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Rebel Priests: The *De Facto* High Priesthood of the Early Maccabean Brothers

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Degree to be awarded: Master of Theological Studies

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An abstract of  
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## Abstract

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When the Maccabees successfully revolted, retook Jerusalem, and re-consecrated the Temple in 164 BCE, they effectively swept into the highest escalons of Judean political power. During the following decade of historical volatility, there is considerable mystery around who precisely held the high priestly office. This thesis argues that the Hasmonean rise to religious power began with their rise to political power. Judas likely served as a rival high priest from 164-160 BCE, while his younger brother Jonathan may very well have served as the *de facto* high priest during the subsequent *intersacerdotium*, the seven-year-vacancy in the high priesthood between 159 and 152 BCE. This paper investigates the textual, chronological, and political evidence for Judas' high priesthood in light of a reexamination of the evidence in Josephus' *Antiquities* 12. In light of this investigation, Judas arguably served in a cultic capacity through the rededication of the Temple in 164 BCE, after Menelaus' death, during Alcimus' time in office, and after Judas' victory over Nicanor. Likewise, a careful analysis of the major contenders for the *intersacerdotium* high priest reveals that Jonathan Maccabeus is the most likely candidate for the *de facto* high priest. Neither the Teacher of Righteousness nor Onias are as viable in light of Qumran material and new archeological and historical evidence. Thus, although the Hasmoneans did not officially attain the high priesthood until 152 BCE, their functional occupation of the office as deputy or *de facto* high priests is feasible as early as 164 BCE.

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## *1. Introduction*

The shadow of the Hasmonean family falls over a century of Jewish history. Their descendants became royal priests, fully integrating the political and religious spheres of power.<sup>1</sup> Yet, while the Maccabean rebellion is clearly the moment this family burst onto the Jewish political scene, their coup of religious power, specifically the high priesthood, is less delimited. The conventional date for the Hasmonean acquisition of high priestly power is 152 BCE, with Jonathan Maccabeus' investiture as high priest by a Seleucid monarch. The Hasmonean claim to this ultimate seat of Judean power lasted until 37 BCE. However, a few scholars have suggested that Judas, not his brother Jonathan, was the first Hasmonean to take up the high priestly mantle.<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, the only explicit textual evidence of Judas' office is several debated references in Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* and determining the validity of this conjecture is problematic. Likewise, there is a paucity of evidence for the identity of the person who occupied the high priestly office during the intersacerdotium, or the seven years between Judas' death and Jonathan's official appointment as high priest. However, the role of *de facto* high priest—someone who functions as high priest regardless of a lack of official appointment and/or the existence of another high priest—offers a viable solution to both mysteries.

In light of the conflict between the Hasmonean party and the current Temple leadership, as well as Hasmonean political and religious aspirations, a pre-152 BCE

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<sup>1</sup> Alice Hunt, *Missing Priests: The Zadokites in Tradition and History*. Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies; 452 (New York: T & T Clark, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Sara R. Mandell, "Rome, Syria and the Jerusalem High Priest: The International Bases of the High Priest's Rule of the Jerusalem City-State (175-63 BCE)," in *Jerusalem in Ancient History and Tradition* (ed. Thompson and Jayyusi), JSOTSup 381 (2003): 85-90; Daniel R. Schwartz, *2 Maccabees*. (Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature. New York: Water De Gruyter, 2008), 474-475.

seizure of the high priestly office would be unsurprising. Moreover, if the developments in the high priesthood are coupled with key windows of Hasmonean Temple control, it is unlikely that the Hasmoneans passively accepted the high priesthood of a Seleucid sympathizer or opponent to their political agenda. Thus, this study is in essence a reevaluation of the political, chronological, and textual evidence for Hasmonean occupation of the high priesthood before 152 BCE, asserting the viability of their *de facto* usurpation of office before Jonathan's official investiture. It will proceed in two major parts: first, assessing Josephus' claim that Judas was high priest in light of other primary texts and historical evidence; second, positing Jonathan as a probable candidate for *de facto* high priest during the intersacerdotium in light of the precedent set by Judas and a reconsideration of key sources. The likelihood that Judas' served as *de facto* high priesthood from 164-160 BCE not only reconciles Josephus with the historical evidence, it also creates a precedent that makes credible Jonathan's candidacy for the mystery priest of the intersacerdotium. Thus, a *de facto* high priesthood makes the ascent of the Hasmonean family into the halls of Temple power plausible as early as 164 BCE.

### *1.1 The Primary Sources*

Our main sources concerning the high priesthood during the early Hasmonean period are Flavius Josephus, 1 and 2 Maccabees, and a scattering of possible references in Qumran literature. Of course, the 'history' in these sources has to be treated with care and awareness that its authors saw the past through lens much different from those of a modern historian.

### 1.1.1 1 Maccabees and its ideology

1 Maccabees is the oldest primary source for this period and it sketches the era between 175 and 134 BCE, from the first year of Antiochus IV Epiphanes' rule to the death of Simon Maccabeus.<sup>3</sup> Based on the author's favorable portrayal of the Romans and his knowledge of the period of John Hyrcanus, 1 Maccabees must have been written before Pompey conquered Judea in 63 BCE and not long before Hyrcanus' death in 104 BCE.<sup>4</sup> Most scholars agree that an author positively connected to the Hasmonean court, possibly the official historian of the Hasmonean dynasty, wrote 1 Maccabees.<sup>5</sup> However, theories about possible sources for the text are speculative at best.<sup>6</sup> Interestingly enough, Josephus heavily relies on 1 Maccabees when he composed his own history of this period.<sup>7</sup> As a Judean source, 1 Maccabees is essentially reliable when it comes to topographical and chronological data.<sup>8</sup> For example, Lawrence Schiffman notes that the author is intimately familiar with the practices of the Seleucid Empire and the events of

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<sup>3</sup> Maria Brutti, *The Development of the High Priesthood During the Pre-Hasmonean Period: History, Ideology, Theology* (Boston: Brill, 2006), 4.

<sup>4</sup> Lawrence Schiffman, "1 Maccabees," in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture* vol 3 (ed. Louis H. Feldman, James L. Kugel, and Lawrence H. Schiffman; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2013), 2769.

<sup>5</sup> Traditionally 1 Maccabees is dated after 100 BCE because John Hyrcanus died in 104 BCE. However, the text's hostility toward Gentiles is inconsistent with the historical realities of Hasmonean policy. Because of this, Schwartz suggests an earlier composition date before 130 BCE. See Seth Schwartz, "Israel and the Nations Roundabout: 1 Maccabees and the Hasmonean Expansion" *JJS* 42 (1991): 36, note 32; Brutti, *The Development*, 13; Jonathan A. Goldstein, *1 Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Anchor Bible 41; New York: Doubleday, 1976), 62-89.

<sup>6</sup> According to Jerome's *Prologus Galeatus*, the text was originally written in Hebrew and may have ended in 14:15 (Eusebius, *Hist. Ecc.* 6, 25, 2; Migne, PL 28, col. 602-603). Josephus' *Jewish Antiquates* ignores the last three chapters of 1 Maccabees, which might indicate that the book was not a literary unit (Brutti, *The Development*, 4-10).

<sup>7</sup> Schiffman, "1 Maccabees," 2770.

<sup>8</sup> Bezalel Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabaeus: The Jewish Struggle against the Seleucids*, (New York: Cambridge, 1989), 151-170; Michael Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew: On Josephus and the Paradigms of Ancient Judaism* (Tubingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 55-57.



the period.<sup>9</sup> However, 1 Maccabees is still a literary composition, one ideologically colored by the author's pro-Hasmonean bias.<sup>10</sup>

The ideology of 1 Maccabees, as noted, is distinctly pro-Hasmonean. The Hasmoneans are portrayed as the pious leaders, fighting against the impious, corrupted Temple cult and Seleucid system. The main ideological thrust of the text centers on the conflict between those who adhere to the law and those who have betrayed it. In his rallying cry at Modin—the moment of inception for the Maccabean rebellion—Mattathias declares: “Whosoever is zealous of the law, and maintains the covenant, let him follow me” (1Macc 2:27). His sons take up his holy war, fighting for the law and Temple. The author highlights the piety and worthiness of this family as “that family of men to whom it had been granted to be agents of Israel’s deliverance” (1 Macc 5:62). Judas, in particular, is the impetus for religious and cultic cleansing. He strikes down those who are lawless among the nations and those among his own people who have turned to Hellenism (1 Macc 3:5-6; 7:5; 9:23; 11:21). In fact, according to 1 Maccabees’ portrait, Judas Maccabeus is the ultimate military leader, the savior of Israel (1 Macc 9:21).<sup>11</sup> Significantly for this project, the Temple and its cult also play a significant role in the theology and focus of 1 Maccabees.<sup>12</sup> József Zsengellér offers a helpful summary of 1 Maccabees and its Temple polemic:

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<sup>9</sup> Schiffman, “1 Maccabees,” 2770.

<sup>10</sup> See Vasile Babota, *The Institution of the Hasmonean High Priesthood* (JSJSup 165; Boston: Brill, 2014), 13-15.

<sup>11</sup> Joan Annandale-Potgieter, “The High Priests in 1 Maccabees and in the Writing of Josephus,” in *the 7th Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Leuven 1989.*, 393-429, (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 408.

<sup>12</sup> Michael Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew: On Josephus and the Paradigms of Ancient Judaism* (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 55-57; 197-201.

...the purification, rededication and preservation of the temple as an institution in an intact form are the main theological issues of the book... 1 Maccabees has a monotemplistic overtone, declaring the temple of Jerusalem the sole legitimate temple of the Jews...<sup>13</sup>

Zsengellér notes that such a polemic reinforces the book's pro-Hasmonean slant, since as the restorers of the true Temple cult, Judas and his brothers prove the legitimacy of their dynasty and the new high priesthood.<sup>14</sup>

If Judas and Jonathan served as *de facto* high priests, 1 Maccabees' silence on the subject is unsurprising. The author of 1 Maccabees is working from a monarchic paradigm. In other words, the Maccabean brothers and their descendents are portrayed as "sacral kings" and their identity as "ruling priests" is subordinated.<sup>15</sup> Besides showing a marked disinterest in the details of their cultic role, 1 Maccabees also demonstrates noticeable pro-Simon bias.<sup>16</sup> Unlike his brothers, Judas and Jonathan, Simon managed to pass on the office of both high priest and ruler to his descendents, founding a hereditary dynasty (1 Macc 13-16). It is little wonder that the priestly accomplishments of his two brothers were eclipsed by the deeds of Simon.

### *1.1.2 2 Maccabees and its ideology*

2 Maccabees covers the period from 175 to about 161 BCE, paralleling the time period and events reported in 1 Maccabees 1:10-7:50.<sup>17</sup> The first two chapters of the book are letters written by those in Jerusalem and inviting diaspora Jews to celebrate Hanukah

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<sup>13</sup> József Zsengellér, "Maccabees and Temple Propaganda," in *The Book of the Maccabees History, Theology, Ideology: Papers of the Second International Conference on the Deuterocanonical Books, Papa, Hungary, 9-11 June, 2005* (ed. Géza G. Xeravits and József Zsengellér; Brill: Leiden, 2007), 194.

<sup>14</sup> Zsengellér, "Maccabees and Temple Propaganda," 194-5.

<sup>15</sup> Rook, *Zadok's Heirs*, 289.

<sup>16</sup> Babota, *The Institution*, 13-15.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

(1 Macc 1-2). These chapters also include a preface written by an abridger who claims Jason of Cyrene as a source.<sup>18</sup> This is why many believe that 2 Maccabees is actually an abridged version of a lost five-volume account of the events written by Jason of Cyrene (2 Macc 2:23). The text has a pro-Judas slant, and its author had superior information on Seleucid hierarchy and figures.<sup>19</sup> While the compositional process was complex, the epitome was probably written between 125-63 BCE.<sup>20</sup> The text focuses on the history of Judea under Antiochus IV (2 Macc 2:19-20); however, it tends to have a more theological coloring and may—in its final form—be a critique of the Hasmonean high priesthood.<sup>21</sup> Here, too, Judas is presented as a sort of pseudo-messianic figure, set apart from both the later Hasmonean dynasty and ‘corrupted’ high priestly institution.

One of 2 Maccabees’ most striking theological themes is its focus on martyrdom. 2 Maccabees sees the oppression of Antiochus IV as a Divine punishment for sin, and the blood of the faithful martyrs as propitiation for that sin.<sup>22</sup> In the iconic story of the seven martyred brothers, the youngest refused to betray the law and offered this speech:

But I, as my brethren, offer up my body and life for the laws of our fathers, beseeching God that he would speedily be merciful unto our nation; and that thou by torments and plagues mayest confess, that he alone is God; And that in me and my brethren the wrath of the Almighty, which is justly brought upon our nation, may cease”(2 Macc 7:37-38).

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<sup>18</sup> Daniel Schwartz, “2 Maccabees” in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture* vol 3 (ed. Louis H. Feldman, James L. Kugel, and Lawrence H. Schiffman; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2013), 2832.

<sup>19</sup> Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabaeus*, 171.

<sup>20</sup> Babota, *The Institution*, 18. See also Harold W. Attridge, “Historiography,” in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran, Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (ed. Michael E. Stone; vol. 2 of *The Literature of the Jewish People in the Period of the Second Temple and the Talmud*, ed. Michael E. Stone; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 177.

<sup>21</sup> Babota, *The Institution*, 19. Judas is portrayed even more piously than he is in 1 Maccabees, and his family is of little concern to the author.

<sup>22</sup> Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 56.

As a product of a diaspora setting, 2 Maccabees is not particularly interested in sacrifices or cultic vessels.<sup>23</sup> This less-than-positive stance on the Temple was not commonly held until recently, when scholars like Daniel Schwartz pointed it out passages like 2 Maccabees 5:18-20:<sup>24</sup>

For had they not been formerly wrapped in many sins, this man, as soon as he had come, had forthwith been scourged, and put back from his presumption, as Heliodorus was, whom Seleucus the king sent to view the treasury. Nevertheless God did not choose the people for the place's sake, but the place for the people's sake. And therefore the place itself, that was partaker with them of the adversity that happened to the nation, did afterward communicate in the benefits sent from the Lord: and as it was forsaken in the wrath of the Almighty, so again, the great Lord being reconciled, it was set up with all glory" (2 Macc 5:18-20).

