninety-nine, after ruling the Order of Carmel for fifty-nine years.

5. In the year 4973, the Prophet Nephthali, forty years old, succeeded the Prophet Zabulon in the post. The Prophet Nephthali, twelfth Superior General of the Essenes, died a holy death in the year 5036, at the age of one hundred and three, after ruling the Order of Carmel for sixty-three years.

6. In the year 5036, Nephthali, Superior General of the Essenes, named the forty-year-old Prophet Jesus of Sirach, from the tribe of Judah, who was Essenian chief priest, as Vice-Superior General of the Essenes, which post he exercised until his holy death, which occurred on the 17<sup>th</sup> of February in the year 5200, when he was two hundred and four years old, the same day as the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt.

### Chapter III

#### Kings of the Persian Empire during the rule by the Essenian Religioso Caudillos Michael

At his death, virtuous King Artaxerxes I was succeeded on the throne of Persia by his son Xerxes III the apostate, who died in the year 4809, after reigning twenty-five years. At the death of Xerxes III, he was succeeded on the throne of Persia by his perverse son Darius II, who died in the year 4839, after reigning thirty years. At the death of Darius II, he was succeeded on the throne of Persia by his perverse son Arsaches, who died in the year 4866, after reigning twenty-seven years. At the death of Arsaches, he was succeeded on the throne of Persia by his perverse son Artaxerxes II, who died in the year 4899, after reigning thirty-three years. At the death of Artaxerxes II, he was succeeded on the throne of Persia by his perverse son Artaxerxes III, who died in the year 4937, after reigning thirty-eight years. At the death of Artaxerxes III, he was succeeded on the throne of Persia by his perverse son Darius III who, after reigning thirty-two years, died on the battlefield, defeated by Alexander I the Great in the year 4969. At the death of Darius III and the conquest of the Persian Empire by Alexander I the Great, this empire was annexed to the Greco-Macedonian Empire.

### Chapter IV

#### Apostasy of the Persian Empire

1. King Xerxes III of Persia, during the first four years of his reign, remained steadfast in the Faith of the Lord God of Israel. But later, influenced by the perverse advice of some of his ministers, he allowed himself to be borne away by pride, sensuality and ambition. Thereupon, apostatizing from the Jewish Faith, he gave himself up fully to every manner of vice. This caused the apostasy of the vast majority of the subjects of his empire, who, from being adorers of the true God, became fanatical adorers of idols and promoters of corruption. As from the apostasy of King Xerxes III of Persia, all succeeding Persian kings occupying the imperial throne were conspicuous for their idolatry, corruption, perversity and detestation of the People of Israel as being the heritage of the true Lord God.

2. Until the apostasy of King Xerxes III, the three previous Caudillos of the People of Israel and the first Essenian Religioso Caudillo Michael I were symbolical tributaries of the Persian kings, since they paid an annual tribute of one silver coin. However, as from the apostasy of King Xerxes III, the Persian kings, in their unbridled ambition, imposed heavy burdens on the subjects of Israel's territory.

### Chapter V

#### Apostasy of many Israelites or Jews resident in the territory of Israel. Dismemberment of Israel's territory owing to this apostasy. Arduous struggle of the Essenian Religioso Caudillos Michael in their zeal for God

1. Following the apostasy of King Xerxes III of Persia, the corruption existent in the empire began to penetrate Israelite territory, spreading throughout the towns, so that many of the children of God's People fell back into the same prevarications as their forebears. Israel's territory gradually turned into a breeding ground for idolatry, licentiousness, crime, theft and other manifold vices.

2. Each of the virtuous Essenian Religioso Caudillos Michael, during his period of rule, had to contend with the apostasy of many in Israelite territory; and, on account of this apostasy, with uprisings and invasions, the dismemberment of many of her provinces, and with constant pressure, firstly from Persian kings, and later from Greco-Macedonian kings, who sought to reduce the full powers of self-government conceded to Israel's Caudillos by virtuous Kings Assuerus, Darius I, Xerxes II and Artaxerxes I, and thus put an end to the Caudilloship of the People of God.

3. The Essenian Religioso Caudillos Michael, however, amid all such difficulties, moved by zeal for the Lord God of Hosts, took up the sword in defence of the territory of Israel, of Faith in the Most High God, and of His Holy Law and worship. Sometimes they had to fight against members of their own people, who were their worst enemies, and at other times against those from outside Israel's territory. Although the Lord God of Hosts protected the members of His faithful people, nevertheless, given the apostasy of the great majority of Israelites, He permitted, during the different Essenian Religioso caudilloships, uprisings and dismemberment to occur in many provinces of Israelite territory, while other provinces were conquered by Persian kings and later by Greco-Macedonian kings.

4. Among the provinces that were split off from the territory of Israel were: Idumea, the Sinai peninsula, Philistea, Syria, Cilicia, Moab, Ammon, Arabia; and also Lebanon, conquered by the Phoenicians of Carthage, who entered by the Lebanese coast. Nevertheless, God reserved for Himself and for His faithful people Mount Carmel, and also the cities, among others, of Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem, Jericho and Bethulia or Megiddo, which He protected, rendering them impregnable to their enemies. In these cities, the Essenian Religioso Caudillos, in their respective periods of

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rule, with great firmness maintained the Faith in the Lord God of Israel and the fulfilment of the precepts of His Holy Law. Sacred worship was never suspended in the Temple of God in Jerusalem, despite the almost continuous struggle of the Essenian Caudillos against the enemies who desired to take possession of the city. Not only, however, were there Israelites faithful to the Holy Law of God in the impregnable cities of Israel, but also in other towns throughout the territory.

5. The impregnable cities of the territory of Israel remained open during the short periods of peace, so that the citizens went out to till their fields, gather crops and sell produce in other towns; and also merchants from other towns of Israel's territory were allowed to enter the impregnable cities. But strict vigilance was mounted so that nothing contrary to the Law of God or sound morals enter the cities. In the periods of peace, the inhabitants of Israel's territory could travel from town to town. However, in periods when invasions, uprisings or wars occurred, the impregnable cities remained closed so that no one could enter or leave. The Essenian Religioso Caudillos generally resided in the city of Jerusalem, but with certain frequency, and accompanied by their armies, they visited the other impregnable cities, and other towns of Israel's territory as well, with the purpose of offering spiritual and material help to those faithful to the Lord God of Hosts. In the impregnable cities of Hebron, Bethlehem, Jericho and Bethulia or Megiddo, there were spiritual and temporal leaders, appointed by the corresponding Essenian Religioso Caudillo, who were under his authority; furthermore, these cities were protected by soldiers of the Israelite army. On not a few occasions, the Essenian Religioso Caudillos and their armies, en route from one town to another, were attacked by enemy troops, so that they were always prepared for any such battle that might unexpectedly arise.

### Chapter VI

#### Alexander I the Great brings about the collapse of the Persian Empire. The Greco-Macedonian Empire

Alexander I the Great, son of Philip II, king of the Greco-Macedonian Empire, was born in 4943, in the city of Skopje, capital of Macedonia. After the assassination of his father Philip II in 4964 by the Persians, Alexander I the Great commenced to reign in the Greco-Macedonian Empire at the age of twenty-one, and in the year 4969 conquered the Persian Empire, when twenty-six years of age, after vanquishing and slaying in battle King Darius III, instigator of Philip II's assassination. The Persian Empire, therefore, collapsed on being annexed to the Greco-Macedonian Empire. The city of Babylon and many other cities suffered great destruction, though Alexander rebuilt them with great splendour.

### Chapter VII

#### Alexander I the Great attempts to besiege and take the city of Jerusalem, and is defeated

1. After seizing the vast Persian Empire, the proud and ambitious Alexander I the Great turned his gaze towards the city of Jerusalem, which he considered one of the principal bastions still left to be conquered within the Greco-Macedonian Empire under his crown. Conceited by triumph in his numerous conquests, he thought that the impregnable city of Jerusalem would also fall before his ferocious military drive.

2. In the year 4970, Alexander I the Great, with a large well-equipped, trained army, made his way to the city of Jerusalem with the object of besieging and then invading it. The virtuous Caudillo of the People of Israel, Michael VI, who kept the city ever well fortified and on continuous alert, assembled all residents unfit for combat before the Temple of God in Jerusalem in order for them, through prayer, fasting and other penances, to implore divine help, at the same time as the Israelite armies under his command confronted the powerful Greco-Macedonian army. The great Caudillo Michael VI, at the head of his troops, cried out in a mighty voice: "Who is like unto God?" Then he charged out from the city with them to the encounter with the powerful army of Alexander I the Great. Once more the Lord God of Hosts fought on the side of His faithful people, since the impetus of virtuous Caudillo Michael VI's troops was so astonishing that, ferociously charging those of Alexander I the Great, they wreaked such great slaughter among them that very few survived; and the proud king himself was forced to flee cowardly at the danger of perishing by the sword of the People of Israel's victorious caudillo. From then on Alexander I the Great never again dared to combat against Jerusalem or against any of the other cities of Israel's territory that God had reserved to Himself, making them impregnable to their enemies.

### Chapter VIII

#### Schism of the Samaritans. Schismatic temple of Sichem

1. Following the crushing defeat of the Greco-Macedonian army before the Jerusalem walls, Alexander I the Great, with his few surviving soldiers, made his way towards the north of Israel's territory, in the direction of a military encampment he had set up in Lebanon. As he neared the city of Sichem, Sanabalat, from the tribe of Levi, Levitical chief priest, came out to meet him accompanied by Levitical priests, levite ministers and many of the people. Sanabalat, on his knees before Alexander I the Great, offered him his services, at the same time manifesting his most bitter hatred of Caudillo Michael VI, the city of Jerusalem and all within, including her inhabitants; since for some time now, Sanabalat and his followers had formed the idea of separating themselves from the authority of the Levitical High Priest, with the aim of constituting a new Jewish Church whose Holy City would be Sichem, and whose High Priest would be Sanabalat himself. In their intrigues, they had also projected the raising of a Temple to the God of Israel in Sichem, beside Mount Garizim, to surpass that of Jerusalem, for which they needed the backing of powerful personages.

2. So then, when the chief priest Sanabalat heard of the defeat of the Greco-Macedonian army before the walls of Jerusalem, and that Alexander I the Great was on his way to the north of the land of Israel, he went out to meet him seeking his support. In view of the astute invitation and hospitality of Sanabalat, the king entered the city of Sichem. Though the Jewish religion was of no importance to the king, since his beliefs were pagan and his morals signally corrupt, nevertheless he saw in Sanabalat's propositions the opportunity, not only to divide the People of Israel's religious

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ife, whereby her power and strength would be still further weakened, but also to avenge himself on Jerusalem, which he had been unable to conquer, by enlarging the city of Sichem so that it might dwarf Jerusalem. So from then on, Alexander I the Great, besides greatly extending the Samaritan city, at the request of Sanabalat began to construct, beside Mount Garizim, a great Temple to the God of Israel to eclipse that of Jerusalem. The Samaritan schism was, then, promoted and consolidated in the year 4970, by the Levitical chief priest Sanabalat, with the help of perverse Alexander I the Great. Sanabalat, with the consent of many Levitical priests, levite ministers and numerous Israelites from the thirteen tribes, named himself levitical high priest of the Jewish Samaritan Church. The work of building the temple in Sichem and its embellishment, by Alexander I the Great, took three years. While the temple was being built, the levitical anti-high priest Sanabalat celebrated worship in a portable temple, in which he had enthroned an ark of the covenant in the style of that found in the Temple of God in Jerusalem.

