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The Maccabees at Prayer: Pro- and Anti-Hasmonean Tendencies in the Prayers of First and Second Maccabees

... *ut legem credendi lex statuat lex supplicandi.*¹

Dieser Artikel untersucht die Darstellungen des Gebets im Ersten und Zweiten Makkabäerbuch angesichts der diese Schriften kennzeichnenden widersprüchlichen Tendenzen. Diese Spannungen betreffen besonders die Bedeutung des Makkabäers Judas für die Befreiung der Juden von der seleukidischen Fremdherrschaft und beeinflussen die unterschiedlichen Darstellungen des Judas und anderer Juden beim Gebet maßgeblich. Die prohasmonäische Propaganda des Ersten Makkabäerbuchs prägt das Judas-Bild dieser Schrift: Judas ergreift die Initiative zum Gebet und erscheint als der gesalbte Eroberer, wie ihn das jüdische Volk im Gebet von Gott erfleht. Dagegen tendiert das Zweite Makkabäerbuch mit seiner Darstellung des Gebets dazu, den Rang des Judas herabzusetzen: Die Juden tun (im deuteronomistischen

1 Prosper of Aquitaine (c. 370–c. 455), *De gratia Dei indiculus* 8 (also known under the titles *Auctoritates* and *Praetextorum*), in *Patrologia Latina* 50:535; 51:201–202, 209: “... in order that the law of supplication establish the law of faith” (cf. 1 Tim 2:1–4). In later western church tradition, it became simplified to *lex orandi lex credendi est*, a saying that has received considerable attention, especially since Vatican II. See further on this point K. Federer, *Liturgie und Glaube: “Legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi”* (Tiro Prosper von Aquitanien). Eine theologiegeschichtliche Untersuchung (Paradosis 4; Freiburg 1950); P. De Clerck, “‘lex orandi, lex credendi’. Sens originel et avatars historiques d’un adage équivoque”, *Questions Liturgiques* 59 (1978) 193–212 (ET: “‘Lex orandi, lex credendi’: The Original Sense and Historical Avatars of an Equivocal Adage”, *Studia Liturgica* 24 [1994] 178–200); W. Dürig, “Zur Interpretation des Axioms ‘Legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi’”, in *Veritati Catholicae. FS Leo Scheffczyk* (ed. A. Ziegenaus, F. Courth and P. Schäfer; Aschaffenburg 1985) 226–236; H.-J. Schulz, “Der Grundsatz ‘lex orandi – lex credendi’ und die liturgische Dimension der ‘Hierarchie der Wahrheiten’”, *Liturgisches Jahrbuch* 49 (1999) 171–181; D.G. Van Slyke, “Lex orandi lex credendi: Liturgy as *Locus Theologicus* in the Fifth Century?”, *The Josephinum Journal of Theology* 11/2 (2004) 130–151. My thanks are due to Jérémy Delmulle for assistance on this point.

Sinn) Buße, sie bitten um das wundersame Eingreifen Gottes; das Leiden der (sogenannten) Märtyrer wirkt verdienstvoll.

Keywords: 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees, Prayer, Judas Maccabeus, Hasmoneans, Second Temple Judaism, Maccabean martyrs, Hanukkah

The contrasting depictions of prayer in First and Second Maccabees are an oft-overlooked area of controversy between these two writings. Generally speaking, whereas First Maccabees offers “a history of the rise of the Hasmonean dynasty”, Second Maccabees presents a rival explanation of how, after the defeat of the Hellenistic general Nicanor, Jerusalem came into “the possession of the Hebrews” but not specifically of the Hasmoneans.² These frequently divergent accounts attest to a sharp disagreement regarding the legitimacy of the Hasmonean dynasty, most probably during the reign of Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 BCE).³ Accordingly, the interpreter encounters numerous points of contention between the “propaganda for the Hasmonean dynasty”⁴ (First Maccabees) and Jason of Cyrene’s refutation in his epitome of a longer work (now known as Second Maccabees). As Jonathan A. Goldstein notes, Jason of Cyrene seems to have “contradicted 1 Maccabees wherever possible”⁵. The authors behind these arguments thus are not merely proponents of opposite sides of a friendly debate, but rather, offer their depictions to the exclusion of the other’s representations and constructions of legitimacy.

This article explores the divergent depictions of prayer and the corresponding reasons attributed to the victories that Judas Maccabeus led.