Thus, the author of 2 Maccabees emphasizes the holy people, not the holy Temple, which is unsurprising since most diaspora Jews rarely participated in the Temple cult.<sup>25</sup> This emphasis is made apparent when comparing stories retold differently in the two books. For example, both 1 and 2 Maccabees' retell of Judas' campaign in Jerusalem, but only 1 Maccabees notes that Judas and his men take a break to offer sacrifices at the Temple (1 Macc. 5:54; 2 Macc. 12:31-32). 2 Maccabees' concern for the Temple cult is subordinate to its concern for God's Divine action and the pious actions of his people, their prayers and willingness to die for the sake of their piety.<sup>26</sup>

### *1.1.3 Josephus*

Flavius Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* is the main source for a reconstruction of the Second Commonwealth and it is a particularly relevant historiographic source for the

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<sup>23</sup> Babota, *The Institution*, 19.

<sup>24</sup> Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 57.

<sup>25</sup> Schwartz, *2 Maccabees*, 45-48.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 45-49.

study of the high priesthood.<sup>27</sup> Composed around 93/94 CE, it is modeled on the Greek historiography like the antiquarian histories of Dionysius of Halicarnassus.<sup>28</sup> Like Dionysius, as a historian, Josephus sought to dispel Roman ignorance about the history and institutions of a particular people. His work provided the Greek-speaking world with information about Jewish history as well as religious and moral instruction.<sup>29</sup> When Josephus composed his earlier work, *Jewish Wars*, the Temple, its cult, and priesthood was still the focal point of his religious identity. However, by the time he wrote *Antiquities*, his theological outlook had shifted to that of a Diaspora Jew, trying to make sense of Judaism without the Temple at its heart.<sup>30</sup> As Michael Tuval argues, in *Antiquities* Josephus' emphasis has shifted from Temple to Torah.<sup>31</sup> In *Antiquities'* history of the early Hasmonean era, Josephus relies on 1 Maccabees as a primary source, and there is no evidence that he was familiar with the text of 2 Maccabees.<sup>32</sup> *Antiquities* is valuable in this study because of its intriguing references to Judas' role as high priest. However, scholarship—and ironically Josephus himself—fluctuates on precisely how Judas is connected to the Temple cult and its highest office.

## *2. Josephus and the succession of Judas*

While Josephus' references certainly sparked scholarly investigation into Judas' high priesthood, his conflicting testimony is problematic. In *Antiquities* book 12, Josephus eulogizes Judas as high priest saying:

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<sup>27</sup> Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 148.

<sup>28</sup> Attridge, "Josephus and His Work," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period*, 210.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.

<sup>30</sup> Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 150.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabaeus*, 189-190.

And when his character was so excellent [while he was alive], he left behind him a glorious reputation and memorial, by gaining freedom for his nation, and delivering them from slavery under the Macedonians. And when he had retained the high priesthood three years, he died (*Ant.* 12.434).<sup>33</sup>

Josephus later says that when Jonathan, Judas' brother, became high priest in 152 BCE, the high priestly office had been vacant for four years since Judas' death (*Ant.* 13.46). In his description of the treaty between Rome and Judea, Josephus mentions again that Judas was high priest.<sup>34</sup> Unfortunately, Josephus is not consistent. In his list of the high priests in *Antiquities* 20, he says that Alcimus held the office three years, and, after he died, there was a seven-year gap before Jonathan's appointment (*Ant.* 20.237-238). Josephus makes no mention of Judas. Finally, in his autobiography Josephus names Jonathan as the first Hasmonean high priest, not Judas (*Life*, 4).

Many scholars argue that these references to Judas' high priesthood are untrustworthy and that the list in *Antiquities* 20, which omits Judas' rule, is dependable.<sup>35</sup> Additionally, the chronology of 1 Maccabees makes Judas' succession to Alcimus impossible. According to 1 Maccabees 9, Alcimus died in 159 BCE and Judas died in the spring of 160 BCE (9:54-58).<sup>36</sup> Alcimus' death was followed by the intersacerdotium, which lasted seven years, ending only when Jonathan was officially appointed to the high priesthood in 152 BCE (10:18-21).<sup>37</sup> Moreover, 1 Maccabees makes no mention of Judas

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<sup>33</sup> *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged* (trans. William Whiston; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1987). Subsequent Greek text is based on the 1890 Niese edition and English on 1828 Whiston English Translation.

<sup>34</sup> "This decree was written by Eupolemus, the son of John, and by Jason, the son of Eleazar, when Judas was high priest of the nation [ἐπ' ἀρχιερέως μὲν τοῦ ἔθνους Ἰουδα], and Simon his brother was general of the army. And this was the first league that the Romans made with the Jews, and was managed after this manner" (*Ant.* 12.419). Josephus is following the account in 1 Maccabees 8, however, the addition of Judas' epithet as high priest is Josephus' addition to the text.

<sup>35</sup> Brutti, *The Development*, 99-100.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 99; Babota, *The Institution*, 104-105; Goldstein, *I Maccabees*, 372, note 3.

<sup>37</sup> James C. VanderKam, *From Joshua to Caiaphas: High Priests After the Exile* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 244.

as high priest, and in light of the book's pro-Hasmonean bias, the absence seems glaring. Some have suggested that Josephus made an anachronistic assumption. Perhaps Josephus assumed that Judas would have served as high priest like his brothers after him, or perhaps he read into Judas' authority to send emissaries to Rome in 1 Maccabees 8.<sup>38</sup> However, while 1 Maccabees makes no mention of Judas' high priesthood and the date of Judas' death makes his succession to Alcimus impossible, Josephus' repeated references to Judas' high priesthood are intriguing and should not be lightly dismissed.

### 2.1 *Antiquities 12 or 20?*

When Josephus wrote book 12 of *Antiquities* (12.412, 434) he was clearly “under the persistent impression that Judas had been a high priest, despite the fact that the idea lacked explicit support from his primary source at that point, 1 Maccabees.”<sup>39</sup> This in itself is telling. Later, when Josephus wrote book 20 of *Antiquities*, he reversed his earlier claim about Judas' high priesthood (*Ant.* 20.237-8). Many scholars tend to credit his later statement.<sup>40</sup> For example, Goldstein argues that Josephus inferred from 1 Maccabees 8 that Judas was high priest and shifted Alcimus' death to a earlier point in his chronology to account for Judas' time in office. Later, Josephus discovered an additional source [ἀναγραφή] that contradicted his inference (*Ant.* 20.261). Therefore, Josephus corrected

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<sup>38</sup> Some suggest that Josephus assumes that since the ultimate head of state in Judea was the high priest, Judas must have been the high priest. However, this forced Josephus to shift or omit dates from 1 Maccabees in order to make this work. See Brutti, *The Development*, 100; J.A. Potieter, ‘The High Priests in 1 Maccabees and in the Writings of Josephus,’ in C.E. Cox ed., *VII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies*, (Leuven: Atlanta 1991), 413-414. However, this is not a satisfying argument. We have no evidence that 1 Maccabees 8 motivated Josephus to manipulate the dates.

<sup>39</sup> Michael O. Wise, “4Q245 (Psdan‘ar) and the High Priesthood of Judas Maccabaeus” *Dead Sea Discoveries*, 12 no 3 (2005): 353.

<sup>40</sup> Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 220; J. Goldstein, “The Hasmonean Revolt and the Hasmonean Dynasty,” in CHJ 2.312.

his mistake in *Antiquities* 20.<sup>41</sup> However, Daniel Schwartz demonstrates that the historian was already using this ἀναγραφή, source, when he wrote *Antiquities* 12. Obviously, Josephus thought its tradition about Judas erroneous and only later changed his mind for unknown reasons.<sup>42</sup> In light of Schwartz's argument, Michael Wise remarks, "more than mere inference prompted Josephus to call Judas a high priest in the first place."<sup>43</sup> In fact, Josephus' shift in *Antiquities* 20 may have had more to do with theology than history.<sup>44</sup> Perhaps, it draws attention to Josephus' move to reorient Judaism away from cult and towards the law.<sup>45</sup> Besides this, as Schwartz has argued, the absence of Judas' name in *Antiquities* 20 is one of many historical problems inherent in this list of priests, and his name's absence can be explained as a "legitimist opposition" to Judas' high priesthood.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, the suggestion that *Antiquities* 20 decisively closes the argument over Judas' high priesthood is tenuous at best. At the very least, Josephus' conflicting reports signal the complexity of the problem, suggesting that Judas' connection to the high priesthood was shrouded in controversy and mystery even two centuries later.

## 2.2 What about Life?

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<sup>41</sup> Goldstein, *1 Maccabees*, 358.

<sup>42</sup> Daniel Schwartz, "KATA TOUTON TON KAIRON: Josephus' Source on Agrippa II." *Jewish Quarterly Review* 72, no. 4 (1981/82): 241-68, esp. 252-3.

<sup>43</sup> Wise, "4Q245," 354.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Comparisons of *War*, written in the seventies, to *Antiquities*, which was written in the nineties indicates that Josephus stopped thinking about being Jewish in terms of the Temple cult and began thinking about being Jewish in terms of observance of law. See Daniel R. Schwartz, *Reading the First Century: On Reading Josephus and Studying Jewish History of the First Century*, (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament ; 300. Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 161-3. Judas' lack of an official appointment would not sit well with Josephus' new orientation.

<sup>46</sup> Daniel R. Schwartz, *2 Maccabees*. Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature. New York: Water De Gruyter, 2008), 475.



If Josephus's references to Judas' high priesthood in *Antiquities* 12 should not be discarded in favor of *Antiquities* 20, what should be done with Josephus' omission of Judas' high priesthood in *Life* 4? Josephus composed *Life* after *Antiquities*, as a sort of appendix.<sup>47</sup> Unlike *Antiquities*, in *Life* Josephus is markedly reluctant to discuss Jewish infighting, tending to white out such conflict.<sup>48</sup> Additionally, as Michael Tuval and others have noted, Josephus' biographical material should not be trusted. In *Life*, Josephus is trying to present his priestly lineage favorably by highlighting his genealogical connection to Jonathan Maccabeus (*Life* 4), and a legend making Judas rather than Jonathan, the high priest would be undoubtedly counter-productive.<sup>49</sup>

It is entirely possible that while Judas was never royally appointed, he assumed the office despite Alcimus or Menelaus' official appointment. Babota suggests that Josephus believed there could not be two acting high priests simultaneously, which is why he played with the chronology, claiming Judas served as high priest for three years after Alcimus died rather than claiming that he served before 160 BCE (*Ant.* 12.434; cf. 12.413-414).<sup>50</sup> Also, Josephus' ideological shift away from Temple-centeredness and towards Torah-centeredness may explain his trouble with Judas usurping the role of high priest, which did not fit Josephus' concerted effort to rework 1 Maccabees and paint the Hasmoneans as struggling for the law above all else.<sup>51</sup> Josephus' past ideology and current one are at war even within *Antiquities*. Finally, while it is possible that Josephus

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<sup>47</sup> Tuval, *From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 23.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 147

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 274, 287.

<sup>50</sup> Babota, *The Institution*, 112.

<sup>51</sup> Tuval argues that over the two decades that Josephus worked as a historian, his loyalties moved from Temple to Torah, although he still clung to priestly identity and maintained that the "the priests were divinely appointed leaders of the Jewish people who had been entrusted with the preservation, interpretation, and enforcement of the Jewish Law" (*From Jerusalem Priest to Roman Jew*, 194-5, 275-87).

made an anachronistic assumption based on textual inference, this too is still just conjecture.

Consequently, Josephus' testimony that Judas was high priest after Alcimus during the intersacerdotium, while chronologically incorrect, reasonably suggests that Josephus had information involving Judas as a high priestly rival to Alcimus. At the very least, Josephus' references make a period of office ambiguity between 164 and 160 BCE plausible. However, the question remains: would such a situation have been politically, religiously, and chronologically possible?

### *3. The high priest and the Temple cult*

In the pre-Hasmonean period, the high priesthood more or less remained in the hands of the Oniad family. As the ἀρχιερεύς, the high priest had significant political and religious oversight.<sup>52</sup> In fact, under the rule of Hellenistic monarchs, the high priesthood slipped further and further along the spectrum, moving from purely religious to significantly political. Since “the social order of the Judean polity as centered on the temple,” the ultimate power of the polity came to rest in the hands of the office high priest.<sup>53</sup> To be high priest was to hold a political, as well as religious, office; thus, the religious and political fate of the community was as dependent on the high priest as it was on the foreign king.<sup>54</sup> Once Judea became a Seleucid polity, the political nature of the

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<sup>52</sup> Chris Seeman, *Rome and Judea in Transition: Hasmonean Relations with the Roman Republic and the Evolution of the High Priesthood* (American University Studies. Theology and Religion 325; New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2013), 60.

<sup>53</sup> Sylvie Honigman, “King and Temple in 2 Maccabees: the case for continuity,” in *Judah between East and West: The Transition from Persian to Greek Rule (ca. 400-200 BCE): A Conference Held at Tel Aviv University, 17-19 April 2007 Sponsored by the ASG (the Academic Study Group for Israel and the Middle East) and Tel Aviv University* (eds. Lester L. Grabbe and Lipschitz Oded; Library of Second Temple Studies; 75. London; New York: T & T Clark, 2011), 109, 113-4.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

high priestly office shifted appointment to this office to the purview of the overlord of Judea, in this case Antiochus IV.<sup>55</sup>

It is unsurprising that as the high priestly office was Hellenized, other aspects of the priesthood and Temple followed suite. In the event that the high priest was unable to fulfill his cultic functions, or perhaps there was an office vacancy, there was a cultic back up. Hartmut Stegemann and Vasile Babota both argue that in such an eventuality, specifically on festivals like Yom Kippur, a deputy high priest would perform the necessary cultic duties.<sup>56</sup> The role of deputy high priest is a crucial puzzle piece for this thesis project, as it may solve both the mystery of Judas' connection to the office and the baffling absence of an official high priest during the intersacerdotium. Evidence for a "deputy" high priest, a *de facto* position, will be demonstrated during the course of this project, particularly in the historical overview of the pre-Hasmonean and early Hasmonian eras.

During the pre-Hasmonean period, high priests were appointed in one of two ways: by hereditary right or by royal Seleucid determination. There is no record of Judas' appointment to the office by a Seleucid monarch. However, Judas had both the opportunity and motive to assert himself as *de facto* high priest, thus resisting the legitimacy of both Menelaus' and Alcimus' claims to the office.<sup>57</sup> After all, while Judas'

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<sup>55</sup> Sara R. Mandell, "Rome, Syria and the Jerusalem High Priest: The International Bases of the High Priest's Rule of the Jerusalem City-State (175-63 BCE)" in *Jerusalem in Ancient History and Tradition* (Eds Thomas L. Thompson and Slama Kh. Jayyusi; Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplements Series 381/ Copenhagen International Series 13. London: T & Clark International, 2003), 85.

<sup>56</sup> Hartmut Stegemann, *The Library of Qumran, on the Essenes, Qumran, John the Baptist, and Jesus* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Leiden: W.B. Eerdmans ; Brill Academic Publishers, 1998), 148-9; Vasile Babota, *The Institution*, 137.