3. As a result of the Samaritan schism, the People of Israel became divided into two opposing religious factions: on the one hand, the true Jewish Church continued under the authority of the corresponding legitimate Levitical High Priest, whose Holy City was Jerusalem, where stood the Sacred Temple that God had ordered rebuilt in His honour, and where all the worship prescribed in the Law of Moses continued to be celebrated; and on the other hand there existed the false Jewish Church under the authority of the corresponding levitical anti-high priest, whose pseudo holy city was Sichem, where stood the profane temple which, against the will of God, they had built for Him, and where the schismatic Samaritans celebrated all the worship prescribed in the Law of Moses. As a result of this Samaritan schism: There were many Israelites from each of the thirteen tribes, residing in different provinces of Israel's territory, who remained faithful to the true Jewish Church under the authority of the legitimate Levitical High Priest; and there were also many Israelites from each of the thirteen tribes, residing in different provinces of Israel's territory, who joined the schismatic Jewish church under the authority of the levitical anti-high priest. The Samaritan schismatics upheld that the Messiah would be born from the tribe of Levi. The schismatic temple beside Mount Garizim in Sichem would later be destroyed by the last of the Holy Machabee Caudillos, John Hyrcanus; who would also translate the remains of Patriarch Joseph from the city of Sichem to the cave of Machpela in the city of Hebron, to rest beside the remains of Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

4. Alexander I the Great's impiety reached the heights of having himself adored as god by his subjects.

### Chapter IX

**Death of Alexander I the Great. Problems concerning his succession. Division of the Greco-Macedonian Empire into four kingdoms**

1. After reigning twelve years, perverse Alexander I the Great, figure of Antichrist, died in Babylon at the age of thirty-three in the year 4976, fulminated by the Lord God of Hosts, and is to be found in the eternal fire of Hell. At his death his son Alexander was not yet born, being in the period of gestation, so Philip Arrideus, natural son of Philip II and therefore Alexander I the Great's stepbrother, was elected king of the Greco-Macedonian Empire. Despite this election, five of Alexander I the Great's generals divided the empire into diadochi or principalities, ruling as princes, though under the crown of King Philip Arrideus. These are the five principalities: Antipater remained at the head of the provinces of Macedonia and Greece; Ptolemy, of Egypt and the land of Israel; Eumenes, of Cappadocia and other neighbouring provinces; Antigonos, of Phrygia, Lycia and Pamphylia; and Lisimachus, of Thrace. After his death, Philip Arrideus was succeeded on the throne by Alexander II, posthumous son of Alexander I the Great and his wife Roxanne. Alexander II was assassinated four years after ascending the throne.

2. As a result of Alexander II's death, following bloody internecine wars and crimes between the diadochi or principalities, the Greco-Macedonian Empire became divided into four kingdoms by the auto-proclamation of the following kings: Ptolemy, of Egypt and of the land of Israel; Cassander, son of Antigonos, of Greece and Macedonia; Lisimachus, of Turkey; and Seleucus, another of Alexander I the Great's generals, of Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia and other nearby lands.

### Chapter X

**The territory of Israel under the dominion of the king of Syria**

In the year 5019, Antiochus III the Great, one of the descendants of Seleucus I's line of succession, inherited the throne of Syria, and later founded the city of Antioch, in honour of his name, making it the capital of his empire. In the year 5030, Antiochus III seized the land of Israel, which was under the dominion of the king of Egypt, annexing it to Syria. Antiochus III died in the year 5035 and was succeeded by his son Seleucus IV Philopator; who after a short reign was succeeded on the throne of Syria by Antiochus IV Epiphanes, having as well under his dominion the territory of Israel. When Antiochus IV Epiphanes began to reign, although Caudillo Michael VIII continued by right to exercise his caudilloship in the territory of Israel, nevertheless in practice he only had power over Jerusalem and the other impregnable cities, as also Mount Carmel.

### Chapter XI

**King Antiochus IV Epiphanes of Syria imposes idolatry and paganism by force in the territory of Israel**

1. From the beginning of his reign, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, of Greek origin, stood out for his impiety, licentiousness, ambition and cruelty. His implacable aversion to the Lord God of Israel, His Holy Law and those steadfast in the Jewish Faith, led him to issue a godless edict in which, under pain of extermination, he required that all his subjects in the territory of Israel profess his own idolatrous religion and pagan morals, so that they were obliged to abandon their own religion. In this royal edict, the People of Israel were forbidden to be circumcised, to offer holocausts and sacrifices to the God of Israel or to observe any other precept of the Law. And, in turn, all were commanded to offer sacrifice to idols and profane Saturdays and solemn feasts.

2. So that his edict be made known to all and fulfilled with utmost rigour, the perverse Antiochus IV sent commissioners to many of Israel's towns, where they raised temples and altars to idols, ordered sacrifices of the meat of pigs and of other unclean animals, and commanded the Israelites to contaminate themselves by eating those meats considered unclean by Mosaic Law, and by other abominations, so that thereby they might separate from the Law of God and alter all His commandments. Many of the children of the People of Israel, who were already corrupted, joyfully embraced the tyrant's edict; others submitted to it from fear of being exterminated; and there were as well many others who heroically resisted such impious impositions since they contravened the Holy Law of the Lord God of Hosts.

3. With the exception of Mount Carmel and the cities of Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem, Jericho, Megiddo or Bethulia, and one or other besides, that were impregnable to the enemies of God by special divine protection, in all the synagogues of the other towns of Israel's territory, Antiochus IV Epiphanes erected a statue of the idol of desolation, which was a copy of the Zeus Olympus he adored as the idolatrous Greek he was. Many of the Levitical priests, faithful to the God of Israel, who governed the synagogues, as likewise many of the people, made heroic resistance to Antiochus to prevent setting up an altar to the Greek idol in them, and there were as well those who gave their lives as martyrs to this cause. Nevertheless, the perverse king, aware that from the times of Alexander I the Great all attempts to invade Jerusalem and the other impregnable cities had failed, was very circumspect in leading his army against them.

4. Impious Antiochus's cruelty reached the point where he required his Israelite subjects to burn incense and sacrifice victims to idols before the doors of their homes, thus to give public testimony that they complied with his edict. He commanded all copies of the books of Holy Law to be handed over in order to be thrown to the flames; so that whoever was later found to have kept any of these books was ruthlessly exterminated. Not a few Israelites were torn to pieces for having circumcised their sons, and the boys hung by the neck in their own homes. Still, amid such cruel desolation, there were those who were firmly resolved to die rather than eat unclean food or break any other precept of Holy Law, many of them being exterminated.

### Chapter XII

**The city of Sichem and its schismatic temple are placed at the service of idolatrous King Antiochus IV Epiphanes.**

**The city of Sichem, King Antiochus IV's second court**

1. In that year 5036, last in Michael VIII's caudilloship, impious King Antiochus IV, in his eagerness to put an end to everything concerning the Lord God of Israel, also sent his commissioners to the city of Sichem, capital of the Samaritan schism. The levitical anti-high priest of the time was the apostate Jason, supreme head of the sect, who offered no resistance at all to the idolatrous plans of Antiochus, instead afforded him the schismatic temple of the city of Sichem, built beside Mount Garizim to the God of Israel, so that he might erect there a great altar with a monumental statue of the idol Zeus Olympus. In this way Jason, levitical anti-high priest of the schismatic Jewish Church, and the majority of his followers, became friends of Antiochus IV, freeing themselves thereby from his persecution and cruelty. Nonetheless, in view of this action by the schismatic Samaritans, a good number of them realized that truth was not on their side; and repentant, abandoned the schism and joined the true Church of the God of Israel, ruled by the Levitical High Priest residing in Jerusalem.

2. Antiochus IV Epiphanes, following his friendly pact with the schismatic Samaritans, though officially continuing to hold his court in the city of Antioch, capital of the Syrian Empire, nevertheless, chose the city of Sichem as second court, so as to have the government of the territory of Israel closer at hand, and followers of the Faith in the true God under better control. Antiochus IV embellished the city of Sichem yet further, fortified it with stouter walls and placed it under the custody of a large military garrison.

### Chapter XIII

**Antiochus IV Epiphanes seizes Egypt, and afterwards makes for the city of Jerusalem to besiege and take it**

1. In the year 5036, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, with a mighty army equipped with chariots, elephants and numerous cavalry, headed overland for Egypt, also sending by sea a large number of powerful ships. The Egyptian army came out to confront him, but was vanquished by Antiochus amid wholesale slaughter. The king of Egypt himself died while fleeing. Antiochus IV then invaded Egypt, seized all the cities and pillaged them.

2. This overwhelming victory against the Egyptians encouraged King Antiochus IV to attempt the conquest of Jerusalem city, to which he had always felt strongly drawn, without daring to confront it. Accordingly, in that same year, after his victorious return from Egypt, he headed for the city of Jerusalem with a powerful and well-equipped army. But the Lord God of Hosts so emboldened the army of the Essenian Caudillo Michael VIII that, in a few days, it destroyed the Syrian army inflicting heavy casualties, with Antiochus IV's consequent retreat at the fear of perishing himself.

### Chapter XIV

**Schism of many essenes during Michael VIII's caudilloship**

During the final year of Michael VIII's caudilloship, in the year 5036, in the city of South Carmel, not far from the Dead Sea, there arose a schism of many essenes in the Order's three branches: religiosos, religiosas and terciarios; the schism was headed by the apostate prophet Tobias, from the tribe of Dan, essenian chief priest, designated years previously as founder and superior of the Essenian religiosos of South Carmel by Nephtali, Superior General of the Essenes. The apostate prophet Tobias, availing himself of a false apparition of the Prophet Saint Elias, proclaimed himself superior general of the essenes, and essenian high priest. This anti-superior general of the essenes and essenian anti-high priest, Tobias the apostate, exceedingly dismembered the Order of Carmel.

## Chapter XV

## Emergence of the sect of the pharisees during Michael VIII's caudilloship

In the year 5036, under the caudilloship of Michael VIII, in the town of Mapha, the sect of the pharisees arose, led by the apostate prophet Pharis, from the tribe of Ruben, a rabbi and doctor of the Law. This sect was formed of elite members from each of the thirteen tribes residing in different provinces of Israel's territory. These sectarians, though believing in the existence of the angels, in the immortality of the human soul and in the resurrection of the dead, nevertheless affirmed that the Messiah to come would not be the Son of God in the strict sense, but merely an adopted Son. The members of this sect, though rigorous in outwardly complying with the Law of God, nonetheless daily transgressed its precepts, since they acted hypocritically to be seen and admired by the people. These sectarians, notwithstanding the slightest scruple in accepting pagan customs and in worshipping idols, provided they conserved their own lives. The sect of the pharisees caused great havoc among the members of the People of Israel who professed Faith in the true God.