2 2 Macc 15:37. See J.A. Goldstein, *First Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 41; Garden City, NY 1976) 4, 27, respectively. On p. 27 Goldstein points out that a summary of the agenda of Second Maccabees appears in 2 Macc 2:19–32, which reflects interest in the Temple and the altar’s purification, as well as God’s miraculous interventions among the Jews, who “though few in number seized the whole land and pursued the barbarian hordes” (2 Macc 2:21).

3 Cf. Goldstein, *First Maccabees* (see n. 2), 5: “Their authors were bitter opponents. ... First Maccabees and the original of which Second Maccabees is an abridgment were written in close succession as propaganda after decades of controversy.” See further id., *First Maccabees* (see n. 2), 62–89, concerning the dates of these writings at or around the time of Alexander Jannaeus.

4 Goldstein, *First Maccabees* (see n. 2), 72. Goldstein discusses these differences at length (*First Maccabees*, 12, 28–34, 44–54, 78–89). See further id., *First Maccabees* (see n. 2), 80: “Striking is the fact that the two books claiming to narrate the liberation of the Jews present not a single document in common. Every document presented in First Maccabees can be used to prove Hasmonean achievement and Hasmonean priestly or dynastic legitimacy. No document presented by Jason can be so used.”

5 Goldstein, *First Maccabees* (see n. 2), 78.

This element is lacking in Goldstein's elaborate and otherwise helpful analysis of the controversies between these two works.⁶ I shall argue that the presentations of the Maccabees and others at prayer by these pro- and anti-Hasmonean authors are rooted in propaganda and, moreover, that their depictions of prayer contribute to our understanding of the larger disagreements between these two interpreters of Maccabean history. This article concerns *depictions* of prayer and makes no claim about how Jews at the time of the Maccabean revolt or, later, under Alexander Jannaeus were actually praying. In the conclusion, we shall consider briefly this problem of tendentiously depicted prayer and possible historical reconstruction.

Concerning a comparative approach to these ideologically competing works, we can, on the one hand, readily observe Jason's reactions to the chronologically prior First Maccabees. Furthermore, it is also clear that the author of First Maccabees attempts to contradict a number of anti-Hasmonean sentiments, such as those attested in Second Maccabees.⁷ The main differences of relevance to these works' depictions of prayer may be summarized as follows. In First Maccabees it is rare for Judas and his brothers to ask for divine intervention, as one routinely finds in Second Maccabees. On the contrary, when the people beseech God in First Maccabees, Judas comes forward to lead in battle in answer to the prayers. First Maccabees accentuates how crucial this military leader was in achieving steps toward Jewish liberation. Additionally, it is common for the prayers in First Maccabees to bemoan the circumstances from which the current Maccabean leader will deliver the people. This work's depiction of prayer serves to aggrandize the deliverance brought about by the same leader(s). Furthermore, according to First Maccabees the proper response to a crisis is to prepare for battle and pray for victory. Unlike the passive praying martyrs in 2 Maccabees 7, in First Maccabees the loyal Jew fights on the side of the Maccabeans. The faithful must side with God's appointed deliverers, who compare favorably with leaders like Moses and David. In contrast to the aforementioned tendencies in First Maccabees, in Second Maccabees Jason argues that Judas secured victory

6 See Goldstein, *First Maccabees* (see n. 2), 30: "Again and again Judas Maccabaeus and his men prayed for divine aid and received it, as could be seen from their ever growing successes against the enemy."

7 The fact that First Maccabees is the earlier of these two works does not necessarily mean that its author was ignorant of the claims of someone like Jason. The author of Daniel, for example, had already considered Judas to be of "little help" and had reserved ultimate hope for the time of the end and the resurrection of the dead (Dan 11:34; 12:1-4).

because of the people's repentance and prayers, the suffering of the martyrs, and his own humble religious devotion. Depictions of Judas as a conquering Davidic warrior are conspicuously absent in Second Maccabees.

The analysis to follow begins with the earlier of these two works, First Maccabees, examining also parallel accounts in Second Maccabees, in order to highlight points that Jason challenged or modified. Since people pray more often in Second Maccabees, additional passages from this work are considered in this article's second main section. This organization will facilitate a coherent picture of prayer in each writing, highlighting the contrasting depictions of Jews at prayer during the Maccabean revolt.