<sup>57</sup> E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)* (rev. and ed. G. Vermes, F. Millar, and M. Black; 3 vols; Edinburgh: Clark, 1973-1987), 1:170, n. 31.

death in 160 BCE seems to preclude an official appointment as high priest, Josephus' repeated statements to the contrary imply that Judas did serve as high priest in some capacity, despite the lack of an official record.

### 3.1 *The high priesthood in the pre-Hasmonean era*

The position of high priest came firmly under the Seleucid control during decades before the Maccabean revolt, and Jerusalem became a theocracy ruled by the high priest.<sup>58</sup> As a *polis*, the Seleucid monarch had the right to appoint the ruler of Jerusalem, and by extension Judea.<sup>59</sup> Antiochus IV exercised this right, appointing first Jason, then Menelaus to the high priestly office. Both men bought their way into the position and were members of an increasing segment of Jewish society in favor of extreme Hellenistic reforms.<sup>60</sup> Three years after Jason became high priest, Menelaus bribed Antiochus IV and gained the office, despite having no hereditary claim to it (2 Macc 4:25). Despite Menelaus' poor reception in Judea, his loyalty to the Seleucid monarchy ensured royal support for his office.<sup>61</sup> While Jason's appointment was a departure from the traditional mode of selection, he still could claim the hereditary right based on his Oniad lineage; however, Menelaus' appointment was even more radical because he did not possess a Levitical, let alone an Oniad-Zadokite, heritage.<sup>62</sup> Menelaus' time in office is also significant because he appointed his brother, Lysimachus, as "deputy in the high-priesthood [τῆς ἀρχιερωσύνης διάδοχον]" (2 Macc 4:29). This is the first time the office

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<sup>58</sup> Jerusalem was made a city-state in 175 BCE, and together with Judea constituted a *polis*. The *polis* was distinguished by Greek/ Hellenized citizenship and was subject to a king, priest, or military ruler.

<sup>59</sup> Mandell, "Rome, Syria and the Jerusalem High Priest," 80-82.

<sup>60</sup> *Ant.* 12. 240-241; 2 Macc 4:1-17; Brutti, *The Development*, 259-260.

<sup>61</sup> Seeman, *Rome and Judea*, 61-85.

<sup>62</sup> Jason was the brother of the previous legitimate high priest; Schwartz, *2 Maccabees*, 231.

of deputy high priest is officially introduced, although Jason may have been deputy for his brother Onias III before assuming the high priesthood himself.<sup>63</sup> With the appointment of Jason and Menelaus as high priests, the high priesthood shifted more fully into the hands of the Seleucid dynasty. After the deaths of Antiochus IV and his son Antiochus V, Demetrius I became the next Seleucid monarch. Alcimus took this opportunity to seek and gain royal validation for his claim to the high priesthood. Like Menelaus, Alcimus could not claim a Oniad pedigree.<sup>64</sup> The most he could claim was that the office was his “ancestral glory” (14:7); in other words, Alcimus was a descendent of Aaron. This Levitical pedigree, coupled with the approval of Demetrius I, was enough for the more moderate Hasideans.<sup>65</sup> Once again, royal sanction outweighed connection to the previous high priestly dynasty.<sup>66</sup> Although dependent on Seleucid good graces, these high priests had power, possibly even political and military oversight, over the whole Jewish territory.<sup>67</sup> It would have been natural for Judas—as the leader of the opposition against Seleucid political and religious power—to proffer himself as an alternative: a high priest without Seleucid puppet strings.

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<sup>63</sup> VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 204. Antiochus IV also appointed his own deputy, making Andronicus deputy while he put down a revolt in Tarsus and Mallus (2 Macc 4:31).

<sup>64</sup> Rooke, *Zadok's Heirs: The Role and Development of the High Priesthood in Ancient*, (New York: Israel Oxford Press, 2000), 278-279.

<sup>65</sup> Hasideans were a moderate faction who initially joined the Hasmoneans (2 Macc 14:6; 1 Macc 2:42) and later compromised with Alcimus, until he slaughtered 60 of their number (1 Macc 7:12-14).

<sup>66</sup> Josephus' problematic chronology of the high priestly succession before the Hasmoneans indicates that Zadokite lineage was more ideological than historical. Others, like Eleazar and Manasseh, lacked the proper credentials for the office- yet were high priests (Brutti, *The Development*, 307).

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 311.

### 3.2 *The high priesthood and the Hasmoneans*

Despite assertions to the contrary, there is evidence suggesting the Hasmoneans were legitimate claimants to the high priesthood, as descendants of the Zadokite line. According to 1 Maccabees, Mattathias—the father of Judas—was of the family of Joarib (1 Macc 2:1-2; *Ant.* 12.265-66), that is, the Hasmoneans were Levites. However, in 1 Maccabees, Mattathias appeals to Phinehas as their ancestor [Φινεες ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν], which supports their genealogical connection to the Zadokite line, one of the first of the twenty-four priestly groups mentioned in 1 Chronicles (24:7-19; 1 Macc 2:54).<sup>68</sup> VanderKam argues that there is no substantial evidence that 1 Maccabees 2:54 was manipulated, and no evidence that the Qumran community and early Pharisees objected to the Hasmonean high priests due to their lineage.<sup>69</sup> Besides this, Angelia Hunt has convincingly argued that there was not a dynasty, or familial monopoly on the high priesthood, until the rise of the Oniads—a family to which the Hasmoneans did not belong—and that thus Hasmonean rise to the office was not cultically scandalous.<sup>70</sup> Regardless of whether or not the Hasmoneans were Zadokites, the precedent set during the pre-Hasmonean era makes the assumption of the high priestly office by a non-Zadokite, while still difficult, politically viable. At worst, the Hasmoneans had as much a claim to the high priesthood as Alcimus.<sup>71</sup> At best, they were on the correct side of the family tree, lacking only royal approval and the right opportunity to take the office.

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<sup>68</sup> VanderKam argues that these references in 1 Maccabees are legitimate not merely propagandistic. See Alison Schofield and VanderKam, “Were the Hasmoneans Zadokites?” *JBL* 124, no 1 (March, 2005): 75-87. Others, like Goldstein, note that this may be the author’s attempt to demonstrate that Hasmoneans were a branch of the Zadokite line, just like the Oniad line was (Goldstein, *I Maccabees*, 8). However, there is no solid evidence disproving a Zadokite lineage. See also, Rook, *Zadok’s Heirs*, 281-282.

<sup>69</sup> They objected for other reasons. See VanderKam, “Were the Hasmoneans Zadokites?” 86-87.

<sup>70</sup> Hunt, *Missing Priests*, 190.

<sup>71</sup> Goldstein, *II Maccabees*, 75, 486.

The high priests who succeeded Onias III obtained their office by royal appointment, regardless of their genealogical qualifications. This shift in focus from lineage to political maneuvering, accompanied the modification of the high priestly office from a fundamentally religious role to a seat of ultimate, political power in Judea. These changing dynamics not only paved the way for the Hasmonean family to seize the office but also for a continued fusion of the political and religious realms. After all, the Hasmonean family was ideologically opposed to both Hellenistic reform and its representatives. Menelaus and Alcimus' compliance with the Seleucids made them the enemy. As the pinnacle of Judean political and religious power, it would be truly astonishing if the Hasmonean family failed to hinder or even usurp Menelaus and Alcimus' control over the high priestly office.

#### *4. Moments of opportunity: 164-160 BCE*

During the four years before his death, Judas had several opportunities to assert himself as high priest. The two main periods were the rededication of the Temple and the tumultuous period after Antiochus V's death. According to the primary sources, Judas interfered with the high priesthood of both Menelaus and, particularly, Alcimus. In fact, the evidence in 1 and 2 Maccabees strongly suggests a connection between Judas and the Temple.

##### *4.1 The rededication of the Temple*

After Judas wrenched control of the Temple from the Seleucid authorities sometime in 165/164 BCE (1 Macc 4:36-61), he continued to retain control of the

Temple, excepting a brief period under Antiochus V (1 Macc 6:51-54). According to 2 Maccabees, Menelaus was high priest in name only, as the sacrifices had not been offered in the Temple for almost two years (2 Macc 10:3). During the rededication of the Temple (2 Macc 10:1-8), Judas may very well have served as high priest. At the very least, Judas had the religious power to appoint ‘pure’ priests [ἱερεῖς ἀμόμους] to help with the rededication process (1 Macc 4:42). He also had the power to institute a new festival, Hanukkah. According to 1 Maccabees, “Judas and his brethren with the whole congregation of Israel ordained, that the days of the dedication of the altar should be kept in their season from year to year by the space of eight days” (4:59). This inclusion of “his brethren” and “the whole congregation” among those who helped Judas institute this new holiday may be an attempt by the author of 1 Maccabees to minimize the scandal of Judas usurping an obvious high priestly function.<sup>72</sup> For the courtly chronicler, the Hasmonean legend must be untainted by scandal if the text is to achieve its goals of legitimation and propaganda.

As a member of the opposition and as one of the principle reasons for the Temple’s desolation, Menelaus would not have been allowed anywhere near the Temple. It is no wonder he was desperate for Antiochus V—the son of Antiochus IV—to re-install him in the Judean government (2 Macc 13:3).<sup>73</sup> However, Menelaus never got the chance to reclaim his position, and another high priest could not have been appointed until some time after Antiochus IV’s death in 164 BCE (*Ant.* 12.361, 386). At the earliest, Alcimus was appointed high priest in 163 but possibly not until 162 BCE. Therefore, there was

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<sup>72</sup> Mandell, “Rome, Syria and the Jerusalem High Priest,” 87.

<sup>73</sup> Onias IV was in Egypt during this period, and therefore could not have been high priest between Menelaus and Alcimus, and he was already running a rival temple.



little to prevent Judas from functioning as high priest in 164 BCE and onward. After all, Judas had just defeated the Seleucids and gained control over the Temple. Such an occupation of office would have been in keeping with the political aspirations indicated by Judas' later actions.<sup>74</sup> As Benjamin Scholnic notes:

This man who was willing to die in order to fight for political independence, who would not accept the restoration of religious autonomy as sufficient, would not have been concerned with the acceptance of the foreign enemy. In fact, accepting the office of High Priest would have made the very strong statement that he, and not the Seleucides, had authority over the nation.<sup>75</sup>

Menelaus was certainly not the priest at Hanukkah and neither was Alcimus. For this reason, Scholnic concludes that Judas was high priest *de facto* while in control of the restoration and purification of the Temple cult. Menelaus was relegated to high priest *de jure*, unable to exercise the functions of high priest and barred from the Temple. Thus, while Menelaus was high priest in name only, Judas was high priest in all but name.

#### 4.2 Antiochus V Eupator

After his father's death, Antiochus V Eupator continued his attempts to squash the Judean rebellion. After being defeated at Bethsura, Lysias—Eupator's guardian and general—made a treaty with Judas, giving Jerusalem back much of its lost self-governance (2 Macc 11:16-33). Menelaus was sent back to Judea according to this letter, which is intriguing since it confirms that, at least near the end of his tenure, he was not serving a high priest. This peace did not last. Eupator brought yet another force against Judas, besieging the city. However, Phillip's political interference forced Lysias and

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<sup>74</sup> Benjamin Edidin Scholnic, *Alcimus Enemy of the Maccabees* (Studies in Judaism; Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 2005), 138-139.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 139-140.

Eupator to make a hurried peace; Eupator “honored the sanctuary and respected the holy place, received Maccabeus” and made him the “principal governor [στρατηγὸν] from Ptolemais unto the Gerrhenians” before withdrawing (2 Macc 13:23-25).<sup>76</sup> According to Josephus’ account, Eupator granted Judas an *amicitia* (*Ant.* 12.381-382; 1 Macc 6:55-63), suggesting his willingness to accept Judas’ political, if not religious, leadership. After all, during the siege Judas was intriguingly headquartered in the Temple (*Ant.* 12.382) until he accepted Eupator’s terms. When the young monarch left to deal with Phillip, he took Menelaus with him and had him executed for conspiracy against the Jewish people (2 Macc 13:4-8; *Ant.* 12.383-387). Eupator was implicitly sanctioning Judas as at least the functioning high priest by the razing of the citadel wall (1 Macc 6:62) and executing the former high priest in 163-162 BCE (*Ant.* 12.383-86; 2 Macc 13:4).<sup>77</sup> Menelaus’ fate is interesting because Lysias recognized that he “was to blame for all the mischief” (2 Macc 13:4). The author of 2 Maccabees also comments, “For inasmuch as he had committed many sins about the altar, whose fire and ashes were holy, he received his death in ashes” (2 Macc 13:8). Thus, because of the rededication and its cultic entailments, coupled with Menelaus’ anathema status, Judas had ample religious justification to slip on the vestments of the high priest. Additionally, the chronology allows for such a role, particularly in the period between the rededication (164 BCE) and Alcimus’ appointment (163/2 BCE). In fact, before his death, Eupator seems to have been

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<sup>76</sup> Phillip was a political confidant of Antiochus IV and a rival for custody his son Eupator, the young monarch. Phillip’s arrival in Antiochia with a significant force was a threat to Lysias’ power (1 Macc 6:55-57).

<sup>77</sup> Mandell, “Rome, Syria and the Jerusalem High Priest,” 88.

forced by political expedience to temporarily recognize Judas' encroachment of the high priestly office through his peace treaty and subsequent execution of Menelaus.