## Chapter XVI

End of the caudilloship of the Essenian Religiosos Michael VIII. In the year 5036, under Michael VIII's caudilloship, in the town of Mapha, the sect of the sadducees arose, headed by the perverse Isaias, from the tribe of Levi, Levitical chief priest and doctor of the Law. This sect was formed by Israelite members from each of the thirteen tribes residing in the different provinces of Israel's territory. These sectarians, though believing that the future Messiah would be the Onlybegotten Son of God, nevertheless denied the existence of angels, the immortality of the human soul and the resurrection of the body; and affirmed that the life of a human being concluded with death on earth, and that reward or punishment on earth was generally related to the life of parents. These sectarians, following their leader Isaias, gloried in having as ideological father High Priest Sadoc, unlawfully appointed by Solomon. The sect of the sadducees caused great havoc among the members of the People of Israel who professed Faith in the true God. Among the descendants of Isaias, founder of the sect of the sadducees, was perverse High Priest Annas, to whom Our Lord Jesus Christ was to appear and before whom He would be struck by the perverse Malchus. In the year 5036, the caudilloship of Michael VIII came to an end, and with him the caudilloship of the eight Essenian Religiosos Michael over the territory of Israel, and the caudilloship of the Essenian Religioso Machabees.

## Thirteenth Part

## Caudilloship of the Essenian Religioso Machabees in Israel's territory

## Prologue

The Prophet and Vice-Superior General of the Essenes Jesus of Sirach was the author of the Books of Machabees, and these books were later atrociously adulterated.

## Book I

## Mathathias Machabee, Prophet, Levitical High Priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel

## Chapter I

Origin and family of Mathathias. Mathathias, Levitical High Priest. Mathathias, first Machabee Caudillo over Israel's territory. In the divine command the Machabee Caudillos were chosen from among Essenian Religiosos without their ceasing to be members of the Order, to occupy the exalted offices of Levitical High Priests and Caudillos of the People of Israel in order to exterminate paganism, idolatry and moral corruption in the People of God, given the massive apostasy of those times. Mathathias and his five sons were prophets and Essenian religiosos; they were all terciarios from childhood, and religiosos after becoming widowers.

Mathathias Machabee, son of Levitical priest John, was from the tribe of Levi on his father's side, and from the tribe of Judah on his mother's. Mathathias was born in the city of Jerusalem in the year 4972, during the caudilloship of Michael VII. His family were natives of the city of Modin, situated close to Lydda, near the Mediterranean port of Jaffa. Mathathias was married and had five children: Judas Machabee, Jonathas Machabee, Simon Machabee, Eleazar Machabee and John Machabee. The name Machabee means 'hammer'.

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In the year 5036, after the conclusion of virtuous Michael VIII's caudilloship, Most Holy Malachias, in the presence of a vast crowd gathered before the Temple of God in Jerusalem, designated and anointed sixty-four-year-old Levitical High Priest Mathathias Machabee as Caudillo of the People of Israel.

5. The cape, staff and flaming sword used by the previous Caudillos were used also by each of the Machabee Caudillos.  
6. Through the caudilloship of the Essenian Religioso Machabees, God continued theocratic government in the land of Israel, though ensuring that neither of the two principal lineages of the House of David be extinguished from which Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of kings, was to descend.

## Chapter II

## Caudillo Mathathias proclaims a Holy Crusade in defence of the rights of the Lord God of Hosts throughout Jerusalem and the whole territory of Israel

1. Following his elevation to the post of Caudillo of the People of Israel, Mathathias Machabee felt the irresistible impulse of God in his soul moving him to organize a Holy Crusade for the re-establishment of the precepts of Divine Law and holy morals in the cities and towns of Israel's territory, immersed in idolatry and its multiple depravities owing to the cruel and despotic impositions of impious King Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Mathathias, in his burning zeal for the glory of God, lamented before his sons saying: "Alas for me! Why was I born to see the spiritual ruin of the great majority of my people? Of what use is life unless, by our heroic efforts, we restore in all the extensive territory of Israel the honour and glory due to the Lord God of Hosts?" So he and his five sons donned hair shirts, covered their heads with ashes, and, with great weeping and abundant tears, begged the Lord God of Israel to strengthen them very specially to carry out successfully the great mission to which they were urged by zeal for the honour of God Most High.

2. For this Holy Machabean crusade, Caudillo Mathathias felt in his heart the need to tour the chief towns of Israel's territory with the object of rousing his people for the great battle against the enemies of God, and to recruit other valiant men willing to die in the holy cause; while it is true that he counted on a large and well-equipped army in the city of Jerusalem, the hazardous mission demanded a considerably greater number of soldiers. However, while preparing to leave Jerusalem with four of his five sons, Caudillo Mathathias Machabee left his twenty-one-year-old son Eleazar, a Levitical priest, in the city as Levitical Vice-High Priest, entrusting him with the government of Jerusalem city during his father's war campaigns.

3. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of September in that year 5036, Caudillo Mathathias, with his sons Judas, twenty-seven years old, Jonathas, twenty-four, Simon, twenty-two and John, twenty, and a large number of the soldiers quartered in the city of Jerusalem, left the city in order to tour the territory of Israel, preaching a Holy Crusade against the enemies of the Lord God of Hosts, and at the same time recruiting additional valiant men willing to fight to the death on the battlefield. During his long journey, Mathathias always began his proclamation of the Holy Crusade with the following words: "All who are zealous for the Holy Law, and who firmly keep the Covenant of the Lord God of Hosts, follow me. Though many obey King Antiochus, thus separating themselves from the yoke of God's Holy Law, consenting to the impious commandments of the king, I, my sons and all who wish to follow me will obey the Holy Law of our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God will help us, and deliver us from forsaking His Law and commandments. We shall not, then, listen to the words of impious King Antiochus, nor shall we sacrifice to idols and betray the commandments of our Divine Law, and turn aside into the ways of perdition." Mathathias, consumed by zeal for the glory of God, constantly repeated the words uttered centuries before by the Prophet Elias: "I burn with zeal for the Lord God of Hosts."

## Chapter III

## Caudillo Mathathias in the town of Modin. Chastisement and conversion of Heliodorus

1. The first town that Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Mathathias visited was Modin, of which he and his family were natives, and where his brothers lived. The town of Modin was heroic in resisting the impious dispositions of Antiochus IV Epiphanes, so that Mathathias's brothers, like the majority of the citizens, had not permitted the tyrant king to place in the synagogue an altar with a statue of the idol Zeus Olympus. Owing to this resistance, some of those in Modin had given their very lives.

2. At Caudillo Mathathias's arrival in Modin with four of his sons and his army, in the presence of all the people assembled in front of the synagogue, he proclaimed a Holy Crusade in defence of God's Law and holy morals. It came to pass that as Mathathias, his sons, his brothers and others of the city were about to enter the synagogue to seek help and protection from the Lord God of Hosts in such a difficult undertaking, young Heliodorus, of Greek origin, arrived there accompanied by a good number of soldiers. One of King Antiochus IV Epiphanes' chief ministers, Heliodorus had been sent by the king with the object of attempting to seduce Mathathias and his followers with flattering promises. Here, then, is what Heliodorus said to Caudillo Mathathias on the king's behalf: "You are Chief of the priests, truly illustrious and great in Israel, and are adorned with the crown of five war-seasoned sons. Comply with my orders, as many of your people have done, by offering sacrifices to the idols, and as reward I will give you the highest post in my kingdom after myself, whereby you and your sons will be numbered among my friends. I will lavish gold, silver and many other gifts upon you." At which Mathathias replied firmly and forcibly: "Tell Antiochus that, even though many of my people cowardly obey his iniquitous dispositions, I, with the fortitude of my Lord and God, shall not obey his commands, neither shall my sons, my brothers nor any of those who wish to remain loyal to the Faith we profess. So then, we shall obey only the commandments of the Holy Law of the Lord God of Hosts." This valiant profession of Faith by Mathathias was contradicted by the cowardly attitude of an Israelite from Modin who, betraying his God and Lord, presented himself before Heliodorus to sacrifice to idols on the altar of the synagogue. At once Caudillo and Levitical High Priest Mathathias, rent by anguish and inflamed by the Just Wrath of God, threw himself upon the Israelite and pierced him through with his sword.

3. Following this lamentable episode, minister Heliodorus, with supreme arrogance and contempt for Caudillo Mathathias and the Holy Law of God, abruptly entered the synagogue of Modin to place on the sacred altar a statue of

## Chapter XV

## Emergence of the sect of the pharisees during Michael VIII's caudilloship

In the year 5036, under the caudilloship of Michael VIII, in the town of Mapha, the sect of the pharisees arose, headed by the apostate prophet Pharis, from the tribe of Ruben, a rabbi and doctor of the Law. This sect was formed by Israelite members from each of the thirteen tribes residing in different provinces of Israel's territory. These sectarians, though believing in the existence of the angels, in the immortality of the human soul and in the resurrection of the body, nevertheless affirmed that the Messiah to come would not be the Son of God in the strict sense, but merely an adopted Son. The members of this sect, though rigorous in outwardly complying with the Law of God, nonetheless inwardly transgressed its precepts, since they acted hypocritically to be seen and admired by the people. These sectarians had not the slightest scruple in accepting pagan customs and in worshipping idols, provided they conserved their earthly lives. The sect of the pharisees caused great havoc among the members of the People of Israel who professed Faith in the true God.

## Chapter XVI

## Emergence of the sect of the sadducees during Michael VIII's caudilloship. End of the Caudilloship of the Essenian Religiosos Michael

1. In the year 5036, under Michael VIII's caudilloship, in the town of Mapha, the sect of the sadducees arose, headed by perverse Isaias, from the tribe of Levi, Levitical chief priest and doctor of the Law. This sect was formed by Israelite members from each of the thirteen tribes residing in the different provinces of Israel's territory. These sectarians, though believing that the future Messiah would be the Onlybegotten Son of God, nevertheless denied the existence of angels, the immortality of the human soul and the resurrection of the body; and affirmed that the life of a human being concluded with death on earth, and that reward or punishment on earth was generally related to the life of parents. These sectarians, including their leader Isaias, gloried in having as ideological father High Priest Sadoc, unlawfully appointed by Solomon. The sect of the sadducees caused great havoc among the members of the People of Israel who professed Faith in the true God. Among the descendants of Isaias, founder of the sect of the sadducees, was perverse High Priest Annas, before whom Our Lord Jesus Christ was to appear and before whom He would be struck by the perverse Malchus.

2. In the year 5036, the caudilloship of Michael VIII came to an end, and with him the caudilloship of the eight Essenian Religiosos Michael over the territory of Israel, and the caudilloship of the Essenian Religioso Machabees began.

## Thirteenth Part

### Caudilloship of the Essenian Religioso Machabees in Israel's territory

## Prologue

The Prophet and Vice-Superior General of the Essenes Jesus of Sirach was the author of the Books of Machabees, though these books were later atrociously adulterated.

## Book I

#### Mathathias Machabee, Prophet, Levitical High Priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel

## Chapter I

## Birth and family of Mathathias. Mathathias, Levitical High Priest. Mathathias, first Machabee Caudillo over Israel's territory

1. By divine command the Machabee Caudillos were chosen from among Essenian Religiosos without their ceasing to be members of the Order, to occupy the exalted offices of Levitical High Priests and Caudillos of the People of God, in order to exterminate paganism, idolatry and moral corruption in the People of God, given the massive apostasy of those times. Mathathias and his five sons were prophets and Essenian religiosos; they were all terciarios from childhood, and religiosos after becoming widowers.