I. First Maccabees: Supplications Corroborating Hasmonean Legitimacy

One finds people praying at several junctures in First Maccabees, including the prayer before Judas' battle with Gorgias (1 Macc 3:43–4:25); prayer prior to engaging Lysias in battle (1 Macc 4:30–33); prayer at the cleansing of the Temple sanctuary (1 Macc 4:36–41); the "cry" of Dathema prior to the city's deliverance (1 Macc 5:30–34); Judas' prayer for the repetition of a biblical miracle and yet achieving victory without one (1 Macc 7:39–50); and Jonathan's prayer subsequent to an ambush and defeat and prior to a successful counterattack (1 Macc 11:67–74). In each case, the prayer focuses not on God's intervention but rather on Judas' initiative calling others to action.

1. Prayer before Judas' Battle with Gorgias (1 Macc 3:43–4:25; cf. 2 Macc 8:12–20)

It is perhaps no accident that people do not pray in response to the apostasy and calamities of 1 Maccabees 1–2, as one finds in 2 Maccabees 3. When the situation is at its worst in 1 Macc 1:64, Mattathias emphasizes how dire the circumstances are (1 Macc 2:1–13). The scene changes after Judas takes command (1 Macc 3:1–9). Accordingly, the narrator reports that the first time the Jews "assembled to be ready for battle and to pray" was under Judas' leadership before the first major battle with Gorgias (3:44; cf. 4:1). A lament (3:45) resembling those in the previous two chapters and emphasizing the woeful situation of uninhabited Jerusalem and her trampled sanctuary conspicuously interrupts this move toward peti-

tion.⁸ This depiction supports the Hasmonean cause in that it draws attention to the bleak situation prior to the dawning of deliverance.

The prayer commences after the community assembles at Mizpah, fasts, opens the book of the law, brings tithes and offerings, and, finally, stirs up the Nazirites (1 Macc 3:46–50a). With the above details in place, the people let their concerns be known by bemoaning the situation in much the same manner as in 1 Macc 3:45. They do not know what to do with the priestly garments, and complain about the sanctuary and priests, as well as the Gentiles gathered to destroy them.⁹

The final part of the prayer asks for no specific action from God. Rather, it invites the question, “How will we be able to withstand them, if you do not help us?” (3:53). I have already suggested that emphasizing the desperate situation dramatizes the significance of those who save the day. The vague request of 3:53 reflects the same tendency in that *Judas appears as the answer to this prayer*. The Maccabean appoints leaders, sends some people home, and sets out for battle (3:55–57). In the depiction of these preparations, Goldstein finds another item on the Hasmonean agenda, namely the validity of fighting against the enemy when facing a crisis situation; Goldstein points out how the author of First Maccabees contrasts the prudent actions of Judas with the earlier response of other Jews, who “before tried to rouse God’s vengeance against the persecuting gentiles by displaying helpless martyrdom” (cf. 1 Macc 2:28–38).¹⁰ The opposition, or in any case ambivalence, toward Judas’ initiative, evidenced by these martyrs and others, presumably would have held that “armed resistance would be useless if not impious”¹¹. Accordingly, the prayer and its surrounding

8 See further 1 Macc 1:24–28, 36–40; 2:7–13. J.R. Bartlett, *The First and Second Books of the Maccabees* (Cambridge, UK 1973) 54 offers that “this lament is reminiscent of [passages like] Isa. 1 or Ps. 79”. Cf. F.M. Abel, *Les Livres des Maccabées* (Paris 1949) 68, who makes comparisons with Jeremiah 33. J.C. Dancy, *I Maccabees: A Commentary* (Oxford 1954) 94 further notes that “the dirge ... [explains] why the Jews had to resort [i.e., retreat] to Mizpeh”.

9 1 Macc 3:50–52: “And they cried aloud (ἐβόησαν φωνῇ) to Heaven, saying, ‘What shall we do with these? Where shall we take them? [51] Your sanctuary is trampled down and profaned, and your priests mourn in humiliation. [52] Here the Gentiles are assembled against us to destroy us; you know what they plot against us.’”

10 Goldstein, *First Maccabees* (see n. 2), 262. Goldstein refers to such martyrs who obey the precepts of God and their earthly rulers as “pietists”. I avoid the term “pietists”, since it may connote value judgments about one group’s actions in contrast to those of others.