#### 4.3 Alcimus and Judas

The events recorded in 2 Maccabees 14 offer additional support for Judas' high priesthood. Alcimus burst onto the political scene as a contender for the high priesthood at some point between Menelaus' death and the arrival of Antiochus V's rival, Demetrius I, in Syria. According to 2 Maccabees, Alcimus had previously been high priest [τις προγεγονώς ἀρχιερέυς] before Demetrius I made it official, but 1 Maccabees indicates that Alcimus only "desired" [βουλόμενος ιερατεύειν] to be high priest (1 Macc 7:5). There is no reference in either 1 or 2 Maccabees to Alcimus' appointment to the high priesthood before his embassy to Demetrius I. Josephus, however, confirms that Eupator appointed Alcimus high priest after Menelaus' death (*Ant.* 12.385). Precisely how much time passed between the *amicitia* and Alcimus' appointment is uncertain. After Eupator left Judas effectively, but temporally, in charge of Judea in 163-162 BCE, the young king traveled to his capital to deal with Phillip and sent Menelaus to Beroea to be executed (*Ant.* 12.383-385; 2 Macc 13:1-2). According to 1 Maccabees, Alcimus and others opposing the Hasmonean party had been exiled around this time (1 Macc 7:5-7). When Alcimus heard of Menelaus' death, he may have traveled to the Seleucid capital and presented himself as a viable alternative to the galling, rebel leader who had caused Lysias and Eupator such grief. Unlike Judas, Alcimus was more than willing to continue the long-standing arrangement between the high priestly leadership and the Seleucid

overlords.<sup>78</sup> Regardless, Alcimus was prevented from accessing the Temple—effectively making a joke of his appointment—and was forced to seek Seleucid military muscle. However, by 162/161 BCE, Demetrius I had escaped Rome, going against the Senate’s wishes in his effort to claim Syria and his father’s crown.<sup>79</sup> He was welcomed as the long-absent, legitimate ruler and had his cousin, Antiochus V, put to death. Thus, while Alcimus may or may not have been officially appointed high priest by Antiochus V, political developments coupled with opposition from the Hasmonean forces in Judea, forced Alcimus to seek royal validation and military support from the new Seleucid ruler, Demetrius I (2 Macc 14:3-4). However, because Demetrius I had violated the Senate’s wishes, he was not acknowledged by Rome as the legitimate Seleucid monarch before 160 BCE (Polybius 31.2.1-7; 31.33.1-5). Therefore, Demetrius I had as little legal right to confirm Alcimus to the high priesthood as Judas did to simply self-appoint himself or allow his followers to appoint him as high priest. In fact, this illegality may explain 1 Maccabees’ silence about both Alcimus and Judas as high priests.<sup>80</sup>

According to 2 Maccabees 14:3, Alcimus is referred to as the former high priest, who had “defiled himself willfully in the times of their mingling with the Gentiles” (14:3). For this reason, Alcimus lost access to the Temple. This ‘defilement’ was likely Alcimus’ political and religious capitulation to the earlier decrees of Antiochus IV. Schwartz argues that it was this acquiescence to Seleucid reforms, not the death of Antiochus V, which tarnished Alcimus and later prevented him from fulfilling his

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<sup>78</sup> This is made obvious by Alcimus’ later dialogue with Demetrius I, in which he presents himself as anti-Maccabean, a man Demetrius I could trust (1 Macc 7:5-7).

<sup>79</sup> Apian, *Roman History: Syrian Wars*, 8.46.

<sup>80</sup> Mandell, “Rome, Syria and the Jerusalem High Priest,” 89-90.

position after Menelaus' death.<sup>81</sup> The Hasmoneans' fervent opposition to Seleucid political and religious control would have bled over into opposition of any royally appointed officials, including Alcimus, especially if he was complicit with Menelaus in the forced religious reforms. In effect, Alcimus became the new rallying point for the Hasmoneans. The Temple had been rededicated and Antiochus IV and Menelaus were dead; however, as a Seleucid collaborator, Alcimus was an immediate, new focal point for the resistance.<sup>82</sup> Regardless of any prior appointment to or aspirations for the office, Alcimus was politically and religiously incapacitated, needing royal approval and military backing to reclaim his position (14:3-4) and gain access to the Temple area (2 Macc 14:3).<sup>83</sup>

Alcimus paints Judas and his supporters as Demetrius's enemies, those who are destabilizing Judea. They had forced Alcimus to give up his "ancestral glory," the high priesthood (2 Macc 14:6-7).<sup>84</sup> Despite Alcimus' subsequent appointment to the high priesthood [ἔστησεν αὐτῷ τὴν ἱερωσύνην], Alcimus' position was so insecure he required military force to attain it. Demetrius I was spurred to action and sent several expeditions to Judea, according to 1 and 2 Maccabees.<sup>85</sup> The first expedition was led by Bacchides (1 Macc 7:8-20) and resulted in Alcimus gaining military support but losing additional

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<sup>81</sup> Goldstein argues Jason uses the term to explain why Alcimus is barred from the Temple (Goldstein, *II Maccabees*, 481-483). See Schwartz, *2 Maccabees*, 469. See also Babota, *The Institution*, 91.

<sup>82</sup> Babota, *The Institution*, 95.

<sup>83</sup> Scholnic, *Alcimus Enemy of the Maccabees*, 28-29. Seeman argues that 1 Maccabees' reticence to confirm Alcimus' high priesthood before Demetrius I is in keeping with the book's ideological commitment to the exclusive legitimacy of the Hasmonean claim to the office (*Rome and Judea*, 106 n.123).

<sup>84</sup> 1 Maccabees 7:6 implies Alcimus was forced out of Judea, but doesn't specify Judas as the cause.

<sup>85</sup> Scholnic, *Alcimus Enemy of the Maccabees*, 31.

Jewish support.<sup>86</sup> After “struggling” to retain the high priesthood (7:21-22) and losing effective control over the Temple, Alcimus was forced to appeal for help a second time. Demetrius sent Nicanor with another military force. However, Nicanor’s positive collaboration with Judas did not sit well with Alcimus, and he complained to Demetrius a third time. Finally, according to 1 Macc 9:1, Demetrius sent a fourth expedition headed by both Bacchides and Alcimus after Nicanor’s death, attempting to finally wrench control of the Temple from the Hasmoneans and their supporters.<sup>87</sup> This expedition was a success and resulted in Judas’ death.

2 Maccabees’ account of Alcimus’ second appeal and Demetrius’ response is especially relevant to the discussion of Judas’ high priesthood. This expedition included Nicanor, the newly appointed *strategos* of the Judea (2 Macc 14:11-13).<sup>88</sup> Nicanor was ordered to install Alcimus as high priest (2 Macc 14:13). However, the Hasmoneans were able to come to a diplomatic resolution, and Judas remained in Jerusalem.<sup>89</sup> Alcimus made another appeal to Demetrius I, accusing Nicanor of not having the king’s interests at heart because he had appointed Judas ἀὐτοῦ διάδοχον. The word διάδοχος could be translated as “deputy” or “successor,” and this phrase raises intriguing questions. Did Nicanor appoint Judas as a successor to the high priesthood, Nicanor’s own position as governor, or something else?<sup>90</sup> The governor position seems highly unlikely, as Nicanor

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<sup>86</sup> In this expedition, Bacchides and Alcimus send messages of peace to Judas and his brothers, but they saw through the pretense. However, the Hasideans—initially accepting Alcimus’ promise of peace—were lured into a slaughter. Bacchides executed some of Judas’ supporters before returning to Demetrius, leaving Jerusalem and a military force in Alcimus’ tentative control.

<sup>87</sup> 2 Maccabees omits Bacchides’ expedition in order to focus on the climactic story of Nicanor. See Seeman, *Rome and Judea*, 107; Schwartz, *2 Maccabees*, 475; Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabaeus*, 345, n.91.

<sup>88</sup> Babota, *The Institution*, 96; Scholnic, *Alcimus Enemy of the Maccabees*, 36.

<sup>89</sup> 1 Macc 7:26-30; 2 Macc 14:12-33.

<sup>90</sup> Goldstein argues that deputy refers to Judas’ appointment to Nicanor’s office, but since Nicanor still remained in office this was a deputy position (Goldstein, *II Maccabees*, 472, 490).

could hardly desire to replace himself even if he had the authority to do so; neither, would he give a rebel leader control over Akra, the last Seleucid military holdout in Jerusalem.<sup>91</sup> VanderKam and Schwartz both interpret the position as a replacement of Alcimus as high priest.<sup>92</sup> Even if Judas was not appointed as a replacement to Alcimus *per se*, Brutti and Babota both argue that the phrase should be translated as “deputy high priest.”<sup>93</sup> The role of deputy is the same position to which Menelaus appointed his brother Lysimachus (2 Macc 4:29). As a deputy high priest, Judas would have preformed the functions of high priest when Alcimus was unable to do so, which—according to Alcimus’ complaints—was quite frequently. Additionally, connecting this position to the high priesthood meshes perfectly with the context. Previously, Alcimus did not have access to the Temple and therefore could not serve as high priest (14:3), so Demetrius I gave Nicanor the political authority to guarantee Alcimus’ position (v.13). However, Nicanor saw a better political resolution, and he offered Judas a joint position with Alcimus, giving Judas political and religious power—essentially sanctioning a role Judas had already begun to fill—without actually deposing Alcimus. He named things the way they were; Judas had all the functions of high priest, as well as access to the Temple, while Alcimus retained the official title. Alcimus, however, did not appreciate this resolution. In fact, his strong reaction further cements that this appointment threatened his office as high priest.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Babota, *The Institution*, 98.

<sup>92</sup> VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 242.

<sup>93</sup> Babota, *The Institution*, 100-101; Brutti, *The Development*, 73-74.

<sup>94</sup> There is nothing in text to explain or indicate a need for a deputy governor, but the assumption that διάδοχος refers to the high priesthood “sits easily in the present context.” Schwartz also argues that Alcimus’ charge is true (Schwartz, *2 Maccabees*, 483, 551-552). See also VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 242 (-43).

Interestingly, Alcimus makes no noises about Judas' eligibility to the office, but rather cleverly paints the appointment as a treasonous action on Nicanor's part. The Seleucid monarch ordered Nicanor to arrest Judas, and, realizing the shift in Nicanor's sentiments, Judas went into hiding.<sup>95</sup> After a fruitless search, Nicanor threatened to raze the Temple and erect an altar to Dionysus if the priests did not hand over Judas.<sup>96</sup> This is suggestive because Judas is assumed to be in the Temple or easily accessible by the priests running the Temple. The fact that Alcimus is not mentioned, despite his official appointment by Demetrius I, supports this position. Either he had not returned to Judea after the third appeal—an unlikely scenario—or he still lacks access, or at the very least influence, in the Temple. Judas won the ensuing battle against Nicanor's forces (15:25-27) and re-gained control of Jerusalem (v. 37). He cut off Nicanor's head and hand and hung them from Akra (2 Macc 15:30; 1 Macc 7:47).<sup>97</sup> Judas immediately demonstrates his authority over Temple affairs. He oversaw the institution of a new holiday celebrating his victory (1 Macc 7:49; 2 Macc 15:36) and exerted authority over the priests by stationing them before the altar (15:31). What followed was a brief period of peace—lasting a few weeks or perhaps a month or two—during which the Hasmoneans controlled Jerusalem and the Temple unopposed.<sup>98</sup> During these final days of peace, Judas was the effective leader of Judea.<sup>99</sup> But these days of peace did not last. Alcimus

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<sup>95</sup> 1 Macc 7:29b-30; 2 Macc 14:26-30.

<sup>96</sup> VanderKam notes that just because Nicanor threatened the officiating priests does not mean Judas was necessarily high priest at the time (VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 243). Babota notes that a deputy high priest would also have spent a lot of time on the temple grounds (Babota, *The Institution*, 102). However, we can conclude that at least part of the priesthood was known to be sympathetic to Judas' cause. 1 Macc 7:33-35; 2 Macc 14:31b-33.

<sup>97</sup> Judas apparently had not gained control over Akra.

<sup>98</sup> Babota, *The Institution*, 104-5.

<sup>99</sup> Judas was essentially the "governor of Judea." See John D. Grainger, *Syrian Wars*, Mnemosyne Supplements 320, (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 322.



made one final appeal to Demetrius I, who sent another expedition led by Bacchides in the spring of 160 BCE. During April/May of that spring, Judas died on the battlefield of Elasa. However, Alcimus' victory was short-lived, and he died of a mysterious disease the following year (1 Macc 9:55; *Ant.* 12.413).

Babota argues that Judas could only have served as a rival high priest during the short period of peace following the death of Nicanor. However, Babota offers no evidence to support the claim that the royal forces holed up in Akra prevented Judas' interference with Temple during Alcimus' appointment to office.<sup>100</sup> If this were the case, it does not make sense that three of Alcimus' four appeals to Demetrius I were about loss of access to the Temple. Additionally, Judas also had primary control over Jerusalem and the Temple during the restoration and rededication in 164 BCE, despite Akra's continued possession by opposition. In short, Judas' high priesthood is certainly chronologically possible. It is also ideologically possible, as both Menelaus and Alcimus were Seleucid sympathizers, puppets tied to king and thus in opposition to the aims of the Hasmoneans and their supporters. Additionally, Josephus and particularly 2 Maccabees suggest that Judas took up the duties of the high priest. Both Eupator and Nicanor implicitly acknowledged and/or approved Judas' role as functioning, or 'deputy,' high priest. However, Judas was not content with implicit acceptance. There was another player on the field, one that could offer Judas what the Seleucid monarchs never did: official confirmation.

#### *4.4 Judas' embassy to Rome*

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<sup>100</sup> Babota, *The Institution*, 112-113.

After defeating Nicanor, Judas sent two diplomatic envoys to “make a league of amity and confederacy with them [Rome]” [στῆσαι φιλίαν καὶ συμμαχίαν or a *amicitia et societas*] in 161 BCE.<sup>101</sup> One of the leaders of this expedition to Rome was Eupolemus. This priestly ambassador from the Hakkos family is most likely one and the same with the Jewish historian, Eupolemus.<sup>102</sup> His obvious support of Judas suggests that he was one of the Temple priests who threw his weight on Judas’ side. There is speculation the “Acts of Judah,” thought to be a source for both 1 and 2 Maccabees, was written by Eupolemus.<sup>103</sup> Significantly, both Chris Seeman and Babota argue for the historicity of 1 Maccabees 8 and its embassy to Rome.<sup>104</sup> In fact, Diodorus confirms that an embassy was sent from Judea during a revolt and mentions that a high priest, a ἄρχιερέως, was ruling Judea at the time: “...their forefathers, having revolted from Demetrius, had sent an embassy to the senate and received from them the leadership of the Jews, who were, moreover, to be free and autonomous, their ruler being called High Priest, not King [οὐ βασιλέως χρηματίζοντος ἀλλ’ ἀρχιερέως]” (40.2).<sup>105</sup> According to Justin’s *Epitome*, the Jewish people were the first “of all the eastern people” to have a treaty with Rome (36.3.9).

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<sup>101</sup> 1 Macc 8:17. This tradition of making alliances is confirmed by Livy, (Livy 7.30.5 et al).

<sup>102</sup> Ben Zion Wacholder, *Eupolemus: A Study of Judaeo-Greek Literature* (Hebrew Union College: New York, 1974), 1-9, 259.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 29-32. In fact, the “Acts of Judah” was the source of 1 Maccabees 8.

<sup>104</sup> The letter fits the political situation. Judas needed Rome and Rome had no strong feelings for Demetrius I. Also, 2 Maccabees 4:11 makes a reference to one of the envoys mentioned in 1 Maccabees, and there is evidence that the Jews were the first oriental people that Rome established an *amicitia* with during the time of Demetrius. However, Babota also argues that 1 Maccabees 8 was the basis for Josephus’ assumption that Judas’ was high priest (Babota, *The Institution*, 106-109). See also Seeman, *Rome and Judea*, 121-146.