2. Mathathias Machabee, son of Levitical priest John, was from the tribe of Levi on his father's side, and from the tribe of Judah on his mother's. Mathathias was born in the city of Jerusalem in the year 4972, during the caudilloship of Michael VII. His family were natives of the city of Modin, situated close to Lydda, near the Mediterranean port of Joppe. Mathathias was married and had five children: Judas Machabee, Jonathas Machabee, Simon Machabee, Eleazar Machabee and John Machabee. The name Machabee means 'hammer'.

3. In the year 5035, the Levitical High Priest was the virtuous Onias, a man of great benevolence and unction, of venerable bearing, modest in his habits, congenial in his discourses, and who from childhood had practised the virtues. That same year, after the holy death of Onias, the line of succession to the Levitical High Priesthood was extinguished by the apostasy of his son Orianus. Thereupon Most Holy Malachias raised Mathathias Machabee, Levitical priest and Essenian religioso, directly to the lofty office of Levitical High Priest, and he was publicly anointed by Most Holy Malachias in the Temple of God in Jerusalem.

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2. At Caudillo Mathathias's arrival in Modin with four of his sons and his army, in the presence of all the people assembled in front of the synagogue, he proclaimed a Holy Crusade in defence of God's Law and holy morals. It came to pass that as Mathathias, his sons, his brothers and others of the city were about to enter the synagogue to seek help and protection from the Lord God of Hosts in such a difficult undertaking, young Heliodorus, of Greek origin, arrived there accompanied by a good number of soldiers. One of King Antiochus IV Epiphanes' chief ministers, Heliodorus had been sent by the king with the object of attempting to seduce Mathathias and his followers with flattering promises. Here, then, is what Heliodorus said to Caudillo Mathathias on the king's behalf: "You are Chief of the priests, truly illustrious and great in Israel, and are adorned with the crown of five war-seasoned sons. Comply with my orders, as many of your people have done, by offering sacrifices to the idols, and as reward I will give you the highest post in my kingdom after myself, whereby you and your sons will be numbered among my friends. I will lavish gold, silver and many other gifts upon you." At which Mathathias replied firmly and forcibly: "Tell Antiochus that, even though many of my people cowardly obey his iniquitous dispositions, I, with the fortitude of my Lord and God, shall not obey his commands, neither shall my sons, my brothers nor any of those who wish to remain loyal to the Faith we profess. So then, we shall obey only the commandments of the Holy Law of the Lord God of Hosts." This valiant profession of Faith by Mathathias was contradicted by the cowardly attitude of an Israelite from Modin who, betraying his God and Lord, presented himself before Heliodorus to sacrifice to idols on the altar of the synagogue. At once Caudillo and Levitical High Priest Mathathias, rent by anguish and inflamed by the Just Wrath of God, threw himself upon the Israelite and pierced him through with his sword.

3. Following this lamentable episode, minister Heliodorus, with supreme arrogance and contempt for Caudillo Mathathias and the Holy Law of God, abruptly entered the synagogue of Modin to place on the sacred altar a statue of

the idol Zeus Olympus borne by some Syrian soldiers who followed him in. But the Lord God of Hosts manifested His Righteous Anger by evident signs, since all of a sudden, mounted on horseback, there appeared a Divine Personage of fulminating aspect, magnificently attired, whose weapons seemed of gold. From Him issued as though devouring rays, which, falling upon those who carried the statue of the idol, cast them to the ground terror-stricken, leaving them insensible and the idol smashed to pieces. Then the Divine Rider, who was Most Holy Melchisedech, charged headlong at Heliodorus, who was trampled on by the horses' hooves, the Divine Warrior then disappearing. While he lay prostrate on the ground, two angels appeared under the form of elegant and robust youths, full of majesty and richly attired, and placing themselves to either side of Heliodorus, scourged him each from his side, and struck him unleashing upon him continuous blows. Afterwards, Heliodorus, unable to speak and plunged into the most tenebrous blindness, was brought out of the Temple mortally wounded, all giving up hope for his survival. In view of such a manifestation of God's power, the Israelites of Modin blessed the Lord God of Hosts because He had humbled the enemy and thereby extolled the glory of the holy place, filling all with joy and gladness. Then, some of the soldiers who accompanied Heliodorus pleaded with High Priest Mathathias to invoke the God of Israel to save the life of Heliodorus, now in his death agony. Mathathias, inspired by God, commenced his prayer, and then the two mysterious youths who had scourged Heliodorus, placing themselves beside him, said: "Give thanks to Mathathias. Levitical High Priest, since for love of him, the Lord God of Israel has spared your life. Now you, who have been scourged by God, announce to all the wonders of the Lord God of Hosts and of His infinite power." This said, the two angelic youths disappeared. At the same time Heliodorus's wounds were healed, and he regained his speech and sight.

4. Heliodorus, after making great promises to cease combating the God of Israel, but to fight for His honour and glory, giving thanks to Mathathias, returned with his men to King Antiochus's presence, to give testimony of the works of the great God of Hosts, which he had seen with his own eyes. Impressed, King Antiochus said to Heliodorus to test him: "What would you do if I sent you to Modin again to place an altar in the town to our Greek idol?" Heliodorus replied: "O Antiochus, if you have some enemy or someone who strives against your kingdom, send him there, and you will see him come back here lacerated by scourging, that is if he succeeds in escaping with his life. Because verily, the virtue of the true God looks after His own. He Himself, who is Almighty and has His abode in Heaven, is the visitor and protector of His sacred synagogues, and chastises and causes to perish those attempting some evil there. From now on do not count on me to fight against the Lord God of Israel, as Him alone will I serve." Following these words, Heliodorus and all those who had accompanied him on the mission to Modin, returned to that town, were circumcised and joined the Holy Crusade of Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Mathathias.

5. Following the Modin episode, High Priest and Caudillo Mathathias, leaving a group of valiant soldiers there for the defence of the town, departed with his sons and military forces, now larger in number, to continue proclaiming throughout the towns of Israel's territory a Holy Crusade to defend the rights of the Lord God of Hosts.

#### Chapter IV

Antiochus IV invades the town of Antipatris. Slaughter of many citizens there for not fighting on Saturday. Mathathias ordains that Saturday also be placed at God's service by means of war. The Assideans or military Essenes join Israel's Holy Crusade

1. The invasion of the town of Antipatris by Antiochus IV took place in that same year 5036. The impious king, counselled by the levitical anti-high priest Jason, went with his troops to the town on Saturday, taking advantage of the day of rest established in the Law of the God of Israel. When the troops of the Syrian king had surrounded the town of Antipatris, from outside they called upon those within: "Come out and obey the commands of King Antiochus, offer sacrifices to Zeus and you will be safe. If you have no wish to obey, at least defend yourselves like valiant soldiers, because if not, we shall take the town and put an end to you all." But those within the town, considering the letter of the law rather than its spirit in defence of God's rights, replied: "In nowise shall we obey the king, neither shall we violate Saturday by fighting against you." Then the troops of Antiochus, climbing over the walls, swooped down on the citizens, who offered no resistance whatever; since they said: "Let us all die in our simplicity, and Heaven and Earth shall be witnesses that our lives are taken unjustly." In effect, the enemy stormed them so fiercely that the women and children perished together with the men.

2. When Mathathias heard of this, he said to his warrior hosts: "If we all proceed as our brothers did, not fighting to defend our Holy Law and our lives against the enemy, they shall soon put an end to us. Therefore, if some enemy attacks us on a Saturday, we shall fight against him with heroic ferocity yet greater in the cause of the Lord God of Hosts, not giving ourselves up to death like innocent lambs. Saturday, being dedicated to God, is precisely the most proper day to employ in His service through war, should it be necessary." Forthwith the glorious Caudillo, at the head of his army, marched on the town of Antipatris and wrested it from the control of his people's enemies.

3. A short while after this episode, there came to join Mathathias a great number of Assideans, who were the militant members of the Essenian Order, the most valiant in Israel and all zealous for the Holy Law. Caudillo Mathathias, therefore, formed a great army, hurling himself furiously on the prevaricators of God's Law and on evil men, having no pity on them at all. Those who remained alive fled outside his dominions to seek safety. Caudillo Mathathias, with his numerous troops, travelled throughout Israelite territory, destroying the idols' altars, exterminating all corruption and circumcising any Israelite boys found to be uncircumcised out of their parents' fear of perishing under Antiochus's tyranny. The army under Mathathias's orders, in its tireless campaigns, persecuted the proud enemy, causing the Holy Law of the Lord God of Israel to prevail against pagan might, and was successful in every enterprise.

#### Chapter V

##### Martyrdom of the aged Levitical chief priest Eleazar Machabee

1. In the year 5037, while High Priest and Caudillo Mathathias toured the different towns of Israel's territory with four of his sons and his armed forces, in the town of Bethel took place the martyrdom of Eleazar, Levitical chief priest and Essenian terciario. The aged, virtuous, ninety-year-old Eleazar Machabee, of venerable bearing, governed the synagogue of Bethel with the greatest zeal. As King Antiochus IV's commissaries failed to persuade him to set up a statue of the idol Zeus on the altar of the sacred building, the king, furiously vexed, proceeded with his henchmen to Bethel, where he sacrificed several pigs in honour of the Greek idol. Then they required the aged Eleazar to eat of this meat forbidden by the Law of Moses. As he refused, however, in order to avoid breaking the Holy Law of God, they forced open his mouth and tried insert pork meat inside for him to eat. But, by divine help, he closed his mouth so tightly that they were unable to insert any meat. Eleazar, preferring a glorious death to a life made detestable by apostasy, went voluntarily on foot to execution, with the firm resolve to suffer death with patience, and do nothing against the Law of God for love of this earthly life.

2. Some pharisees, however, Eleazar Machabee's fellow citizens, who were present, came privately to him saying that, if he permitted, they would bring unforbidden meat for him to eat before the king as if it were pork, and free himself from death in this way. But Eleazar, with the courage and nobility that he had always displayed, promptly replied: "I prefer to die rather than make use of this iniquitous fiction of yours, whereby I would gravely offend the Lord God of Israel, bring loathing and disgrace upon my priesthood and old age, and be the cause of the perdition of many through my bad example. All these great evils would result from my trying now to conserve the little time that remains of my corruptible life. Besides, though I might free myself from the tortures of men, I cannot, living or dead, escape from the hands of the Almighty. Thus, valiantly dying in defence of God's Law, I will prove myself worthy of my priesthood and old age, and by my martyrdom leave for all an example of fortitude in defence of the most holy and venerable Law." While they were beating him to death on the scaffold, the aged Eleazar Machabee said: "You, O Almighty Lord God, who possess holy knowledge, well know that, being able to free myself from death, I suffer atrocious pains of body, but my soul suffers them willingly out of holy fear of You in defence of Your Law." In this way the venerable, aged Eleazar died a martyr, leaving to his people, by the remembrance of his death, a model of virtue and fortitude.

#### Chapter VI

##### Martyrdom of the Prophetess Machabea and her seven Machabee sons

1. In that same year 5037, there took place in the town of Mapha the martyrdom of the Prophetess Machabea and her seven Machabee sons, named Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel, Cediel, Cedechiel and Jereniel. Mother and sons were Essenian terciarios. It happened that, the seven brothers having been arrested along with their mother, King Antiochus IV sought to compel them to eat pork contrary to what was established in the Holy Law of God, with the threat that if they did not, they would be subjected to great tortures. As they refused, he insisted that they should do so by force of scourging with a bullwhip.