11 Goldstein, *First Maccabees* (see n. 2), 235.

context not only justifies the author's pro-Hasmonean agenda but also highlights the leader as the answer to the community's cry.¹²

The preceding observations find corroboration in Judas' exhortation immediately before this fight and the brief concluding description of the battle. The Maccabean compares the hoped-for deliverance with how the Lord saved the Jews previously – with Moses as their leader – when they crossed the Red Sea (1 Macc 4:8b–11). Judas implores them to “remember” (μυμνήσκομαι) the Exodus and deliverance from Pharaoh (4:9). If God hears them (καὶ νῦν βοήσωμεν εἰς οὐρανόν εἰ θελήσει ἡμᾶς καὶ μνησθήσεται), they have proof that God “will favor [them] and remember his covenant ... and crush this army ...” (4:10). Given that Judas identifies the present situation with the biblical past and the covenant, if the Maccabean forces win (as, of course, they do), the result authenticates that the Lord recognizes Judas' leadership. By implication, God has renewed or confirmed the covenant with the Maccabees, which suggests possibly ominous implications for Jews who may oppose their actions or leadership.

Second Maccabees offers a notably contrasting depiction of the Jews prior to this battle with Lysias. The prayer, which is explicitly separate from Judas' initiation, is attributed to others (οἱ δὲ τὰ περιλελειμμένα πάντα), who

sold all their remaining property, and at the same time implored the Lord to rescue those who had been sold by the ungodly Nicanor before he ever met them, [15] if not for their own sake, then for the sake of the covenants made with their ancestors, and because he had called them by his holy and glorious name. (2 Macc 8:14–15)

From a tradition-critical perspective, one could infer that Jason picks up on the covenant motif of 1 Macc 4:10 but reverses the implicit comparisons with Moses' leadership (cf. 1 Macc 4:8b–11). After the prayer, Judas offers an exhortation that the frightened people trust in Almighty God rather than “arms and acts of daring”¹³. As Goldstein notes, the words attributed to Judas in 2 Maccabees 8 focus on the lawless acts of the Gentiles

12 In this light Bartlett's comment (*First and Second Maccabees* [see n. 8], 55 [emphasis original]) regarding the opening of the book of the law becomes appropriate: since, according to Bartlett, “Possession of such a *scroll of the law* at this time carried the death penalty (1:57)”, the very preparations before the battle (cf. 1:48) bespeak a controversial and possibly dangerous response to foreign rulers.

13 2 Macc 8:16–18. The depiction of a frightened army offers an additional refutation of the apparent ease with which Judas mobilizes his people to action according to 1 Macc 3:46–60. In 1 Macc 4:6–7, the Jewish troops recognize the greatness of the enemy, but Judas encourages them not to fear (4:8).

and “other examples, including the deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib”¹⁴. In Jason’s account, God can still remarkably deliver, but there is no problem of becoming an outsider to God’s promises if one does not support the political successors of those with whom, according to 1 Maccabees 4, God ostensibly renewed the covenant.

In light of these competing agendas, we see that the depictions of prayer serve the overarching interests of not only 1 Macc 3:43–4:25 but also Jason, who separates his praying characters from Judas, refers to a different portion of scripture, and highlights Judas’ need to encourage a frightened army.¹⁵ Whereas according to First Maccabees Judas is the embodiment of God’s help in a time of crisis, Jason does not allow Judas to receive prominence as a military commander, let alone as a leader like Moses.

As a further illustration of these divergent tendencies, we observe Second Maccabees’ elaboration of what the Maccabees did after the two successive victories.¹⁶ According to Jason, “the wrath of the Lord had turned to mercy” (2 Macc 8:5) because of the deaths of the martyrs and the people’s prayerful repentance (cf. 7:37–38; 8:2–4). Second Maccabees further reports that after the battle “they gave some of the spoils to those who had been tortured and to the widows and orphans . . .” (2 Macc 8:28). One could infer from this gesture that because the martyrs helped to turn aside God’s wrath and thus played an integral role in securing the victories that Judas led, they should share in the spoils. The narrative of First Maccabees predictably is unaware of such details and offers only a brief comment regarding the result of the battle.¹⁷ This difference between the Maccabean narrators, while not directly supporting the above observations regarding the divergently depicted prayers, correlates with several emphases in 1 Macc 3:44–53. The author of First Maccabees not only does not reward martyrs, but also implicitly rebukes their passivity.