<sup>105</sup> *Diodorus*, 40. 2 (Walton, LCL).

Sara R. Mandell argues that Judas had the power to send such an envoy because he had assumed the high priesthood at the behest of his people.<sup>106</sup> Josephus confirms this in Antiquities 12:

And when he was dead, the people bestowed the high priesthood on Judas; who, hearing of the power of the Romans, and that they had conquered in war Galatia, and Iberia, and Carthage, and Libya; and that, besides these, they had subdued Greece, and their kings, Perseus, and Philip, and Antiochus the Great also; he resolved to enter into a league of friendship with them (*Ant.* 12:414)

There is an obvious connection here between Judas' appointment to the office of high priest and his subsequent political action. In 196 BCE, Rome had declared itself the patron of all Hellenized people.<sup>107</sup> Because of Jerusalem's earlier constitution as a *polis*, it also fell under Roman patronage.<sup>108</sup> The high priest—as the leader of Judean city-state—was now politically able to formally interact with Rome, despite Judea's status as a Seleucid territory.<sup>109</sup> Judas was the first Judean leader to actually take advantage of this standing patron-client relationship, and he did so brilliantly. Mandell remarks, “Judas had to secure his right of succession as high priest and ruler. It needed to be his by some inalienable means as before, and he was able to secure it by approaching the Seleucid ruler's suzerain—namely, Rome.” Because of the Senate's earlier degree, Rome had the right to help Judas and the Jewish *ethnos*.<sup>110</sup> Through the *amicitia* established between Judea and Rome, Rome both acknowledged Judas' right to represent the Judean *ethnos*

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<sup>106</sup> Mandell, “Rome, Syria and the Jerusalem High Priest,” 91.

<sup>107</sup> Polybius 18.44.2; Livy 33.30.1-2.

<sup>108</sup> See Victor Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, (1st ed; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1959), 90-116, 152-174.

<sup>109</sup> Mandell, “Rome, Syria and the Jerusalem High Priest,” 82.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

and its *polis*, and implicitly confirmed his high priesthood.<sup>111</sup> Rome would not have engaged in diplomatic relations unless it recognized the authority of the other party to speak on behalf of the Judean *ethnos*. Clearly, Judas had this authority.

This alliance between Judas and Rome was consistent with Roman hostility against the Seleucid Empire. Rome had suspended diplomatic relations with the Seleucid government and was determined not to recognize Demetrius I as a legitimate monarch since he had defied Rome, the Seleucid suzerain, by returning to Syria.<sup>112</sup> Rome, at least, recognized Judas' authority to make such an alliance on behalf of Judaea. Demetrius' subsequent disregard for the treaty does not discredit Judas' authority or the historicity of the treaty, but rather it confirms Demetrius' diplomatic hostility with Rome. In fact, this *amicitia* was long lasting and was re-confirmed by Rome with Judas' brothers: first with Jonathan and then with Simon III, when he became high priest in 142 BCE (1 Macc 14:16-18).

#### 4.5 Conclusions on Judas

And when his character was so excellent [while he was alive], he left behind him a glorious reputation and memorial, by gaining freedom for his nation, and delivering them from slavery under the Macedonians. And when *he had retained the high priesthood three years*, he died [δ' ἀρχιερωσύνην ἔτος τρίτον κατασχὼν ἀπέθανεν] (Ant 12:434).

The traditional assumption has been that Josephus adjusted Judas' time as high priest and placed it after 159 BCE—making him high priest from 159-156—despite the

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<sup>111</sup> “Since rulership over the state devolved upon the high priest, the acquisition of the high priesthood implicitly acknowledged a person as the legitimate ruler of the state” (Mandell, “Rome, Syria and the Jerusalem High Priest,” 84-85).

<sup>112</sup> Dov Gera, *Judaea and Mediterranean Politics 219 to 161 B.C.E* (Brill's Series in Jewish Studies, New York: Brill, 1998), 303-304.

fact that according to 1 Maccabees, Judas died in 160 BCE.<sup>113</sup> However, this adjustment alleviated the problem of two high priests serving simultaneously. While we can dismiss Josephus' attempt to repress a double high priesthood, we should not be so quick to dismiss his information about the length of Judas' time in office. In fact, as has been demonstrated, Judas likely served as *de facto* high priest from the rededication of the Temple in 164/3 BCE to his death in 160 BCE. In other words, Josephus confirms what the chronology and evidence in 1 and 2 Maccabees has implied: Judas was high priest concurrently with Alcimus, at least during the three years before Judas' death in 160. Thus, the evidence strongly suggests that Judas was not only the first Maccabean brother to assume the role of high priest but that he set the precedent for Hasmonean *de facto* occupation of the office. This precedent may help solve the mystery of the intersacerdotium.

##### 5. *De Facto Priest: 159-152 BCE*

As has been demonstrated, the office of a deputy, διάδοχος, particularly as attached to the high priesthood, is evidenced in the pre-Hasmonean period and in the early days of the Maccabean revolt. Case in point, Menelaus appointed his brother, Lysimachus, as his deputy high priest while he was on a diplomatic errand (2 Macc 4:31). VanderKam argues that Jason may have served as deputy high priest to his brother Onias III, before taking the office for himself.<sup>114</sup> Additionally, Antiochus IV appointed his own deputy, Andronicus, while he put down a revolt in Tarsus and Mallus (2 Macc 4:31). The

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<sup>113</sup> Brutti, *The Development*, 99-100; J.A. Potieter, 'The High Priests in 1 Maccabees,' 413-414.

<sup>114</sup> VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 204.

emissary of Demetrius I appointed Judas as the deputy high priest, confirming a *de facto* role Judas likely in essence already fulfilled. Finally, after Jonathan's capture in 143 BCE, his brother Simon served as *de facto* high priest until his official nomination to the office by the Great Assembly in 140 BCE.<sup>115</sup>

Maria Brutti has argued quite convincingly for the existence of a secondary high priestly office. The plural form of ἀρχιερεύς in the works of Flavius Josephus (*War* 1.33; 2.243; 2.301-428) seems to indicate the existence of more than one high priest at a time.<sup>116</sup> Fascinatingly, the *War Scroll* describes a high priest, his substitute, and twelve chief priests (1QM 2:1). This reference is telling, especially for a priestly community obsessed with proper Temple hierarchies. On the eschatological battlefield imagined by the *War Scroll*, it makes perfect sense that a deputy high priest is present, ready to take up the battle against the sons of darkness should the high priest fall. This secondary high priestly figure, the חמשינהו, is significant. In 11QT 31:4 and 4Q376 1:1, this “second priest” or the “substitute priest” is clearly the same διάδοχος role filled by Lysimachus and Judas (2 Macc 4:29; 14:26).<sup>117</sup> In *m. Yoma* (1:1-2; 3:9; 4:1; 7), reference is also made to a secondary high priest who served in place of the high priest on Yom Kippur if necessary. Josephus confirms this in his narrative about a priest appointed to temporarily replace the high priest Matthias in his cultic duties (*Ant.* 17.165-167). Coupled with the Ptolemaic Rosetta stone inscription, which indicates a precedent for more than one

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<sup>115</sup> See Scholnic, *Alcimus Enemy of the Maccabees*, 38, 138-139. See also Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson, ed. *A History of the Jewish People* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 216; VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 270-274.

<sup>116</sup> Brutti, *Development*, 71-2; Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus: An Investigation into Economic and Social Conditions during the New Testament Period* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 177-178.

<sup>117</sup> Brutti, *Development*, 72-3.

Egyptian high priest in 198 BCE, Brutti concludes that scholars can be relatively certain that some form of a deputy high priestly office—or a multiplicity of high priests—existed in different forms during this time.<sup>118</sup> There is additional evidence that this position continued to be utilized in some fashion after Judas' death in 160 BCE, during the intersacerdotium. In fact, Hanan Eshel concludes that, at least on Yom Kippur, somebody served on a cultic level as high priest between 159-152 BCE.<sup>119</sup> If Judas was the first Hasmonean high priest, and if later Hasmonean history is any guide, it would make sense for the Maccabean brothers to retain the power of high priest, even if it was in an unofficial or *de facto* capacity.

### 5.1. Who was high priest?

During the intersacerdotium, or the period between 159 and 152 BCE, the Seleucid government did not appoint a high priest. Perhaps no high priest was preferable to appointing a rebel or increasing tensions. However, it is implausible that the office remained totally vacant for the seven year period between Alcimus' death in 159 BCE and Jonathan's official appointment in 152 BCE. Someone must have functioned on a cultic level as high priest.<sup>120</sup> Hartmut Stegemann argued that after Judas reintroduced the annual observance of the feasts, celebrations like Yom Kippur would have necessitated a high priest.<sup>121</sup> Besides this, after Jonathan's treaty with Baccides in 157 BCE, there was a

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid. This is significant because the Ptolemaic dynasty was the immediate precursor to the Seleucides, and it controlled and influenced Judea for over century, at least until the 190s.

<sup>119</sup> *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hasmonean State*, English (ed. Sidrat Sifre Mehqar 'al Ha-'et Ha-'atikah; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Jerusalem, Israel: William B. Eerdmans Pub.; Yad Ben-Zvi Press, 2008), 57.

<sup>120</sup> Babota, *The Institution*, 137-138.

<sup>121</sup> Hartmut Stegemann, *The Library of Qumran: On the Essenes, Qumran, John the Baptist, and Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 147-149 Stegemann argues that the Teacher of Righteousness held the office before Jonathan. See also Brutti, *The Development*, 101.

lengthy period of peace in Judea. In other words, there were no major military tensions to interfere with Temple cultic functions. Rooke argues that a deputy, the figure who performed Temple duties when the actual high priest was unable to do so, would have taken up the high priestly obligations.<sup>122</sup> At the very least, “it seems likely that the *functions* of the high priest would have continued even if no one held the position officially, that is, by royal appointment.”<sup>123</sup> If the Hasmonean dynasty already was inducted into the high priesthood through the *de facto* office of Judas, Jonathan’s similar ascension to high priestly power is not only feasible but a viable solution to the mystery of the intersacerdotium.

#### 5.1.1. *The Teacher of Righteousness*

The primary candidate for high priest during this period has classically been the Teacher of Righteousness. This proposition is rooted in what now is referred to as the “old consensus.” According to it, Khirbet Qumran was founded during the reign of Jonathan or Simon Maccabeus, sometime between 161-135 BCE, by a dissenting group of the Jewish community who followed the Teacher of Righteousness in opposing the Hasmonean claim on the high priesthood.<sup>124</sup> Thus, the old consensus reads between the lines of Qumran Literature that recounts a conflict between the Teacher of Righteousness and the Wicked Priest and posits a historical schism between the Teacher and Jonathan Maccabeus over the high priestly office. In this scenario, the Teacher served as high

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<sup>122</sup> For example, Menelaus appointed his brother as deputy (2 Macc 4:29). See Rooke, *Zadok’s Heirs*, 288.

<sup>123</sup> VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 245.

<sup>124</sup> Michael O. Wise, “Dating the Teacher of Righteousness and the *Floruit* of his Movement.” *JBL* 122/1 (2003): 53-87.



priest after Alcimus' death until he was deposed.<sup>125</sup> The Teacher then left to found his own community at Qumran. However, this origin story has increasingly been challenged, as has the certitude of dating the Teacher to the mid-second century BCE. Some even argue that these figures do not refer to historical individuals, or at least to figures identifiable in our historical record.<sup>126</sup> As John Collins contends, “many of the arguments for the dating of the Teacher and the Wicked Priest to the mid-second century BCE can no longer be accepted.”<sup>127</sup> He argues that this origin hypothesis for Qumran should be dismissed, since the archeological and paleographical evidence no longer undeniably supports the mid-second century dating for the founding of the community.<sup>128</sup> He contends that the usurpation—if it even was usurpation—of the high priesthood by the Hasmoneans was not a causative factor of the *Yahad* community's origins.<sup>129</sup> Hanan Eshel, while agreeing that a dispute over succession to the office of high priest was not the causative factor for the founding of the Qumran community, disagrees on dating the Teacher to the first century rather than the mid-second.<sup>130</sup> After all, while the founding of the physical Qumran community cannot be dated to the mid-second century, the

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<sup>125</sup> The majority option is that Jonathan should be identified as the “Wicked Priest.” VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 267; Devorah Dimant, “Qumran Sectarian Literature,” in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran, Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (ed. Michael E. Stone; vol. 2 of *The Literature of the Jewish People in the Period of the Second Temple and the Talmud*, ed. Michael E. Stone; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 510.

<sup>126</sup> B. E. Thiering argues that the Qumran figure of the “Wicked Priest” is the same as the “Man of a Lie,” a sectarian rival to the Teacher of Righteousness. Therefore, the references in the Dead Sea Scrolls are concerned with internal, not external matters. See Barbara E. Thiering, “Once more the wicked priest.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 97, no. 2 (June 1, 1978): 191-205. See also Brutti, *The Development*, 107.

<sup>127</sup> John Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community: The Sectarian Movement of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009) 120-1

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 90-94.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 95-98.

<sup>130</sup> Hanan Eshel posits that the *Yahad* became active around 196 BCE, since this is 390 years after the exile and fits with CD timeline which is based on Ezekiel 4:5. Since the Teacher of Righteousness only began to lead the group twenty years after its inception, this would make Jonathan the Hasmonean the opposing “wicked priest.” See Eshel, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hasmonean State*, 27-33.

movement, the *Yahad*, and its figures are not so constrained.<sup>131</sup> While there is no evidence for a fight over the high priestly succession between the Teacher and the Wicked Priest, there is strong evidence that the sect eventually broke away from the Temple cult over differences of calendrical and legal observance (4QMMT).<sup>132</sup> More significantly, while the Teacher quite possibly lived during the mid-second century, there is no evidence to assume he was the unnamed high priest between 159-152 BCE.<sup>133</sup> In fact, if the *Yahad* community's opposition to the Hellenistic lunar calendar is any indication, the Teacher's anti-Hellenistic position would have alienated him from both the Seleucides and the Hellenistic party. In other words, neither would have supported his candidacy. Besides this, if the Teacher were actually nominated to the high priesthood, Qumran literature would have certainly recorded it, especially in lists of high priests (4Q245; 4Q387). H. Stregemann argued that the "titular" The Priest (הכהן) was a title ascribed three times to the Teacher in Qumran literature, and it was known epithet for the high priest. He concludes that the Teacher was the high priest of the intersacerdotium. However, scholars like Michael Wise have demonstrated that there is simply no compelling textual or other evidence to substantiate this connection.<sup>134</sup> Nevertheless, someone had to have met the vacancy left by Alcimus' death, despite the fact that after his death in 159 BCE no high priest as recorded in office for seven years.