2. But one of them, the first-born, said to King Antiochus: "What do you want of us? We are willing to die rather than violate the laws of the God of Israel." The king, then, exceedingly wroth, ordered that frying pans and bronze boiling pots be placed over the fire, and when they were red-hot, ordered the tongue to be cut out of the one who had spoken first; and that after the skin had been torn from his head, the extremities of his hands and feet be cut off in his mother's and brothers' presence. When he was completely mutilated, the king ordered that he be thrown alive into one of the frying pans, in which he was tortured a long spell until he died. While he suffered this torment, his mother and brothers encouraged each other to die valiantly, saying: "The Lord God, who sees the truth, will take pity on us and console us in the other life."

3. The first having died, the second of the brothers was brought up to be tortured and mocked if he refused to eat pork, so that Antiochus asked him if he was prepared to eat it, because if not he would be tortured in every member of his body. But the young martyr replied: "I will do no such thing", for which he was subjected to similar tortures as his brother. On the point of expiring, he said: "You take from us, O utterly perverse king, our present life, but the Lord God, King of the Universe, shall reward us with Eternal life for having died in defence of His Holy Law."

4. Then came the third brother's torture, who also refused to eat pork; and on their asking for his tongue to cut it off, he at once thrust it out, valiantly stretching his hands out as well for them to be cut off, saying with great confidence: "From God I received these bodily members. But now I despise them for love of His Holy Law, and I hope to recover them from His same divine hands." Faced with this heroic attitude, the king and those with him were astonished at the spirit of that youth who paid no heed to tortures.

5. When he was dead, the fourth brother was also tortured for refusing to eat pork, and at the point of death he said: "It is of great advantage for us to lose our lives at the hands of men, for the firm hope we have that God will reward us with eternal life. But if you, O Antiochus, persist in your iniquity, you shall not attain eternal life."

6. Having taken hold of the fifth brother, who also refused to obey the impious command, they cruelly martyred him. But he, looking at the king, said to him: "You boast of the power you have among men, and thus do as you please; but you are just as mortal as all the rest. Do not think that God has forsaken His people. Wait a little and you shall see the greatness of His infinite power, and that if you persist in impiety, He will torture you and those who act like you."

7. After he had died, the sixth brother was brought to torment. He also refused to eat pork, so that he was cruelly tortured. On the point of expiring, he said: "Do not vainly deceive yourself, O Antiochus, since if we suffer these



torments it is also to expiate the sins we have committed against our God. But do not think that, if you persist in impiety, having dared to combat the Lord God of Israel, afterwards you shall go unpunished."

8. King Antiochus IV, seeing himself humbled by the first six martyrs' words, took them as if they were an insult to himself. As there still remained the youngest of the brothers, the king not only exhorted him with words, but also assured him by an oath that he would be his friend, make him rich and happy, and would give him whatever he wished if he abandoned the Law of the Lord God of Israel. As the promises of the king did not persuade the child to change his mind, Antiochus advised his mother to consider the life and wellbeing of her son. Thereupon, however, Machabea spoke to the boy in this way: "My son, have compassion on me, who bore you for nine months in my womb, nourished you with milk from my breasts, nursed you and brought you up to your present age. I beseech you, my son, to look at Heaven, at Earth and at everything in them. Understand that the Lord God made them out of nothing, as He did the human race. Do not fear, then, this tyrant, rather, making yourself worthy to share the same fate as your brothers, meet death heroically so that, together with them, you be with me in Heaven by the divine mercy in which we hope." His mother had not yet finished speaking when in a loud voice the child said to the executioners: "What are you waiting for? I will not obey the command of the king but the precepts of the Lord God given to us through Moses. But you, O Antiochus, who are the author of the many evils that befall my people, understand that you shall not escape the avenging hand of God if you continue acting impiously. O wicked and abominable king! Do not flatter yourself uselessly with vain hopes, inflamed with anger against the servants of God, because you have not yet escaped the justice of Almighty God who sees all. For having endured now a fleeting pain, my brothers are already enjoying the Covenant of Eternal Life. But you, if you do not repent, by the just judgment of God, shall suffer chastisement proportionate to your pride. As regards myself, like my brothers I make the sacrifice of my body and my life in defence of the Laws of the Lord God of Israel, beseeching Him to be propitious to our people as soon as possible, and to compel you, for the good of your soul, by force of chastisements and tortures, to confess that He is the only God. My death and that of my brothers shall be as a glorious seed for my people." King Antiochus, then, feeling himself belittled by the heroism of a boy, seething with rage, unleashed his fury upon him more cruelly than on the other brothers. This seventh son of Machabea also died, then, with complete confidence in the Lord God of Hosts, and without contaminating himself by paganism.

9. Machabea, a surpassingly admirable woman and worthy to live in the eternal remembrance of the good, saw her seven sons perish within a short space of time, enduring it with constant resolve through the hope she had in God. While they were undergoing martyrdom, with manly fortitude and womanly tenderness she courageously exhorted each of them, saying: "The selfsame God Creator of the Universe, Who gave you soul and life when you were conceived in my womb, through His mercy shall give you everlasting life, because for love of His holy laws you die without regard for your own selves." Finally Machabea also died, amid the cruelest tortures.

#### Chapter VII

##### Caudillo Mathathias's wars against Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

##### Caudillo Mathathias reconquers a great part of the provinces of Israel's territory

1. At the same time as Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Mathathias toured Israelite territory preaching the Holy Crusade, he waged great battles against Antiochus IV Epiphanes' armies; he defeated them on many occasions, won back for Israel's territory many of the provinces dismembered in times past, and considerably reduced the king's power in the territory. Mathathias, in his concern to re-establish divine worship in many urban synagogues, and implant in them the Law of God and holy customs, then utterly disregarded, battled with ardent enthusiasm and military heroism, hardly ever laying aside his sword. Mathathias also counted on the help of the convert Heliodorus, who fought valiantly in defence of the cause of the Lord God of Hosts, until dying heroically in one of the battles against the Syrians.

2. During the first five years of his caudilloship, Mathathias Machabee recovered for the People of God the following towns and territories subject to Antiochus IV Epiphanes: first he reconquered the towns of the region of Judah, with the exception of Jerusalem and the other impregnable cities that were already under the rule of Israel's caudillo; he then reconquered the towns of Nazareth, Sefhoris, Capharnaum and others of the region of Samaria, with the exception of the impregnable city of Bethulia or Megiddo which was already under the control of Israel's caudillo, and with the exception of the city of Sichem and others that continued under Syrian domination. Caudillo Mathathias assigned these reconquered towns in the regions of Judah and Samaria to the custody and vigilance of his son John Machabee. Following these reconquests, Caudillo Mathathias reconquered the territories of Idumea, the Sinai Peninsula and Philistea, assigning them to the custody and vigilance of Judas Machabee.

3. In all the reconquered towns and territories, Mathathias Machabee banished all traces of idolatry, demolishing its temples together with their altars and idols, among which were those dedicated to the idol Zoroaster. Among the idolatrous temples Mathathias demolished, was that of the idol Dagon in the Philistine town of Azotus, which was wholly consumed by the flames. Mathathias, moreover, banished the multiple depravities existent in the reconquered territories, exterminating those obstinate in impiety, expelling others, and demanding of those who remained the observance of the Holy Law of God and His holy morals, under pain of death.

#### Chapter VIII

##### Caudillo Mathathias energetically combats the essenian schism and the pharisee and sadducee sects.

##### Clandestine proliferation of the schism and of the two sects

As stated above, in the year 5036, last of Michael VIII's caudilloship, in the town of South Carmel near the Dead Sea, a schism of many essenes occurred, and in the town of Mapha to the north of Jerusalem the pharisee and sadducee sects arose. Caudillo Mathathias, however, having subsequently reconquered those two towns, in them vigorously

combated the schism and the two sects; since while he exhorted their followers to conversion, he also threatened with death those who remained obstinate in error. The great majority of the schismatics and sectarians succeeded in fleeing, dispersing among the different towns of the territory of Israel, where they continued, furtively and hypocritically, to propagate their schism and heresy. Others sincerely retracted their errors and returned to upright ways; there were also those who converted falsely to avoid having to leave their possessions and homeland. A fair proportion of those who had dispersed throughout the territory of Israel later took refuge in the schismatic city of Sichem, a powerful bastion and second court of the Syrian kings in the region of Samaria, as also pseudo holy city and see of the levitical anti-high priest. Nonetheless, Caudillo Mathathias was obliged to use the exterminating sword on quite a few followers of the schism and of the sects, who challenged him including with weapons. The followers of the essenian schism and of the pharisee and sadducee sects, far from becoming extinguished, proliferated over the years, despite the rigorous vigilance of Caudillo Mathathias and the other Caudillos who succeeded him, with the exception of the last of them, Aristobulus Asmoneus, who favoured those errors. Thus the schismatic essenes were numerous in the times of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the members of the pharisee and the sadducee sects were not only numerous, but even came to occupy high posts in the Jewish church.

#### Chapter IX

##### Caudillo Mathathias reconquers the lands of Moab and Ammon

During the years 5042 and 5043, Caudillo Mathathias reconquered the lands of Moab and Ammon, also under the dominion of Antiochus IV Epiphanes as tributaries; they, though offering great resistance to Mathathias's armies, were nevertheless subjected by the sword of this invincible caudillo, since the Lord God of Hosts fought at his side, in order that zeal for God's holy cause might prevail over impiety. Mathathias, after banishing from those reconquered lands all that contravened the Holy Law of God and holy morals, entrusted their custody and vigilance to his son Jonathas Machabee.

#### Chapter X

##### Mathathias Machabee reconquers the territory of Lebanon. Death of Antiochus IV Epiphanes

1. In the year 5050, Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Mathathias Machabee, with a numerous army, embarked on the reconquest of Lebanon, still in the clutches of the Phoenicians of Carthage, though under the dominion of King Antiochus IV as tributaries.

2. While the great battle raged between the Israelite army under the command of Mathathias, and the Syrian army under the command of one of its generals, King Antiochus IV Epiphanes, with a large military guard, toured the northern region of Syria. However, aware that in the Persian city of Elimaida or Persepolis, which was outside his jurisdiction, there stood a temple dedicated to the idol Venus containing great wealth in silver and gold deposited there by Alexander I the Great, he launched a surprise attack to ransack it. Notwithstanding, he was unable to achieve his purpose, since the inhabitants came out to give him battle, so that, much to his regret, he was compelled to flee, returning to his court in Antioch. No sooner had he arrived when he learned that the Syrian army had been destroyed by Mathathias's army in the Lebanon region, which was now under the dominion of the great Machabee Caudillo.