To summarize, after an initial mention of an anticipated prayer (1 Macc 3:44), we find instead a lament. After a further interruption enumerating details of the community’s religious devotion (3:46–50a), the prayer continues with an additional lament and thus implicitly calls attention to the

¹⁴ Goldstein, *First Maccabees* (see n. 2), 264; so also Dancy, *I Maccabees* (see n. 8), 96.

¹⁵ Therefore, Bartlett, *First and Second Maccabees* (see n. 8), 57 (emphasis original) is incorrect to suggest that in 2 Maccabees 8 “Judas’ speech recalls the defeat of *Pharaoh and his army* (Exod. 14); the parallel speech in 2 Macc. 8: 16–20 adds [*sic*] reference to other occasions when God helped Israel”.

¹⁶ I am indebted to Goldstein, *First Maccabees* (see n. 2), 12 n. 11, who points out this observation with regard to the different views toward the martyrs in these contexts.

¹⁷ 1 Macc 4:24–25: “On their return they sang hymns and praises to Heaven – ‘For he is good, for his mercy endures forever.’ [25] Thus Israel had a great deliverance that day.”

significance of Judas as a proto-Hasmonean deliverer. By concluding with a general request for divine assistance (3:53), the author makes the keen leadership of Judas – and *not* either the suffering of the martyrs or the piety of the prayers and fighters – both the presupposition and the favorable divine response to the initial petition.¹⁸ Just before the battle commences, Judas again prays (4:8–11) and comes forward not only as the answer to prayer but also as the embodiment of a deliverer like Moses. The partially parallel account of 2 Maccabees 8 could hardly be more diametrically opposed to these agendas, instead aiming to discount the significance of Judas as a leader and attracting attention to others who pray, to the fearful Jewish army, and to other biblical allusions.

2. Prayer prior to Engaging Lysias in Battle (1 Macc 4:30–33; cf. 2 Macc 11:6–15)

Following the Jews' victory over Gorgias (cf. 1 Macc 3:43–4:25), the Seleucid general Lysias deploys a large force, which Judas meets at Beth-zur (1 Macc 4:26–29). Prior to the encounter with Lysias, the author offers another petition for victory (4:30–33). This prayer, with its allusions to ancient Israelite conquests,¹⁹ coheres with the description of the previous battle (cf. 4:22), where the presentation of current events is filtered through archetypes of the biblical past. The prayer asks for victory, like the one God gave to David and Jonathan over “the mighty warrior” and the Philistines (4:30). There is no request for miraculous intervention through an angelic intermediary, for example. On the contrary, they ask, “Strike them down with the sword of those who love you” (4:33a). In the brief description of their smashing success (4:34), the author illustrates the validity of such a divine petition.²⁰ 1 Macc 4:30–33 therefore im-

18 In light of the above observations, it does not follow, as Dancy, *I Maccabees* (see n. 8), 94 suggests, that “[t]he main object of the observances at Mizpeh [3:46] was to establish a claim to the compassion and the help of God (v. 53); a subsidiary one perhaps to arouse enthusiasm of the people (v. 54)”. Dancy seems to bring the theology of prayer in Second Maccabees to this context. Yet the author of First Maccabees makes no connection between fasting or praying and receiving divine mercy.

19 Goldstein, *First Maccabees* (see n. 2), 270 notes the possible allusions to numerous biblical passages, including Deut 28:65; Jos 5:1; 1 Sam 10:26; 14:1–15; 17:4, Pss 9:11f; 107:26f; Mic 7:16. The “mighty warrior” is probably an allusion to Goliath (cf. 1 Sam 17:4). See further F.M. Abel and J. Starcky, *Les Livres des Maccabées* (3rd ed.; Paris 1961) 115.

20 1 Macc 4:34: “Then both sides attacked, and there fell of the army of Lysias five thousand men; they fell in action.” The absence of the final words (καὶ ἔπεσον ἐξ ἐναντίας αὐτῶν) in some witnesses may best be explained by parablepsis on the part of certain copyists

plies that fighting – and praying – on the side of the anointed leader constitutes an integral key to success.

Once again Second Maccabees takes exception with nearly all the above points. First, although concurring that the Jews won a victory, Jason calls attention to the enemy soldiers who escape from battle rather than those who were killed (2 Macc 11:12; *pace* 1 Macc 4:33). Second, the end of the battle stems not from Judas' triumph but from Lysias' initiative to negotiate peace (2 Macc 11:13f). Third, the Seleucid general takes this action since "he realized that the Hebrews were invincible because the mighty God fought on their side" (11:13). What led to Lysias' realization was that "a horseman appeared at the head [of the Jews], clothed in white and brandishing weapons of gold" (11:8b). Before the battle the Israelites, too, had recognized this "heavenly ally" (11:9f). It was for such a "good angel" that Judas, his men, and all the people had earlier prayed (11:6).