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<sup>131</sup> VanderKam, "People and high priesthood in early Maccabean times." In *Hebrew Bible and Its Interpreters*, 205-225. Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 205-8.

<sup>132</sup> Eshel thinks the Teacher of Righteousness was forced to go into exile by the Wicked Priest over calendrical differences, particularly the Day of Atonement (Eshel, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 38); See also James VanderKam, "2 Maccabees 6,7a and calendrical in Jerusalem," *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period* 12, no 1 (July 1981): 52-74.

<sup>133</sup> VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 250.

<sup>134</sup> Michael Wise, "The Teacher of Righteousness and the High Priest of the Intersacerdotium: Two Approaches," *Revue De Qumran* 14, no. 4 (April 1990): 587-613.

### 5.1.2. *What about the Oniads?*

During the seven-year official vacancy, it would have made sense if some Judeans attempted to restore the Oniad high priestly dynasty. However, according to *Antiquities* 13.62-73, Onias IV fled to Egypt sometime before Alcimus was given the office of high priest.<sup>135</sup> He was not biding his time, waiting to return to Jerusalem. Instead of returning after Alcimus' death, he asked and received permission from Ptolemy to build a temple in Leontopolis, like the one in Jerusalem. Onias saw himself as fulfilling the prophecy in Isaiah in which an altar would one day be built in Egypt.<sup>136</sup> As the son of Onias III—the deposed high priest from 175 BCE—and the heir of the toppled Oniad dynasty, Onias might have been the obvious moderate choice to replace Alcimus.<sup>137</sup> However, his ties to the newly formed Egyptian cult and the Ptolemaic empire would have certainly precluded such a move. Besides this, his familial ties would not have recommended him to the government.<sup>138</sup>

### 5.2. *Jonathan Maccabeus*

In the year following Judas' death, his supporters approached his brother Jonathan and sought to make him their “ruler and leader” [ἄρχοντα καὶ ἡγούμενον] in Judas' stead (1 Macc 9:29-31). The rebel forces continued a policy of resistance to both the Seleucid military and their appointed high priest, Alcimus. 1 Maccabees says that after Judas'

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<sup>135</sup> Reinhard Pummer, *The Samaritans in Flavius Josephus* (Texte Und Studien Zum Antiken Judentum; 129. Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 190.

<sup>136</sup> Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, 276-7. See also Joan E. Taylor, "A Second Temple in Egypt: The Evidence for the Zadokite Temple of Onias." *Journal For The Study Of Judaism In The Persian, Hellenistic And Roman Period* 29, no. 3 (August 1998): 297-321.

<sup>137</sup> 2 Macc 4:7-8.

<sup>138</sup> VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 246.

death, Alcimus and “those who had no regard for the law” took control in Judea. Jonathan accepted command of his brother’s forces and successfully continued the resistance, defeating Bacchides (9:29-49). After Alcimus died (159BCE) and Bacchides left Judea, there was a two-year period of tranquility that lasted until 157 BCE (Ant. 13.22; 1 Macc 9:57). Following a fresh outbreak of insurrection, Jonathan decisively beat the Seleucid forces and concluded a peace treaty with Baccides (9:58-72). After which, according to 1 Maccabees, “...the sword ceased from Israel: but Jonathan dwelt at Michmash and began to govern the people; and he destroyed the ungodly men out of Israel” (9:73). The author of 1 Maccabees then jumps to 152 BCE in the next chapter, leaving the readers puzzled over the events that took place in the interim.<sup>139</sup> Who was in power in Jerusalem? What about the empty high priestly office? Rook notes that Jonathan took a less-traditional path to the high priesthood, the path of military prowess and leadership, one reminiscent of the beginnings of the Jewish monarchy (1 Sam 8:20 LXX). However, the struggle for religious freedom had long become undecipherable from the struggle for political freedom.<sup>140</sup> Not only is it highly unlikely that as the recognized leader of Judea, Jonathan allowed the Temple cult to grind to a halt, but also it is inconceivable that Jonathan would allow this power vacuum to be filled by another.

### 5.2.1 Evidence from Qumran

As has been demonstrated, the pre-Hasmonean period set a precedent for blurring the lines between high priesthood and civil ruler. This line was almost completely erased with the rise to power of the later rulers in the Hasmonean dynasty.<sup>141</sup> This double office

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<sup>139</sup> VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 244.

<sup>140</sup> Rook, *Zadok's Heirs*, 283.

<sup>141</sup> Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 235-63.

of priest and king was not unopposed, and it may have been the primary impetuses for the anti-Hasmonean sentiment reflected in sectarian and non-sectarian texts at Qumran, like the *War Scroll* (1QM); *peshar Habakkuk and peshar Nahum*; *4QTestimonia* (4Q175); and the *Apocryphon of Joshua* (4Q378-4Q379).<sup>142</sup>

### 5.2.1.1 The “Wicked Priest”?

Although the idea that the Teacher served as high priest during the intersacerdotium is unlikely, the Wicked Priest still offers useful insight into this period. It is generally agreed that the appellation Wicked Priest [הכהן הרשע] was a play on the title for high priest attested in Ezra 7:5 and 2 Ch 31:10, making it a reference to one of the Hasmonean high priests.<sup>143</sup> Unfortunately, the historical identity of this Wicked Priest has been a contentious question since the very first copy of *peshar Habakkuk* (1QpHab) was released.<sup>144</sup> He has variously been recognized as Aristobulus, Alcimus, Jonathan, Jannaeus, or Simon, since the Wicked Priest is widely believed to be a high priest whose timeline intersects in some way with that of the Qumran community.<sup>145</sup> According to the historical allusions in *peshar Habakkuk*, the Wicked Priest was once highly regarded, since he was called by a name of truth when he first rose to power (1QpHab 8:8-9).

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<sup>142</sup> Torleif Elgvin, “Violence, Apologetics, and Resistance: Hasmonean Ideology and Yahad Texts in Dialogue,” in *The War Scroll, Violence, War and Peace in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature* (Eds. Kipp Davis, Kyung S. Baek, Peter W. Flint, and Dorothy M. Peters; Leiden: Brill, 2016), 329-336.

<sup>143</sup> Eshel, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hasmonean State*, 38; VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 267.

<sup>144</sup> James VanderKam, “The Wicked Priest Revisited,” in *The “Other” in Second Temple Judaism: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins* (ed. Daniel C. Harlow, Karina Martin Hogan, Matthew Goff, and Joel S. Kaminsky; Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 2011), 350.

<sup>145</sup> William Brownlee, “Wicked Priest, the Man of Lies, and the Righteous Teacher: The Problem of Identity,” *The Jewish Quarterly Review* Vol 73. No 1 (Jul. 1982): 3-9; VanderKam, “The Wicked Priest Revisited,” 352.

However, the author of *peshar Habakkuk* criticizes him for grasping for wealth, doing violence, and disobeying the laws:

Its interpretation concerns the Wicked Priest, who was called by the name of truth at the beginning of his standing, but when he ruled in Israel, he became arrogant, and he abandoned God, and betrayed the statues for the sake of wealth. And he stole and amassed the wealth of men of violence who had rebelled against God, and he took the wealth of peoples to add to himself guilt of iniquity (1QpHab 8:8-13).<sup>146</sup>

VanderKam notes that this description of an initial period of favorable reception fits Jonathan's initial rise to power, before he began acquiring wealth and loot in his many battles. In fact the charge of iniquity/defilement makes sense if Jonathan continued to fight battles as high priest, putting himself in danger of corpse defilement.<sup>147</sup> However, many of Jonathan's military victories occurred *before* his official investiture as high priest by Alexander Balas (1 Macc 9:43-49; *Ant.* 13.14; 1 Macc 9:60; *Ant.* 13.25). This may suggest that Jonathan, the Wicked Priest, may have been active as such before his alliance with Balas. One of the key details suggesting Jonathan was the Wicked Priest is the violent death detailed in the pesharim. Thus, in the opinion of many scholars, the Wicked Priest was clearly Jonathan Maccabeus, who died horribly at the hands of Trypho (1 Macc. 12:48; 13:23; *Ant.* 13:192-95).<sup>148</sup>

The in[terpretation of the passage]concerns the [Wicked] Priest, who rebelled [and trans]gressed the statues of [God, and all his enemies will arise and abu]se him s[o that] his injuries are on account of punishments of wickedness. And horrors inflicted evil diseases upon him, and acts of vengeance on his carcass of flesh (8:16-9:2).<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Bilhah Nitzan, "Peshar Habakkuk," in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture* vol 1. (eds. Louis H Feldman, James L. Kugel, and Lawrence H. Schiffman; 3 vols. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2013), 651.

<sup>147</sup> VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 267.

<sup>148</sup> Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community*, 109. VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 267; J.T. Milik, *Ten Years of Discovery in the Wilderness of Judea*, SBT 26 (London: SCM, 1959), 65-93.

<sup>149</sup> Nitzan, "Peshar Habakkuk," 652. See also 1QHab 9:9-12.

This death does not fit with Simon, who died rather ignominiously in a drunken stupor (1 Macc 16:16; *Ant.* 13.228). The only other Hasmonean candidates for such a violent death are Hyrcanus II and Alexander Jannaeus. However, when this passage is read in conjunction with 1QpHab 9, where the Wicked Priest dies at the hands of Gentiles, Jonathan is the better contender.<sup>150</sup> A close reading of *pesher Habakkuk* also highlights that the Wicked Priest and the Teacher were in conflict over differing calendars, like the celebration of Yom Kippur (1QHab 11:4-8). Therefore, VanderKam argues that the historical allusions in *pesher Habakkuk* best fit Jonathan Maccabeus, as one of the only high priests who both ruled Israel and controlled an army.<sup>151</sup>

A constraint must be acknowledged. First, not all the Qumran passages about the Wicked Priest mention a conflict with the Teacher.<sup>152</sup> As Alex Jassen points out, it is likely that the violent imaginaries of the Wicked Priest in Jerusalem wagging war on the Sectarials and their idealized Teacher is “a broader attempt by the disempowered and disenfranchised sectarians to craft a narrative of victimhood.”<sup>153</sup> In other words, *pesher Habakkuk*, like other Qumran materials, are “resistance texts to Hasmonean ideology, state-building, and harsh and intractable autocracy.”<sup>154</sup> Thus, while these allusions may

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<sup>150</sup> Hyrcanus II did not die at the hands of Gentiles (*Ant.* 15.165-78). Alexander Jannaeus was probably alive when the pesharim were written, and so must be ruled out as well (Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community*, 112).

<sup>151</sup> VanderKam, “The Wicked Priest Revisited,” 366-367.

<sup>152</sup> This supports the assertion of many scholars that the Wicked Priest is actually a sobriquet for a variety of Hasmonean leaders, from Jonathan to Alexander Jannaeus (Nitzan, “Peshar Habakkuk,” 636; Collins, *Beyond the Qumran Community*, 120).

<sup>153</sup> Alex P. Jassen, “Violent Imaginaries and Practical Violence in the War Scroll” in *The War Scroll, Violence, War and Peace in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature* (eds. Kipp Davis, Kyung S. Baek, Peter W. Flint, and Dorothy M. Peters; Leiden: Brill, 2016), 179.

<sup>154</sup> Elgvin, “Violence, Apologetics, and Resistance,” 320.

indeed refer to the historical figure of Jonathan Maccabeus, conclusions should be made only tentatively, at least until less ambiguous evidence comes to light.<sup>155</sup>

While the Wicked Priest references cannot with certainty be used to connect Jonathan Maccabeus to the high priesthood—especially before 152 BCE—they do support the legitimacy of the early Hasmonean claim to the office. Van De Water notes that the suggestion of an illegitimate high priesthood cannot be drawn from the term “Wicked Priest.”<sup>156</sup> As Brownlee says, “...in any translation it is the lust for wealth which has made a traitor of the Wicked Priest, and nothing is said of the usurpation of an office which did not belong to him.”<sup>157</sup> Regardless of who provided the foundation for these “Wicked Priest” descriptions in *peshet Habakkuk*, the *Yahad* community clearly did not denounce the Hasmoneans for their lineage. Instead, this figure—who perhaps represents several of the Hasmonean Priest-Kings—is criticized for the corruption that came *after* he also took civil power. In fact, this criticism may reflect later anti-Hasmonean sentiments about the double office of high priest and ruler; it may have very little to do with actual historical realities connected to the founding Hasmonean brothers.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> John Collins, “The Time of the Teacher” in *Studies in the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and the Septuagint: Presented to Eugene Ulrich* (eds. Peter W. Flint, Emanuel Tov, and James VanderKam; Brill: Leiden, 2006), 215-17.

<sup>156</sup> Rick Van De Water, “The Punishment of the Wicked Priest and the Death of Judas,” *Dead Sea Discoveries*, 10, no 3. (2003): 396.

<sup>157</sup> Brownlee, “Wicked Priest,” 4.

<sup>158</sup> For additional reading on Qumran anti-Hasmonean ideology and relevant texts see Elgvin, “Violence, Apologetics, and Resistance,” 319-340. This increasing tension between the Qumran community and the Jerusalem leadership is also reflected elsewhere in texts like 11QTemple Scroll, 4QSefer ha-Milhamah, and 1QMegillat ha-Milhamah, which probably reflect a segment of Jewish society that opposed the radical merging of civil and religious power under Hasmonean rule (Babota, *The Institution*, 122, 135-138, 194). B. Bar Kochva, “Maccabean Revolt” *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* 1: 901.



### 5.2.1.2 Other Qumran Evidence: Pseudo-Daniel

When the Aramaic manuscripts 4Q243-245 were discovered, J.T. Mikh identified them all as copies of the same literary work, *Pseudo-Daniel*.<sup>159</sup> However, John Collins and Peter Flint later separated 4Q245 from the rest of *Pseudo-Daniel*, since it never overlaps with the other manuscripts and has a distinctive eschatology. Thus, there are two *Pseudo-Daniel* texts. 4Q245 is helpful for this study because it contains a controversial, fragmentary list of high priests and kings. Collins and Flint identified Onias III, Jonathan Maccabaeus, and Simon Maccabaeus at the end of this list of high priests (4Q245 1 i 9-10).<sup>160</sup> The problem, however, is that 4Q245 is difficult to reconstruct, since no lines are fully extant and none of the fragments are actually joined.<sup>161</sup> The inclusion of these Hasmonean names in the list of high priests is startling because the *Yahad* community at Qumran was, for the most part, opposed to the Hasmonean dynasty.<sup>162</sup> According to Flint, there are three possible explanations for these Hasmonean names. First, they were included in order to identify when eschatological events would happen; however, this does not fit the typical negative judgments on figures of this era in other apocalyptic literature.<sup>163</sup> Second, the author was showcasing the failure of the Temple cult in his milieu; however, again there is no evidence that a negative sentiment was intended or even part of the missing bits of fragment 1.<sup>164</sup> Third, Jonathan and Simon were accepted

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<sup>159</sup> Michael O. Wise, "4Q245," 313-6.