3. The news of the reconquest of Lebanon by Mathathias, and the destruction of the temples with their altars and idols, caused such shock and agitation in King Antiochus IV, that he abruptly set off with his army in an endeavour to recover the lost territory, and later go up to Jerusalem, swearing that he would turn the city into the tomb of all its inhabitants. But shortly after beginning the march he was struck with a terrible wound by the Hand of the Lord God of Hosts, so that he had to return in haste to Antioch, where he was forced to keep to his bed, plunged into the most desperate melancholy. For he was unable to sleep, and his heart was despondent and oppressed by deep remorse. He himself exclaimed to his courtiers in a fury of despair: "To what terrible affliction am I reduced, and in what an abyss of misery do I find myself! I, who before was so happy enjoying my royal dignity, the immense wealth I possessed and all the pleasures that I had within my reach! But now, the implacable worm of remorse gnaws at my soul and devours my whole being. I find myself alone, abandoned, and plunged into a chaos of gloomy darkness." Antiochus IV, however, did not at any moment show repentance for his crimes and impiety. On the contrary, he became yet further hardened in his hatred of the Lord God of Israel and His Holy Law. King Antiochus IV Epiphanes, figure of Antichrist, died in that year 5050, amid terrible suffering and convulsions, feeling his body slowly decompose, till his innards had all issued forth. At his death, he was succeeded on the throne of Syria by his son Antiochus V Eupator, who followed the same perverse ways as his father. Caudillo Mathathias entrusted the vigilance and custody of the territory of Lebanon as well to his son John Machabee.

#### Chapter XI

##### King Antiochus V Eupator besieges the city of Jerusalem and is overthrown by Caudillo Mathathias Machabee

1. In the year 5053, while the Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Mathathias was travelling around the territories of Idumea and the Sinai Peninsula, reconquered by him years previously, King Antiochus V Eupator of Syria, who was ambitious to subject the city of Jerusalem to his crown, saw his opportunity to besiege it with a numerous army. The strategy planned by Antiochus V was to carry out his designs for conquering the Holy City very speedily, with the object of seizing it before Mathathias could intervene in the conflict with his army. As the Syrian king was aware that Jerusalem was strongly fortified, and guarded and defended by a large number of valiant soldiers under the command of Eleazar Machabee, Levitical Vice-High Priest and Governor of the city, he assembled a vast army, well trained and armed, so that, according to his surmise, the siege of the city would be unendurable for the Jerusalem troops.

2. Antiochus V left the city of Sichem with his army, to catch those in Jerusalem unawares by night, although the latter city was always very well guarded by the Israelite army quartered there. Antiochus surrounded Jerusalem with

such skill that his victory seemed assured, but he found the city to be very well defended. The Lord God of Hosts, who kept watch ceaselessly for the safety of His faithful people, and most especially for that of Jerusalem, communicated to Caudillo Mathathias the imminent danger to His Holy City and His Sacred Temple.

3. On the third day of the Jerusalem siege, when it had become well-nigh unendurable to the inhabitants of the city, Caudillo Mathathias arrived and completely surrounded the city, trapping the Syrian army between his troops and the walls. The combat between the two sides was dogged and bloody, but the impetus of the soldiers of the People of God, under the command of Mathathias, prevailed over the fury of the enemy army, perceptibly reduced in numbers; though King Antiochus V, before the battle ended, succeeded in escaping with a group of soldiers, and was therefore not brought to bay. After this crushing defeat, the Syrian king never again dared to undertake the conquest of Jerusalem during the caudilloship of Mathathias.

### Chapter XII

#### Death of the Prophet, Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Mathathias Machabee

1. In the year 5076, when the Prophet, Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Mathathias perceived that the day of his death was drawing nigh, being in the city of Jerusalem, he gathered there, among other relatives, his five sons, and spoke to them in this manner: *"It is the desire of the Lord God of Hosts that after my death my son Judas Machabee, a forceful and valiant man from his youth, occupy the posts of Levitical High Priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel. He shall be the one, then, who shall rule his people, guiding and leading them out in war. It is also the will of the Lord God of Hosts that, following the death of my son Judas Machabee, the posts of Levitical High Priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel pass successively to his other brothers, from the eldest to the youngest."*

2. *"O my children, you are living an epoch in which the enemies of God stubbornly endeavour to impose paganism on our people. For that reason, with all your strength you must ensure to be ever more zealous for the Holy Law of the Lord God of Hosts, always ready to give your lives in defence of the Covenant of our fathers. Bear very much in mind the example of constancy in virtue our forefathers left us, and you will acquire great glory and an everlasting name in God's eyes. Remember the example of our forefathers: Our Father Abraham, for being faithful under trial, was reputed as righteous; Joseph, by not consenting to sin, was made Lord of Egypt; the priest Eleazar, for his fidelity to Moses, received the Levitical High Priesthood; the priest Phinees, for keeping watch over God's honour, caused the plague that afflicted the People of Israel to cease; Joshua, for fulfilling what God had commanded, was made Caudillo of Israel; Caleb, for giving testimony of the truth before the Israelites, obtained an inheritance in the Promised Land and afterwards the caudilloship; Samuel, for his fidelity to God from infancy, was chosen by Him to be Judge of his people; David, for his piety, patience and heroism, attained the throne of the Kingdom of Israel; Elias, for his burning zeal for the Law of God, was rapt up in a fiery chariot; Ananias, Misael and Azarias, for their Faith in the power of God, were delivered from the power of the flames; Daniel, for his sincerity, innocence and uprightness, was freed from the lions' jaws; and thus consider from generation to generation, and you shall see that none of those who place their hope in God are confounded. Do not be daunted, O my children, by the menacing words of sinful man, as his glory is nothing other than rubbish and worms, since today he is raised aloft, and tomorrow shall be trampled underfoot, because he shall return to dust and his plans shall perish. You then, my children, strive and labour manfully in defence of the Holy Law of Our God and Lord, because for this you shall be eternally glorified. Let all continue to labour for the honour of our God and of our people, so that all observe His commandments. Give to the enemies of the Holy Law their deserts, and be solicitous in keeping the precepts of the Lord."* He forthwith blessed his sons and all the others present.

3. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of December in that year 5076, the Levitical High Priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel Mathathias Machabee died a holy death in Jerusalem at the age of one hundred and four, after forty years of caudilloship. His sons buried him in Modin beside the sepulchre of his fathers, and all Israel wept for him bitterly.

## Book II

### Judas Machabee,

#### Prophet, Levitical High Priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel

### Chapter I

#### Judas Machabee, Prophet, Levitical High Priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel. Reorganization of the territory of Israel

1. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of December in the year 5076, following the death of Mathathias Machabee, his son Judas Machabee, sixty-seven years of age, Levitical priest and Essenian religioso, succeeded him in the Levitical High Priesthood and Caudilloship of the People of Israel, being publicly anointed in Jerusalem by Most Holy Malachias. Judas Machabee received an extensive territory from his father Mathathias, with exceptionally well fortified cities, a numerous well-equipped army, and a people well organized in political, social, and above all in religious matters.

2. Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Judas Machabee, in the first year of his caudilloship, reorganized the government of the extensive territory of Israel: he confirmed his brother Eleazar in the posts of Levitical Vice-High Priest and Governor of the city of Jerusalem; he appointed his brother Jonathas Governor of the town of Hebron and the whole region of Judah, with the exception of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and also placed under his authority the territories of Idumea, the Sinai peninsula and Philistea. He appointed his brother Simon Governor of the town of Bethlehem, and of the lands of Moab and Ammon. He appointed his brother John Governor of the city of Bethulia or Megiddo, and of that part of Samaria under the dominion of Israel's caudillo, and of the territory of Lebanon.

3. The schismatic city of Sichem and others adjoining it remained under the dominion of the Syrian king.

### Chapter II

#### Victory of Judas Machabee over the Syrian army in its attempt to recapture territories from the People of God

In the year 5077, Antiochus V Eupator, king of Syria, sent his general Appolonius at the head of a powerful army to battle against the army of God's People, with conquest in aim. Appolonius left the city of Sichem with his numerous troops, and entered that part of the region of Samaria under the control of Judas Machabee; who when he learnt of this, went out to meet him with his army, defeated and slew the general and left the battlefield strewn with enemy dead, the few survivors taking flight. Judas took possession of the rich spoils left by the defeated Syrian army for benevolent purposes.

### Chapter III

#### Judas Machabee's victory, in defence of Jerusalem, over the Syrian army

1. In the year 5080, Antiochus V Eupator, hearing that Judas Machabee was recruiting more soldiers for his army, ordered his general Seron to reorganize the Syrian army, considerably enlarging it in order to wage a decisive battle against the Israelite army and take vengeance for the disaster suffered previously. Seron said to himself: *"I am going to win a great reputation and glory for myself in all the kingdom, by defeating Judas Machabee and all those who fight with him."* Seron not only recruited soldiers in Syria, but also mercenaries from other countries. And he assembled such considerable reinforcements of impious troops that he deemed certain his vengeance against the children of the People of God, and the conquest of some parts of Israel's territories under the dominion of Judas Machabee.

2. From the city of Sichem, General Seron set out for Jerusalem with his vast army. Caudillo Judas Machabee and his men were to be found encamped on the outskirts of the town of Bethoron, preparing themselves for battle by prayer and fasting. As the Syrian army drew near this town, Judas Machabee, with his large army, although numerically greatly inferior to the enemy army, sallied forth to the encounter. When some generals of the Israelites' army saw the huge Syrian army already closing in on them, they said to Judas Machabee: *"How can we fight against such a great and powerful army, we being so much smaller in number?"* Caudillo Judas said: *"For the Lord God of Hosts it is an easy matter for many to be the prey of few, because when He wishes to grant victory, it makes no difference if there be many or few; since in combat victory does not depend on the multitude of troops, but on the strength that comes from God. In truth the enemy closes in on us with an immense multitude of insolent and proud persons, with the object of annihilating us, of conquering Jerusalem, of profaning and pillaging the Temple of God, and of making their own many other towns of ours. But we, though much smaller in number, will fight heroically for our Holy Law of God, for our people and for our lives. The Lord God of Hosts Himself shall confound His enemies before us. Therefore, fear them not!"* After having uttered these words, to the cry of *"The Lord God of Hosts fights with us!"* the troops of Judas Machabee suddenly hurled themselves on the enemy, overcoming them amid great slaughter. The fleeing survivors were pursued by the Israelite army until they entered Syrian territory, many perishing on the way.

3. By this new victory the name of Judas Machabee caused terror, not only to the Syrians, but also to those of other countries, since everywhere the victories of the Machabee Caudillos were spoken of.

### Chapter IV

#### Judas Machabee's victory over the Syrian army in its attempt to seize the territory of the People of God. Judas Machabee orders prayers to be said for the souls of the departed

1. When Antiochus V Eupator heard of the crushing defeat of his vast army under the command of Seron by the troops of Judas Machabee, he seethed with rage; and with greater eagerness for revenge he ordered a more numerous, more powerful and better equipped army than the previous one to be prepared. To do so, he put the royal treasury at the disposition of his army, to which he gave a year's pay in advance, ordering that it be prepared for anything. Moreover, he recruited soldiers from other countries to fight in his army as mercenaries. At that time Lysias was Supreme Commander of the Syrian army, and in his hands Antiochus V placed the fresh military exploit, by which he planned to conquer the greater part of the regions of Samaria and of Judea. As principal generals of the gigantic Syrian army, Supreme Commander Lysias chose Ptolemy, Nicanor and Gorgias, persons of great prestige in the king's eyes, because of their notable valour and skill in the art of war. General Nicanor, an apostate Levitical priest, had lived a long time in the city of Jerusalem, but afterwards, out of pride and ambition, had betrayed his priesthood and Faith in the true God, and gone over to the service of impious King Antiochus V Eupator.