Therefore, 1 Macc 4:30–34 and 2 Macc 11:6–15 further exemplify how the contrasting presentations of prayer serve the conflicting agendas of these two authors. In the one account Judas prays confidently for God to bless his own victory and receives the same as previous biblical fighters. In the other the people ask for a heavenly sign and achieve victory because the enemy recognizes that they have received help from an angel rather than from Judas.

3. Prayer at the Cleansing of the Temple Sanctuary (1 Macc 4:36–41; cf. 2 Macc 10:1–4)

First Maccabees draws a direct connection between the preceding victory against Lysias (1 Macc 4:34–35) and the impetus originating with "Judas and his brothers" to cleanse the Temple sanctuary.²¹ The author records the mourning and lamentation of the people when they survey the abysmal sight (4:38–39). As in 3:54, they sound the trumpets and call out to heaven.²² Unlike previous occurrences of prayer, there is no mention of

since ἔπεσον appears twice in the verse. Concerning the manuscript evidence, see S. Todesche and S. Zeitlin, *The First Book of Maccabees* (New York 1950) 104.

21 1 Macc 4:36: "Then Judas and his brothers said, 'See, our enemies are crushed; let us go up to cleanse the sanctuary and dedicate it.'" Goldstein, *First Maccabees* (see n. 2), 273–274 discusses at some length that, contrary to what was expected, no miracle accompanied this new dedication. In Goldstein's view, this ostensible omission may stem from an embarrassing turn of events. In light of the above observations regarding how God works in response to the petitions of humanity, however, it is more likely that for the author of First Maccabees *no miracle was necessary*. Rather, the focus continues to remain on Judas' initiative rather than miraculous intervention.

22 1 Macc 4:40b: καὶ ἐσάλπισαν ταῖς σάλπιγξιν τῶν σημασιῶν καὶ ἐβόησαν εἰς οὐρανόν.

the specific contents of the petition. Instead, the narrative mentions Judas' command to continue the fight and for priests to be selected.²³

2 Maccabees 10 likewise mentions prayer at the cleansing of the Temple only briefly. Nevertheless, Jason again seizes the opportunity to build his own case, even in a brief prayer. He places the time they “purified the sanctuary and made another altar” (2 Macc 10:3) after the death of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (cf. 9:5–29). The people's prayer in 10:4 reflects another aspect of this author's explanation of the Jews' predicament and deliverance: the cause of the people's woes is *their own sin*.²⁴ By repenting and seeking the Lord, they may celebrate the purified sanctuary and new altar (10:1–3). Jason argues implicitly that no Hasmonean ruler could save the people from their own sin; they must do this themselves. As a consequence of this deuteronomistic interpretive scheme, Judas becomes only an instrument of God who was at the head of the group who recovered “the Temple and the city as the Lord was leading them on” (τοῦ κυρίου προάγοντος αὐτούς 10:1). Thus, Jason again picks up on the propaganda surrounding the importance of the leadership of “Judas and his brothers” (cf. 1 Macc 4:36) and diminishes their significance by replacing the unspecified prayer of 1 Macc 4:40 with a supplication that bespeaks a rival presentation of the people's problem and a corresponding alternate solution (2 Macc 10:3).

4. The “Cry” of Dathema before the City's Deliverance (1 Macc 5:30–34)

The next time First Maccabees depicts a prayer, Judas seeks to rescue the city of Dathema from enemy siege. Judas sees “that the battle had begun and that the cry of the town (ἡ κραυγὴ τῆς πόλεως) went up to heaven” and calls his forces to join in the fight (5:31 f; cf. 5:9). There is no clear differentiation between the “cry” of battle and the “cry” of prayer that reaches heaven and is answered with the help that Judas summons rather than a miraculous or other-worldly intervention. One might even ask whether the city cries out to God, Judas, or both sources of deliverance. As is con-

23 1 Macc 4:41–43. In 1 Macc 9:46 there is another such brief depiction of prayer when Jonathan exhorts to his troops, “Cry out now to Heaven (νῦν οὖν κεκράξατε εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν) that you may be delivered from the hands of our enemies.”