<sup>160</sup> Wise, "4Q245," 316; Collins, "Daniel, Book of: Pseudo-Daniel," in *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. L. Schiffman and J. VanderKam; 2 vols.: Oxford: University Press, 2000) 1:176-77.

<sup>161</sup> See Flint, P. "4Qpseudo-Daniel ar' (4Q245) and the Restoration of the Priesthood," *RevQ* 17 (1996): 137-50.

<sup>162</sup> Flint, "Daniel Tradition at Qumran," in *Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea* (ed. C. Evans and P. Flint; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 41-60, esp. 46-56.

<sup>163</sup> For example: Daniel 11, the *War Scroll*, or the Enochic *Apocalypse of Weeks*.

<sup>164</sup> Flint, "Daniel Tradition at Qumran," 54.

as legitimate high priests by the author of 4Q245. This solution, argues Flint, makes the most sense, especially if the negative critique of the Hasmoneans only occurred after they combined the offices of high priest and king. This rationale for their inclusion is further supported because the list of high priests is immediately followed by a list of legitimate Jewish kings.<sup>165</sup>

Michael Wise ingeniously reconstructs the fragments of 4Q245, arguing that Judas Maccabeus' name should be included before his brothers, Jonathan and Simon. Based on the reconstruction methods developed by Hartmut Stegemann, a comparison to other genre parallels, and a connection between the number of priests and term "thirty-five" [4Q245 3 2], Wise carefully reconstructs most of the text. In his reconstruction, Wise restores Judas Maccabeus's name to the list of high priests, arguing that Judas probably functioned as an unofficially recognized high priest before Jonathan took office.<sup>166</sup> Since this fragment was almost certainly composed as early as 1 Maccabees—and definitely long before *Antiquities*—it constitutes "premier historical testimony."<sup>167</sup> As Flint pointed out in his study, the *Yahad* community's problem with the Hasmoneans had to do with their blending of the traditional offices of king and high priest.<sup>168</sup> By separating the list of high priests from kings in 4Q245, the author implicitly critiques those high priests after Simon Maccabeus who combined the two offices.<sup>169</sup> This text is significant for this project for two reasons. First, it provides evidence from the opposition

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Devorah Dimant, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Scholarly Perspective: A History of Research* (Boston: Brill, 2012), 173-4. Wise, "4Q245," 343, 352-360.

<sup>167</sup> Wise, "4Q245," 352.

<sup>168</sup> Flint, "Daniel Tradition at Qumran," 54.

<sup>169</sup> John Collins, "Pseudo-Daniel" in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture* vol 1 (eds. Louis H Feldman, James L. Kugel, and Lawrence H. Schiffman; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2013), 619 n. 6. Elgvin, "Violence, Apologetics, and Resistance," 334.

to Judas' high priesthood. Second, it confirms that the Teacher was not the high priest before Jonathan and Judas, solidifying that case for continued Hasmonean control of the office beginning with Judas rather than Jonathan. It also strengthens the case for Jonathan's ascension to the office before his official investiture in 152 BCE.

### 5.2.1.3 *Other Qumran Evidence: Apocryphon of Jeremiah*

The *Apocryphon of Jeremiah C* was composed in the mid-second century, and it is an apocalyptic text that contains both descriptions of the past and the future.<sup>170</sup> In its depiction of post-exilic period, the author describes a “blasphemer” who will “rise up...over the gentiles, and he will commit acts of wickedness” (4Q387 2 ii 3-4; 4Q388a 7 ii 3; 4Q389 8 ii 9). Kipp Davis identifies this blasphemer as Antiochus IV.<sup>171</sup> Significantly, *Apocryphon of Jeremiah C* goes on to critique the priests of Jerusalem who were faithless and who committed abominations (4Q387 2 iii 6-7; 4Q388a 7 ii 6-7). The *Apocryphon* then mentions a new “order of priests...three who will rule,” and this most plausibly describes Jason, Menelaus, and Alcimus, the Hellenistic high priests who had corrupted and changed the office.<sup>172</sup> These figures are contrasted with “three priests, who will not wander about in the ways of the former priests, by the name of the God of Israel they will be called” (4Q385a 5 7-8; 4Q387 3 4-5). Davis concludes that the contrast with the previous, Hellenistic high priests can only mean that these faithful high priests were the leaders of the Hasmonean revolution: Mattathias, Judas, and Jonathan.<sup>173</sup> Davis’

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<sup>170</sup> Kipp Davis, “Prophets of exile: 4QApocryphon of Jeremiah C, Apocryphal Baruch, and the efficacy of the Second Temple” *Journal For the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 44, no. 4-5 (2013): 497-529.

<sup>171</sup> Kipp Davis, *The Cave 4 Apocryphon of Jeremiah and the Qumran Jeremianic Traditions: Prophetic Persona and the Construction of Community Identity* (Boston: Brill, 2014), 162.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

conclusions are intriguing; although, it is more plausible to exclude Mattathias—who never became high priest—and include Simon.

### 5.2.2 *Moment of Opportunity: 159-152 BCE*

If Judas was the *de facto* high priest while the Hasmoneans were in control of the Temple, it would make sense that once Jonathan had the opportunity to do likewise, he too would claim the power and prestige of the office. After an initial period of chaos and military action, as well as Alcimus' death, Bacchides inexplicitly left Judea.<sup>174</sup> The situation did not sit well with the Hellenists, and two years later they got Bacchides to return and reengage Jonathan and his forces. The attempt failed, and Bacchides was severely routed (1 Macc 9:65-9; *Ant.* 13.28-31). Before leaving Judea, Bacchides took out his defeat on the Hellenist leaders (1 Macc 9:69). As Edward Dabrowa notes, this crippled the Hellenist resistance to the Hasmoneans.<sup>175</sup> Bacchides made peace with Jonathan, pledging to return Jewish prisoners and take no further military action against the Hasmoneans (1 Macc 9:71-2; *Ant.* 13.32-33). Interestingly enough, we have no record of any military action between Jonathan and the Seleucides between 157-152 BCE.<sup>176</sup> In other words, Jonathan had his opportunity.

#### 5.2.2.1 *Appointment by the people*

According to 1 Maccabees 14:25-45 the people nominated Simon, Jonathan's brother, to be high priest before Demetrius II confirmed his investiture. Based on 1

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<sup>174</sup> Edward Dabrowa, *The Hasmoneans and Their State: A Study in History, Ideology, and the Institutions*. Wyd. 1., ed. Electrum (Uniwersytet Jagielloński. Instytut Historii; v. 16. Kraków: Jagiellonian University Press, 2010), 43-4.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

Maccabees 13:36-42, this took place at the outset of Simon's reign, likely at the meeting described in 1 Maccabees 13:1-9. In other words, the people first appointed Simon as high priest, and the Seleucid king later confirmed this appointment. Thus, according to Scholnic and other scholars, Simon served as *de facto* high priest until a foreign king confirmed his office.<sup>177</sup>

In fact, Simon's ascent to office supports the theory that Jonathan also served as *de facto* high priest at the behest of the people and before his official investiture by a foreign monarch. Intriguingly, Josephus' report of Judas' elevation to the high priesthood is evocative of Simon's own appointment. Josephus states that his military supporters, the λαός, appointed Judas high priest. While, as argued earlier, this is incorrect chronologically, it is plausible that the λαός appointed Judas to the office after Menelaus' death.<sup>178</sup> Thus, for both Judas and Simon, the λαός played an active role in their rise to high priestly power (*Ant.* 12.414; 13:213; 1 Macc 14:31-4). In Jonathan's rise to power, 1 Maccabees mentions only that the people nominated him "ruler and leader [ὁ ἡγούμενος]" but not high priest (1 Macc 9:30). However, when Jonathan's appointment by the λαός is compared to Simon's an intriguing connection emerges: "Now as soon as the people [τοῦ λαοῦ] heard these words, their spirit revived. And they answered with a loud voice, saying, Thou shalt be our leader [ἡγούμενος] instead of Judas and Jonathan thy brother" (1 Macc 13:7-8). Significantly, the title ἡγούμενος, used here in 1 Maccabees 13:7-8, is the same title the people, ὁ λαός, later reconfirmed on Simon

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<sup>177</sup> See Scholnic, *Alcimus Enemy of the Maccabees*, 38, 138-139. See also Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson, ed. *A History of the Jewish People* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 216; VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 270-274; VanderKam, "People and High Priesthood," 205-23.

<sup>178</sup> The λαός, argues VanderKam, is not a reference to Judeans in general but to the Maccabean troops (VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 243). See also Babota, *The Institution*, 236-67.

(14:35), along with the office of high priest [ἀρχιερέα]. This supports the suggestion that the ceremony described in 1 Maccabees 13:1-9 depicts the actual moment Simon became high priest—via the nomination of the ὁ λαὸς—and, only after this office was confirmed by Demetrius II (1 Macc13: 36), it was reconfirmed by the Great Assembly and the people (1 Macc 14).<sup>179</sup> The title ἡγούμενος is also used when the Hasmonean supporters nominated Jonathan as Judas’ successor, as “ruler and leader [ἡγούμενον]” (1 Macc 9:30). Earlier, 1 Maccabees 7:5 notes that Alcimus “was desirous to be high priest, *for their captain* [ὁ ἡγούμενος].” This also substantiates a close association between the title ἡγούμενος or leader [of the Jews] and the title high priest. The parallel suggests that all three brothers were appointed to positions of high priestly and political power by their own forces, near the outset of their ascension to power. If Simon and Jonathan’s rise to power is any example, there is a precedent in which one Hasmonean brother passes on military power, and quite possibly high priestly power, to the sibling who succeeds him. Thus, Simon and Jonathan both functioned as *de facto* high priest, nominated early in their rule by their military force, independent of a Seleucid seal of approval. However, in an attempt to legitimize their rise to power, the author of 1 Maccabees—and as a result Josephus who relied on 1 Maccabees—only describes their high priestly office after each brother was royally legitimated (1 Macc 9:30; 10:1-E; 13:36, 14:35-34).<sup>180</sup>

#### 5.2.2.2 What about Akra?

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<sup>179</sup> VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 277-80. Goldstein makes the argument that the author of 1 Maccabees omitted any reference to Jonathan’s earlier appointment as high priest by the people (13:1-9) to “conceal Simon’s and the Jew’s desertion of Antiochus VI’s cause” (*1 Maccabees*, 476-77). However, Goldstein’s second suggestion is more plausible: the idea that the author of 1 Maccabees simply wanted to present Simon (and Jonathan’s) rise to the priesthood as above-board as possible, an appointment by the people was not sufficiently authoritative or legitimate. Thus, the author of 1 Maccabees passed over such nominations by the people in silence.

<sup>180</sup> See also Babota, *The Institution*, 112-113; 237-245.

One of the primary objections to Judas and Jonathan's occupation of the Temple and its high priesthood without Seleucid approval is the purported location and menace of the Akra Citadel.<sup>181</sup> Akra, according to 1 Maccabees, was built by the Seleucids and was the center of military opposition to the Hasmoneans in Jerusalem: "Then they built the city of David with a great and strong wall, and with mighty towers, and made it a strong hold [ἄκρα] for them; and they put there a sinful nation, wicked men, and they fortified themselves therein" (1 Macc 1:33-4). Through this fortress, Antiochus IV maintained control of the Temple Mount and Jerusalem as a whole. Josephus asserts that Akra was located in the lower city, the City of David, overlooking the Temple itself (*Wars* 5.39,137-9, 253):

He [Antiochus IV] also burnt down the finest buildings; and when he had overthrown the city walls, he built a citadel [ἄκρα] in the lower part of the city, *for the place was high, and overlooked the temple* [emphasis added], on which account he fortified it with high walls and towers, and put into it a garrison of Macedonians. However, in that citadel dwelt the impious and wicked part of the [Jewish] multitude, from whom it proved that the citizens suffered many and sore calamities (*Ant.* 12:252).

According to Josephus, Akra's location would have made it nearly impossible for the Hasmoneans to take—let alone sustain their hold on—the Temple. After all, Akra remained in enemy hands until 141 BCE, when Simon Maccabee finally conquered it (1 Macc 13:50; *Wars* 1:39). Josephus tells us that whenever the Jews went up to the Temple to sacrifice "the garrison would sally out and kill them—for the Akra commanded the

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<sup>181</sup> Bar-Kochva, *Judas*, 445; see also Koen Decoster, "Flavius Josephus and the Seleucid Acra in Jerusalem," *Zeitschrift Des Deutschen Palästina-vereins* (1953-) 105 (Deutscher Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas: 1989), 70–84.

Temple” (*Ant.* 12.362). Thus, Judas Maccabeus would have had to contend with enemy fire and direct interference with his access to the Temple mount. However, recent scholarship, as well as archeological and topographical evidence suggests this was not the case.

Significantly, the southeastern hill—the City of David or the lower city—is forty meters lower than the Temple Mount. In fact, Bar-Kochva argues convincingly that the topographical and archeological evidence makes the conclusion that the southeastern hill was ever high than the Temple mount untenable.<sup>182</sup> Recently, a section of Akra’s wall and base were recently unearthed under the Givati parking lot in the City of David, confirming Josephus’ assertion that the fortress stood on this hill. Coins from the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes were also found, providing additional evidence matching the site to fortress mentioned in 1 Maccabees. According the excavation directors Doron ben-Ami, Yana Tchekhanovets, and Salome Cohen, this site was a Seleucid fortress that “...was constructed on the high bedrock cliff overlooking the steep slopes of the City of David hill. This stronghold controlled all means of approach to the Temple atop the Temple Mount, and cut the Temple off from the southern parts of the city.”<sup>183</sup> While Josephus was correct about the hill, he was wrong about Akra’s dominance over the Temple Mount, as well as extent to which Akra would have posed an impediment to Hasmonean control of Jerusalem. Bar-Kochva notes, “the location of the citadel was

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<sup>182</sup> If the Temple Mount was higher than hill on which Akra stood, the citadel could not have dominated, and thus controlled, the Temple. There are no signs the hill was ever lowered in this fashion. In fact, Josephus’ story about Simon Maccabeus razing the both Akra and lower the hill it stood upon was probably an attempt to reconcile the difficulty of the south-eastern hill being lower than the Temple Mount (Bar-Kochva, *Judas*, 445-57); 1 Macc 13:42, 49-51.