2. In the year 5085, the Syrian army, exceedingly numerous in foot soldiers and horsemen, powerfully armed and under the orders of Supreme Commander Lysias, and with the help of the three generals, departed from the Syrian city of Damascus intent on the recapture of part of the lost territories, and including the conquest of the city of Jerusalem, hoping to become enriched with the vast treasures of the Temple of God. The Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Judas Machabee, knowing that the enemy forces were nearing his dominions, and of the order given by Antiochus V Eupator to exterminate and put an end to the Israelite people, said to his generals, who were somewhat discouraged: *"Let us take heart, and trusting in the help of the Lord God of Hosts, let us fight in defence of our Holy Religion and our people."* Then Judas Machabee assembled his army on the outskirts of Jerusalem and prepared it for the great battle by assiduous military training, but above all by prayer to the Lord God of Israel imploring His mercy and Grace. Judas Machabee and his principal generals entered the Holy City to pray before the Temple of the Lord God of Israel and to commend to Vice-High Priest Eleazar Machabee that, together with all those unfit for warfare, he should pray constantly for the happy outcome of the new and hazardous campaign they were to wage against the enemy in defence of the Lord God, of His Holy Law and of the entire people. Many of the citizens of Jerusalem fasted, wore hair shirts and covered their heads with ashes, to implore divine help more efficaciously in this way.

3. The Syrian army, under the command of Supreme Commander Lysias, from Damascus headed for the source of the River Jordan; and marching along the eastern bank, crossed the river above Jericho, and made for the Samaritan Machabee, who was then to be found encamped with his army in the approaches to Emmaus, spoke to his generals and troops in this way: "Take up arms and be men of valour, so that tomorrow you may be ready to fight against the numerous army of different countries who have joined up forces against us, to annihilate us and overthrow our Holy Religion. Because it would be preferable for us to die in battle than to see the destruction of our Holy Temple of Jerusalem, of the city and of our people. Fight with Faith and trust in the Lord God of Hosts, the Almighty God of Israel."

4. The following day, Supreme Commander Lysias, his three generals and the whole of his vast Syrian army, headed for the approaches to Emmaus in order to give the decisive battle to the army of the People of God. When Caudillo Judas Machabee saw that the Syrian army was very strong and powerfully armed, he prayed to the Lord God of Hosts thus: "May You be blessed, O God, Saviour of Israel, who shattered the strength of a powerful giant by means of Your servant David. Deliver now, in the same way, the vigorous Syrian army into the power of Your people's army, and let its troops and cavalry be crushed. Instil terror into them, and dissipate their courage and daring, and let them be broken. Overthrow them Yourself, Lord, by the sword of those who love You, so that all who know Your Name may sing hymns to Your praise." Once battle was joined, the army of the People of God wreaked great slaughter on the Syrian army, General Ptolemy perishing as well. As Supreme Commander Lysias saw that his soldiers fled before the invincible onslaught of the Israelite troops, who were determined to die courageously in defence of their ideals, he too took flight with a fair number of surviving soldiers southwards, but was overtaken in the town of Bethsur by the army of Judas Machabee, who, with his sword killed Lysias, cutting off his head to take as a trophy, and exterminated the soldiers accompanying him.

5. The following day Caudillo Judas Machabee, as was his custom, went with his men to the battlefield, to remove the bodies of the soldiers of his army who had died and give them pious burial. It chanced that, inside the tunics of a good number of them, he found gold and silver statues of idols which during the battle they had been taking from the dead pagan enemies. Judas Machabee ordered those who accompanied him to pray most especially for the souls of those soldiers, so that the Lord God might have pity on them. Then he ordered a collection to be made among the citizens of Jerusalem, so that sacrifices be offered in the Temple of God in reparation for the sins of those who had died with such lamentable external signs, in suffrage for their souls and the souls of the other deceased soldiers, so that God might have pity on them and soon free from temporal pain those found in Purgatory. Prayer for the dead was ordered by Judas Machabee in the firm belief the People of God had in the existence of Purgatory, from where souls later left in order to enjoy the bosom of Abraham. Judas Machabee ordered all those gold and silver statues to be collected and immediately melted down, the product later to be used in the service of God's Temple in Jerusalem.

#### Chapter V

##### Judas Machabee's victory over the Syrian army in its fresh attempt to take Jerusalem and destroy its Sacred Temple

1. In the year 5088, while the Syrian King Antiochus V Eupator was residing in the Samaritan city of Sichem, second court of his kingdom, he was instigated by the apostate Menelaus, levitical anti-high priest, to undertake a new military campaign with the object of conquering the city of Jerusalem. What Menelaus hoped was that the Syrian army would destroy the Temple of God in Jerusalem, so that the schismatic Temple dedicated to God in Sichem and governed by the levitical anti-high priest, be the only one of importance in Israel's territory. But, as the king showed himself somewhat reluctant to make war on Jerusalem, considering it a difficult city to conquer, the astute and perverse Menelaus suggested that he form a coalition with kings from other nations, with the object of bringing to a satisfactory conclusion the undertaking he feared so much. Moreover, he assured the king that if he was successful in conquering Jerusalem, he could easily seize the whole of Israel's territory under the dominion of Caudillo Judas Machabee. Antiochus V Eupator consulted his Supreme Commander Nicanor, whom he considered his right-hand-man in government and in affairs of war. Nicanor, the most ambitious of men, who always dreamed of enriching himself with the spoils of his enemies, encouraged the king to carry out this military undertaking.

2. Supreme Commander Nicanor toured Syria's neighbouring countries to obtain from their kings a good number of soldiers, horses, elephants, arms and other powerful war materials. The kings agreed to this in view of Nicanor's promise that the very extensive territory of Israel under the dominion of the Machabee Caudillo, once conquered, would be divided up among all their kingdoms.

3. In the year 5089, King Antiochus V Eupator placed at the disposition of his Supreme Commander Nicanor an army so vast and heavily armed that the mere sound of it passing by struck terror into those who saw it on the march. Besides the Syrian soldiers, its ranks were swelled by valiant soldiers from different countries, wearing superb armour and equipped with powerful weapons. The horses were innumerable and the elephants of extraordinary size. From a human point of view, it seemed quite impossible for the heroic Caudillo Judas Machabee to overcome and defeat the vast Syrian army about to face him, though he possessed a large and valiant army.

4. When Judas Machabee learned, through one of his generals, of the coalition formed by the Syrians with other kingdoms to accomplish the conquest of Jerusalem, and subsequently of the entire territory of Israel under his caudilloship, humanly speaking he was troubled. However, amid this fear, as he ever hoped with sure confidence in God's succour, he urged his men not to fear the encounter with the soldiers from different countries, but rather to call to mind the assistance received at other times from the Lord God of Hosts, and hope that in the face of the present one the Almighty would grant them the victory. Furthermore, Judas Machabee, by his exhortations taken from the Holy Law of God and the Prophets, reminding them of the victories they had previously achieved by divine help, instilled into his army

a new heart full of hope, and in this way inflamed their spirits to fight boldly in defence of the Lord God of Israel, of His Sacred Temple of Jerusalem, of the city and of the whole territory of Israel under the sway of the People of God.

5. While the High Priest and Machabee Caudillo encouraged his soldiers, specially drilled them further for war, and gathered a large quantity of arms, horses and other war materials to face the powerful enemy, Supreme Commander Nicanor, commanding the vast Syrian army, departed from the schismatic city of Sichem towards the Holy City of Jerusalem, encamping a short time afterwards close by, in the neighbourhood of Bethoron.

6. Days before the decisive battle, the Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Judas Machabee encamped with his army on the outskirts of Jerusalem, and before going out to meet the enemy, prayed before the Temple of the Lord God of Hosts, and ordered his brother Eleazar, Levitical Vice-High Priest and Governor of the city, that during the campaign all should pray so that, by divine help, the enemy be exterminated for the greater glory of God and His people. While Judas Machabee prayed before the Temple of Jerusalem he had the following prophetic vision: Onias, who had been Levitical High Priest, appeared to him with his hands uplifted praying for the whole People of Israel. A short while later there appeared another man, venerable for his old age, and surrounded by glory and magnificence. Judas Machabee asked Onias to identify the other ancient who had appeared with him. Onias replied: "This is Jeremias, prophet of God, who, by the great love he has for his brethren of the People of Israel, prays much for them and for the Holy City of Jerusalem." Then Jeremias stretched out his right hand and presented a golden allegoric sword to Judas Machabee, saying to him: "Take this holy sword, a gift from God, with which you shall overthrow the enemies of my People of Israel." At this symbolical gesture of the Prophet Jeremias, Caudillo Judas Machabee felt exceedingly emboldened to face the great military undertaking that awaited him.

7. Following the prophetic vision, Caudillo Judas Machabee left Jerusalem to rejoin his valiant army encamped on the outskirts of the city. To inspire his soldiers and inflame them yet further with zeal for the glory of God, he related the vision he had seen before the Temple of God in Jerusalem. All then, encouraged by these words of Judas Machabee, did not vacillate in attacking and combating the enemy vigorously, so that by the help of God and their own personal efforts, victory be decided in their favour, as the Holy City of Jerusalem and her Sacred Temple were in danger. Truthfully, the soldiers were less worried about their wives, children, brothers and parents than about the holiness of God's Temple, cause of their greatest and chief concern. Likewise, those within the city felt great anxiety for the fate of those entering into combat. But the Levitical Vice-High Priest and Governor of the city Eleazar Machabee, placing his confidence in the Lord God of Hosts, ever victorious in battle, prayed thus: "You, Lord God of Hosts, who need nothing, wished that the Sacred Temple of Your dwelling be among us. Well now, O Saint of Saints and Lord of all, keep forever free from profanation this Temple of Yours in Jerusalem which You ordered to be rebuilt to the glory of Your Name."

8. While the soldiers of the People of God were awaiting the order of their Caudillo to go into battle, they observed the approach of the enemy army. Judas Machabee, considering the multitude of men who were about to fall upon them, the varied array of their arms, the ferocity of their elephants and their numerous horses, raised his hands to Heaven, invoking the Lord God of Hosts, the Almighty, Who works prodigies and grants victory to those who fight for His cause. Judas Machabee invoked God in this way: "You, O Lord God of Hosts, sent your angel at the time of Ezechias, king of Judah, and exterminated the majority of Ninevite soldiers who, under the command of Sennacherib, besieged Jerusalem! Now also, Lord God of Heaven, send Your exterminating Angel so that He go before us and make known the strength of His terrible and tremendous arm, and thus fill with dread those who, blaspheming, come against Your holy people." Meanwhile, Nicanor, Supreme Commander of the Syrian armies, heralded by a loud blast of trumpets and the piercing yells of many of his soldiers, was closing in with his troops. Judas Machabee and those with him, however, invoking the Lord God, prepared to enter into battle.

9. But just then, suddenly, the Angel of the Lord, that is, Most Holy Melchisedech under the figure of Invincible Warrior of God, carrying a flaming sword in His right hand, appeared before the army captained by Judas Machabee. At the presence of the heavenly personage, the troops of the Caudillo of the People of Israel, rejoicing greatly at the presence of God, charged furiously into battle, and while they fought with their hands, they prayed to the Lord with their hearts. The defeat of the Syrian army was crushing, since the flaming sword of Most Holy Melchisedech wreaked on the enemy troops one of the greatest slaughters hitherto known.