<sup>183</sup> Israel Antiquities Authority, “Has Acra from 2,000 years ago been found?” n.p. [cited Marc 32016]. Online: <http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/IsraelExperience/History/Pages/Has-the-Acra-from-2000-years-ago-been-found-3-Nov-2015.aspx>



meant to oversee the inhabited Jewish parts of the city and not the Temple.”<sup>184</sup> At most, the inhabitants of the fortress may have harassed Jerusalem inhabitants and made accessing the Temple from the South difficult. Besides all this, it is often conveniently forgotten that all three Hasmonean brothers ruled Jerusalem, throughout their decades’ long rebellion, and did so despite the fact that Akra continued to be manned by Seleucid soldiers until Simon destroyed in the 140s.<sup>185</sup>

### 5.2.2.3 Means and Access

One of the primary possible impediments to Jonathan’s *de facto* service as high priest before his official nomination would be his freedom—or possibly its lack—to move in Jerusalem and access the Temple prior to 152 BCE. First, while Alcimus undoubtedly became high priest in truth after Judas’ defeat and death at Elasa, in that same year Jonathan’s supporters appointed him “ruler and leader” (1 Macc 9:30). In light of Judas and Simon’s appointments, this was quite possibly a nomination as the Hasmonean rival high priest. Unfortunately for Alcimus, his own death in the spring of 159 cut his priestly tenure short, leaving the office vacant of any Seleucid appointed high priest (1 Macc 9:54-6; *Ant.* 12.413).<sup>186</sup>

Additionally, neither the Hellenists nor Bacchides proved to be a significant deterrent to Hasmonean activity between 159 and 157 BCE. While Bacchides did begin entrenching himself in Judea after the victory in 160 BCE (1 Macc 9:50-52), his project was cut short by the death of Alcimus, the Hellenists’ political and religious leader.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Bar-Kochva, *Judas*, 460.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, 458.

<sup>186</sup> Dabrowa, *The Hasmoneans and Their State*, 42.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, 43..

Bacchides subsequently abandoned Judea to its own devices, leaving the land at peace for two years [ἡσύχασεν ἡ γῆ Ἰουδα ἔτη δύο] (1 Macc 9:57). As Dabrowa argues, the only reasonable explanation for this bizarre retreat is that Bacchides sought to avoid entanglement in a never-ending conflict with the Hasmoneans.<sup>188</sup> Without a Seleucid nominee to rally behind and the support of Bacchides, the Hellenists were effectively handicapped.<sup>189</sup> In fact, after two years in which the Hasmonean forces were “at ease and dwelling without care [ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ κατοικοῦσιν],” the Hellenists convinced Bacchides to return with an army (1 Macc 9:58-69), which was soundly defeated by the Hasmonean forces. Bacchides was so upset he turned on the Hellenists and “slew many of them” (9:69). Thus, after Alcimus died, but particularly after Bacchides’ defeat and non-aggression treaty in 157 BCE, Jonathon was the undisputed powerhouse in Judea.<sup>190</sup> Someone who would become a coveted military ally only a few short years later (1 Macc 10).

Furthermore, although Jonathan settled in Michmash, he still had access to Jerusalem. 1 Maccabees 9 ends with the enigmatic statement: “the sword ceased from Israel: but Jonathan dwelt at Michmash, and began to govern the people; and he destroyed the ungodly men out of Israel.” Nothing is said of the five-year-interim between Jonathan’s victory and his official investiture as high priest in 152 BCE. However, his settlement at Michmash, some eight miles from Jerusalem, is problematic. If he was able, why did he not settle in Jerusalem? Does this exclude him as a candidate

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid. 43-4. In the countryside, the Hasmonean movement was firmly supported, and, in the few remaining Hellenistic holdouts, the Hellenists were so weakened as to be ineffectual. Even in the past they were only able to take action with the assistance of the Seleucid forces

<sup>190</sup> Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 232; 1 Macc 9:71-2; *Ant.* 13.32-33.

for the high priest of the intersacerdotium? Not in the least. Obviously, although Akra was not situated in such way to impede access to the Temple, its occupation by Syrian troops would have made it a less-than-ideal spot for Jonathon to establish a military stronghold. Besides this, the non-aggression treaty would have prevented Jonathan from directly threatening the Syrian fortresses but not from cracking down on Hellenists or making the short trip to Jerusalem.<sup>191</sup> Thus, neither the Hellenists nor the fortress in Jerusalem would have posed a significant impediment to Jonathan's control or access to the Temple.<sup>192</sup> Michmash was simply an ideal administrative center.<sup>193</sup>

Finally, if Dabrowa is correct in arguing that part of the non-aggression treaty of 157 entailed the payment of taxes by the Hasmoneans to the Seleucid monarch, Jonathan's control of the Temple, and quite possibly the high priesthood, was critical.<sup>194</sup> After all, in the early Second Temple period, particularly under Seleucid administration, the high priest or its ruling family administered and collected the taxes "imposed by both the temple and by the royal administration."<sup>195</sup> In fact, Antiochus IV likely appointed Jason and Menelaus high priests because the Onias was resisting his fiscal obligations as the Judean high priest within a Seleucid administrative system.<sup>196</sup> Thus, the notion that Jonathan was unable to access Jerusalem and its Temple between 159-152 BCE is not fully substituted. Although there is a shortage of details for the events of the

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<sup>191</sup> See Dabrowa, *The Hasmoneans and Their State*, 44-5. Rooke, *Zadok's Heirs*, 284-285; "He destroyed the ungodly men out of Israel (1 Macc 9:73)."

<sup>192</sup> Sievers, Joseph. *The Hasmoneans and Their Supporters from Mattathias to John Hyrcanus I*. Place of Publication Not Identified]: [publisher Not Identified], 1981), 116-9.

<sup>193</sup> Dabrowa, *The Hasmoneans and Their State*, 45-6.

<sup>194</sup> See also 1 Macc 10:29-35; 11:35-36; 13:34,37,39; 15:5, 20-21; Dabrowa, *The Hasmoneans and Their State*, 45. Dabrowa's argument is supported by Demetrius II's concession to Jonathan in 1 Macc 10, a letter which seems to presuppose the fiscal responsibility of the recipient toward Demetrius II.

<sup>195</sup> Sylvie Honigman, *Tales of High Priests and Taxes The Books of the Maccabees and the Judean Rebellion against Antiochos IV* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 350-61.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.* 360.

intersacerdotium, the extant evidence suggests that Jonathan's *de facto* acquisition of the high priestly office during this period is a viable possibility.

#### 5.2.2.4 Making it Official: Demetrius I' Letter

As an experienced battle commander and the powerhouse in Judea, Jonathan was a coveted ally. In 152 BCE, Alexander Balas, claiming to be the son of Antiochus IV, made a bid for the Seleucid throne. Desperate for allies, Demetrius I solicited Jonathan's military support. His efforts are preserved in 1 Maccabees 10. This chapter may provide a significant clue to the identity of the person occupying the office high priest *before* 152 BCE. However, determining the historicity of various elements of Demetrius' preserved letter has proved controversial.

In the missing letter, Demetrius grants Jonathan permission to recruit troops, arm them, and release the Jewish hostages held in the Akra Citadel in Jerusalem (10:6-9). He effectively legitimized Jonathan as the Judean leader.<sup>197</sup> Jonathan took the opportunity to entrench himself firmly in Jerusalem, rebuilding the city's fortifications and causing the Seleucid troops and supporters to flee the city (1 Macc 10-13). Concerned about this potential alliance, Alexander Balas sent his own offer to Jonathan, appointing him not just as his friend and ally, but also as the official high priest of Judea [ἀρχιερέα τοῦ ἔθνους] (10:18-21). "So Jonathan put on the holy garments in the seventh month of the one hundred and sixtieth year, at the feast of tabernacles..." (1 Macc 10:21). Demetrius sent a second letter, extending his own concessions but addressing an unnamed high priest: "And as for the tower which is at Jerusalem [Akra], I yield up authority over it,

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<sup>197</sup> Babota, *The Institution*, 125.

and give the high priest [ἀρχιερεύς], that he may set in it such men as he shall choose to keep” (1 Macc 10:32). Although Jonathan opted to remain allies with Alexander, Demetrius’ preserved letter (10:25-45) is of import, since it makes two references to the high priest. The first, concedes Akra to the high priest (1 Macc 10:32) and in the second reference he concedes three provinces from Samaria to Judea, to the authority of the high priest (v. 38).

Bunge, Murphy-O’Connor, and Wise have all made various attempts to pin down these references. Dating Demetrius’ second letter to 152 BCE, Bunge argues that the letter antedates Jonathan’s appointment to the high priesthood by two years (1 Macc 10:25-45). He argues that the references to a high priest actually are addressed to Jonathan’s predecessor (vv. 32,38), the Teacher of Righteousness.<sup>198</sup> Murphy-O’Connor agrees, but excludes verse 32 as a redactional edition.<sup>199</sup> Wise concurs, identifying similarities with the Temple Scroll—which was written by the Teacher—and Demetrius’ letter and concludes that the letter in 1 Maccabees 10 was written to please the Teacher.<sup>200</sup> However, a closer examination of the evidence makes the identification of the “high priest” in 1 Maccabees 10 as the Teacher or someone other than Jonathan far from convincing. VanderKam offers an alternative: Demetrius was purposefully vague in his letter, hinting at his willingness to appoint someone to the office other than Jonathan, who was obviously supporting Alexander.<sup>201</sup> However, if Jonathan had already taken advantage of Demetrius’ earlier concessions, as VanderKam assumes, then Demetrius

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<sup>198</sup> According to him, Jonathan would not have actually been invested with the office of high priest until Alexander ascended to the throne in 150 BCE. “Zur Geschichte und Chronologie des Untergangs der Oniaden und des Aufstiegs der Hasmonäer,” *JSJ* 6 (1975): 27-43 in VanderKam (*From Joshua*, 247-257).

<sup>199</sup> See J. (Jerome) Murphy-O’Connor, “Demetrius I and the teacher of righteousness (1 Macc, 10:25-45),” *Revue Biblique* 83, no. 3 (July 1976): 400-420.

<sup>200</sup> Wise, “The Teacher of Righteousness,” 587-613.

<sup>201</sup> VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 254-5.

would have known his attempt to solicit aid from another priest to be pointless. Jonathan already had full control of every fortress but *Beth Zur* and was the military might of Judea (*Ant.* 13.42; 1 Macc 10:6-11). After all, there is a reason both Seleucid contenders sought Jonathan's military alliance and not that of another priest. Lawrence H. Schiffman offers the most compelling explanation. Since Demetrius I had not been the one to appoint Jonathan high priest—it probably rankled a great deal—he preferred to simply refer to “the high priest.”<sup>202</sup> Finally, regardless of Demetrius' intent, there is no convincing reason to assume that Demetrius I's second letter antedates Alexander's appointment of Jonathan to the high priesthood. Not only is there no reason to doubt 1 Maccabees assigning of Jonathan's formal investiture to 152 BCE, it is implausible to imagine that Alexander would appoint Jonathan as high priest in 150 BCE if Jonathan had been Demetrius' ally for the previous two years.<sup>203</sup>

There is one element of Jonathan's appointment in 152 BCE to which no one has paid particular attention. In each of the previous instances when a Seleucid monarch appointed a Judean high priest, the appointee always either solicited the appointment or solicited confirmation to office they already possessed (1 Macc 4:7-10; 4:27; 14:1-11). Antiochus IV knew Jason and Menelaus desired their appointments, and Demetrius I was made quite aware of Alcimus' claim to the office to which Judas' prevented him access. Jonathan, however, had not solicited the office, yet somehow Alexander Balas—a new arrival to region—knew that he would be favorably disposed to such an appointment. Seemingly, it would have been more strategic for Balas to make Jonathan “chief among

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<sup>202</sup> *Outside the Bible*, 2806.

<sup>203</sup> VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 256-9.

his friends,” general [στρατηγός] and governor [μεριδάρχης] from the outset, rather than after Balas’ victory over Demetrius I (10:65). On the other hand, if Jonathan was already the *de facto* high priest, Balas’ offer of an official investiture would have been extremely attractive, considering that Demetrius I had studiously avoided any official installation to the office during the prior seven years.

## 6. Conclusions

After a reconsideration of the political, chronological, and textual evidence for the early Hasmonean period, the Hasmonean installation into the high priesthood plausibly began long before Jonathan’s official investiture in 152 BCE. In fact, the role of a *de facto* a high priest—in all its manifestations—offers a feasible solution to two inter-related historical mysteries: Judas’ high priesthood and the bizarre absence of an official high priest during the intersacerdotium.

For the Maccabean rebellion and subsequent political ascension, the Seleucid stranglehold on the Temple and its highest office was a focal point for both resistance and political power. As a Seleucid invocation, royal investiture of the office of high priest would not have been particularly significant to the Maccabean brothers, particularly at the outset of their rebellion. After all, Judas and his forces were fundamentally opposed to Seleucid religious and political oversight. As a reassessment of Josephus’ *Antiquities* suggests, Judas quite plausibly acted as *de facto* high priest, as a rival to the royally nominated Hellenistic high priests. Thus, as VanderKam and Schwartz both argue, the only reason Judas is not listed in *Antiquities* 20 as high priest is because Judas lacked

explicit royal confirmation.<sup>204</sup> Not only is such a *de facto* usurpation of the office ideologically conceivable and historically possible, it would have set a precedent cementing Jonathan's candidacy as the *de facto* high priest in the years following Judas' death.

It is highly improbable that either Maccabean brother would allow the Temple to grind to a halt, particularly after the religious innovations of 164 BCE. While it is true that the primary sources, excepting *Antiquities*, make no explicit reference to a Hasmonean high priest before 152 BCE, each of these sources has agendas that must be taken into consideration. For pro-Hasmonean authors like 1 Maccabees, a legitimate, scandal-free Hasmonean ascent to office is a paramount concern. Likewise, 2 Maccabees is unconcerned with the details of the Hasmonean history and dynasty, focusing instead God's action and actions of his pious people.<sup>205</sup> Any official connection of Judas and Jonathan to the high priesthood outside of official legitimation would not be conducive to either author's agenda. Finally, Josephus is struggling not only with a shift in ideology but also a multiplicity of traditions and a concern for presenting the high priesthood according to his own sensibilities. Therefore, an earlier Hasmonean occupation of the high priestly office before 152 BCE should not be dismissed. Rather, the primary sources should spark a reassessment of the evidence. Only then can another picture of this volatile period emerge: two Maccabean brothers, who were both rebel priests and military leaders, initiating the climb to the high priesthood long before their enemies

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<sup>204</sup> VanderKam, *From Joshua*, 243; Schwartz, *2 Maccabees*, 475.

<sup>205</sup> Schwartz, *2 Maccabees*, 45-49.



conceded defeat and officially recognized the Hasmonean ascension to the halls of Temple power.

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