10. At the sight of the crushing defeat and the numerous death toll in his army, the Syrian Supreme Commander Nicanor fled with a fair number of his soldiers, but was overtaken by the army of Judas Machabee, who himself with his sword killed Nicanor, cutting off his head to take to Jerusalem. Once the enemy was defeated, Most Holy Melchisedech disappeared. The inhabitants of Jerusalem, amid shouts of delight, and blessing the Lord God of Hosts, received the great Caudillo of Israel and his victorious soldiers. Nicanor's head was affixed to the battlements of Jerusalem's walls as a clear sign of God's assistance.

11. High Priest and Caudillo Judas Machabee ordered that holocausts and other sacrifices be offered in the Temple of Jerusalem in thanksgiving to the Lord God of Hosts.

#### Chapter VI

##### Death of the levitical anti-high priest Menelaus. Death of Antiochus V Eupator

1. That same year 5089, following the defeat of the Syrian army in the vicinity of Jerusalem, in which battle Supreme Commander Nicanor perished, impious King Antiochus V Eupator became enraged with anti-high priest Menelaus, instigator of that belligerent exploit resulting so unfavourably to the Syrians. Menelaus, with refined shrewdness and deceitful artifices, sought to calm Antiochus's anger. But the king, knowing that Menelaus was chiefly to blame for the evils that had befallen, ordered him to be arrested and then taken up a very high tower surrounded by heaps of

burning coals. From there the apostate was hurled down, and his body reduced to ashes. Such was the death that Menelaus, prevaricator against the Holy Law, guilty of manifold crimes and sins against the Lord God of Israel, deserved to die.

2. Months after Menelaus's death, impious King Antiochus V Eupator died, assassinated in Sicheim by his son Demetrius, who by this means succeeded him on the Syrian throne under the name of Demetrius I.

### Chapter VII

#### Other victories of Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Judas Machabee

1. Undefeated Caudillo Judas Machabee fought valorously as well against other enemies besides the Syrians, among them the king of Egypt, who tried several times without success to capture the territories of Idumea and the Sinai Peninsula. Thanks to the fighting impetus of Judas Machabee, the power of the Egyptian kings was considerably weakened.

2. In the year 5100, iniquitous King Demetrius I of Syria sent his generals Bacchides and Alchimus, in command of a great army, with the intention of conquering Mount Carmel and exterminating the religiosos living there. Accordingly, the Syrian troops, crossing the River Jordan to the south below Lake Genesareth, headed for Galilee, and encamping in the neighbourhood of Masalot, took this town, which pertained to the People of God, killing many there. But the Lord God of Hosts alerted His Prophet and Caudillo Judas Machabee to the great danger facing Mount Carmel and the entire northern part of Israel under his dominion.

3. High Priest and Caudillo Judas Machabee, who was with his army on one of the many tours he made of Israel's territory, headed quickly for the encampment of the enemy forces. When Judas Machabee's forces spotted the vast number of Syrian troops, they were filled with great dread and many deserted camp, leaving the army of Judas Machabee weakened and without possibility of reinforcements, as they were tightly hemmed in by the enemy. Yet despite all this, he said to his soldiers: *"Come now, let us go forth against our enemies, since with the help of God we will overthrow them!"* But many of them tried to dissuade him, saying: *"By no means can we do so. Therefore, better reach safety and join the others who have left, and come back to do battle at some more favourable moment."* Judas Machabee said: *"May the Lord deliver us from taking flight before them. If our time has come, let us die valiantly in defence of our people, and not blemish our glory."*

4. Just as he finished speaking, the Syrian army came up to meet him perfectly organized: the horsemen were divided into two groups, the slingers and archers went before the army, and the vanguard was composed of the most valiant soldiers. The Syrian general Bacchides was on the right flank, and the other Syrian general Alchimus on the left. The battalions advanced in crescent formation, at the same time sounding the trumpets. The soldiers of Judas Machabee, encouraged by the mysterious strength given them by the Lord God of Hosts, raised a cry and charged into battle, and as a consequence the earth shook with the clangour of the armies during the combat, from morning until evening. Judas Machabee, seeing that the right flank where Bacchides stood, looked the strongest, took with him the most valiant of his troops and, overcoming it, pursued the forces composing that flank to the vicinity of Mount Thabor. The Syrian soldiers on the left flank, captained by Alchimus, seeing the right flank thrown into disorder, followed Judas Machabee and his soldiers, so that the struggle became more intense, many losing their lives on both sides. But the battle was won, with the help of God, by the troops of Judas Machabee, the few surviving Syrians fleeing towards the east bank of the Jordan. By Judas Machabee's triumph, the town of Masalot was newly reconquered for the People of God.

### Chapter VIII

#### Death of the Prophet, Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Judas Machabee

1. Shortly before his death, the Prophet, Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Judas Machabee gathered together in Jerusalem, among other relatives, his four brothers. He reminded all that after his death, he would be succeeded in the posts of Levitical High Priest and Caudillo of Israel by his brother Jonathas, in conformity with the will of his father, Caudillo Mathathias. After blessing them all, High Priest and Caudillo Judas Machabee died a holy death in the city of Jerusalem, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December in the year 5100, aged ninety-one, after twenty-four years of caudilloship. Judas Machabee's brothers took his body to the town of Modin, and buried him beside the sepulchre of his father Mathathias. All the People of Israel mourned greatly and wept the death of their caudillo, saying: *"The champion who defended the People of Israel has now died!"*

2. The exploits of Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Judas Machabee were so astonishing that, like his father Caudillo Mathathias, his name was held in dread by the enemies of the People of God. Judas Machabee, with the help of his brothers and the powerful army received from his father, fought courageously in defence of Israel's territory. He increased the glory of his people, and, vested in the armour of invincible warrior, brandished his sword with valour. He was like a lion's whelp roaring on the hunt, since he pursued evildoers, seeking them out everywhere and exterminating those who perturbed his people. The fear instilled by his name terrorized and scattered his enemies, and with a strong arm he freed his people from extermination and idolatry. Judas Machabee, like his father, undefeated Caudillo Mathathias, toured the territory of Israel from end to end to ensure faithful observance of the Holy Law of the Lord God of Hosts, exterminate the workers of iniquity and deliver his people from the enemy scourge.

## Book III

### Jonathas Machabee,

#### Prophet, Levitical High Priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel

### Chapter I

#### Jonathas Machabee, Prophet, Levitical High Priest and Caudillo of the People of Israel. Reorganization of Israel's territory

1. The 25<sup>th</sup> of December in the year 5100, following the death of Judas Machabee, he was succeeded to the Levitical High Priesthood and Caudilloship of Israel by his brother, the Levitical priest and Essenian religioso Jonathas Machabee, eighty-eight years old, who was publicly anointed in Jerusalem by Most Holy Malachias. Jonathas Machabee received from his brother Judas an extensive territory, with cities exceptionally well fortified, a numerous and well-equipped army, and a people well organized in political, social, and above all in religious matters.

2. Levitical High Priest and Caudillo Jonathas Machabee, in the first year of his caudilloship, reorganized the government of Israel's extensive territory. He confirmed his brother Eleazar in the posts of Levitical Vice-High Priest and Governor of the city of Jerusalem. He confirmed his brother Simon in the post of Governor of the town of Bethlehem, and of the lands of Moab and Ammon. He confirmed his brother John in the post of Governor of the city of Bethulia or Megiddo, of that part of the region of Samaria under the dominion of the Caudillos of Israel, and of the territory of Lebanon. His forty-year-old nephew John Hyrcanus, son of Simon, he appointed Governor of the city of Hebron, of the entire region of Judah with the exception of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, also placing under his authority the territories of Idumea, the Sinai peninsula and Philistea.

### Chapter II

#### Victory of Jonathas Machabee in defence of Jerusalem

1. In the year 5102, the Syrian King Demetrius I, conceited owing to his power, army and weaponry, desired to carry out the great enterprise of conquering the coveted city of Jerusalem. In a meeting with his Supreme Commander Bacchides and other courtiers, all were of the same mind that the opportune moment had arrived to assault Jerusalem; for they said: *"Jonathas and those with him live at ease and are off guard. Now is the right moment for Bacchides, with a powerful army, to wage war on them."*

2. Supreme Commander Bacchides then set out with a powerful army along the east bank of the Jordan, and encamped at the riverside, building a wooden bridge over the voluminous waters to be used in crossing over to the west bank. From there he sent an army captain in command of a platoon of soldiers with an embassy to the High Priest and Caudillo Jonathas, who was encamped with his army in the valley of Galgala. The contents of the message ran thus: *"Jonathas, do not try to offer me resistance, because I am not in the mood to be an object of your derision and opprobrium. Now then, if you have confidence in your troops, let us measure our forces; however, military advantage in the field lies with me. Inform yourself, otherwise you will find out who I am and who are those accompanying me. It is better that you hand over right now the city of Jerusalem, before my army exterminates yours, takes the city by storm and wreaks great slaughter among her inhabitants. How can you resist the onslaught of my horsemen and army?"* So when Jonathas heard these words, he prayed to the Lord God of Hosts, beseeching His powerful help, with which he was certain to gain victory. Strengthened by prayer, he dismissed Bacchides' messengers with these words: *"Tell your chief that my strength and that of my army reside in the Almighty God of Israel, the invincible God, the Lord God of Hosts who fights with His people in defence of their holy cause."*

3. Bacchides, determined to carry out his enterprise, marched out abruptly with his powerful army to seek Jonathas's troops; and having crossed the River Jordan, the two forces met in the Galgala valley in the Jericho countryside. The great battle took place there, and God assisted His own in such fashion that they inflicted heavy casualties on the Syrian army, whose leader Bacchides perished as well. Many of the survivors took to flight, but Jonathas pursued them tenaciously until finally trapping them on the west bank of the Jordan, they being unable to advance further, as the upsurge of the river was considerable, and the bridge constructed by the Syrian army had been destroyed by the troops of Israel's caudillo to prevent the enemy from fleeing. Many of the Syrian soldiers who tried to swim across the river were swept away by the current. Following the glorious victory, the army of the People of God made ready to collect the enemy spoils; but Jonathas ordered that all who found gold and silver statues of idols were to give them immediately to him, to be melted down and the product used in the service of God's Temple; and that no one dare to keep a single one, as the righteous anger of God would fall on those who did so.

4. High Priest and Caudillo Jonathas, after giving pious burial to the soldiers of his army who had perished in battle, went with the numerous survivors to the city of Jerusalem, where he was received amid jubilant acclamations by the inhabitants, who gave thanks to the Lord God of Israel because He had defended the Holy City and protected the Sacred Temple so zealously. Jonathas ordered special sacrifices to be offered in thanksgiving to God, and also for the repose of the souls of his warriors fallen in combat.

5. Other memorable battles were won by the invincible Caudillo Jonathas against the armies of King Demetrius I of Syria. In one of them he seized from the sway of the Syrian crown, among others, the town of Ramoth of Galaad, and a great part of Arabian territory. Jonathas assigned this reconquered part of Arabia to the custody and vigilance of his brother Simon Machabee.