24 2 Macc 10:4: “They fell prostrate and besought the Lord (ἤξισαν τὸν κύριον) that they might never again fall into such misfortunes, but that, if they should ever sin (ἐάν ποτε καὶ ἀμάρτωσιν), they might be disciplined by him with forbearance and not be handed over to blasphemous and barbarous nations.” See further the discussion of 2 Macc 10:1–4 in the following section.

sistent for the author's pro-Hasmonean agenda, Timothy's army "recognized that it was Maccabeus" (ἐπέγνω ... ὅτι Μακκαβαῖός ἐστιν) and "fled before him" (ἔφυγον ἀπὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ, 5:34). Moreover, with ἀπὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ (*not αὐτῶν*) 1 Macc 5:34 explicitly draws attention to Judas and away from the advancing army of the Jews as a whole.

5. Judas Prays for Repetition of a Biblical Miracle and Yet Achieves Victory without It (1 Macc 7:39–50; cf. 2 Macc 15:21f)

In 1 Macc 7:41 f Judas prays for the repetition of a biblical miracle (cf. 2 Kgs 19:35–37) prior to engaging Nicanor again in battle:

When the messengers from the king spoke blasphemy, your angel went out and struck down one hundred eighty-five thousand of the Assyrians. [42] So also (οὕτως) crush this army before us today; let the rest learn that Nicanor has spoken wickedly against the sanctuary, and judge him according to this wickedness.²⁵

Given the contrasts this article has noted between First and Second Maccabees on asking for such miraculous intervention,²⁶ the occurrence of such a request in First Maccabees merits an explanation. We shall see that despite the *request* for a miracle, the absence of the *occurrence* of a miracle is consistent with the author's pro-Hasmonean agenda.

In 2 Kgs 19:35–37 the Lord sends an angel, who at night kills 185,000 Assyrians, thus resulting in the flight of King Sennacherib; the Assyrian king is subsequently executed by his two sons. In three respects Judas' request in First Maccabees stands in contrast to the tendency of miraculous deliverance in Second Maccabees. First, Judas' main request is that God "crush his [Nicanor's] army before us today" (1 Macc 7:42). Judas does not ask for an aversion of the battle but for success once it commences (cf. 4:30–33). Second, Judas' victory without the help of an angel surpasses the grandeur of the deliverance in 2 Kings 19 (cf. 1 Macc 7:41). In the biblical account, the opposing leader flees from the battle only to be assassinated by his sons (2 Kgs 19:37). Nicanor's death is more spectacular because he is "the first to fall in battle" when the armies meet (1 Macc 7:43c). Third, despite Judas' request, there is no mention of any miracu-

²⁵ Nicanor's threat against Judas' and the priests' prayer asking for vengeance against "him and his army" (1 Macc 7:33–38) immediately precedes the general's advance and the clash between him and Judas. First Maccabees draws no direct connection between the petition of the priests and Judas' success. As we shall see below, 2 Maccabees 14f both picks up on this possible inference and adds other causes for the victory, including prayers from the Jewish people, the former high priest Onias, and Judas, apparently in an effort to diminish the significance of the Maccabean's role in the conflict.

²⁶ E.g., see above on 1 Macc 4:30–33 and 2 Macc 11:6–15.

lous intervention in the battle. On the contrary, 1 Macc 7:43b offers the rather underwhelming report that when the forces met in battle, “the army of Nicanor was crushed”. Thus, although Judas’ prayer in 1 Macc 7:41f asks for the type of supernatural intervention that is more characteristic of Second Maccabees, the result of the battle actually supersedes the grandeur of the biblical account, notably without any miraculous help. A possible implication of 1 Macc 7:41–50 is that one needs no angel when serving in Judas’ army.

It will come as no surprise that the author of Second Maccabees does not allow this portrayal of Maccabean prayer to escape alteration. The Judas of 2 Macc 15:21f is said to understand his inability to grant victory, since “it is not by arms, but as the Lord judges, that he [God] grants the victory to those who are worthy” (2 Macc 15:21). Moreover, Jason’s Judas is even more blatant in his request “for an angel [as] in the time of King Hezekiah” (15:22). We shall return to this passage later, since Jason’s description is quite extensive, offering a climax for his anti-Hasmonean work.

6. Prayer Subsequent to Ambush and Defeat Followed by Victory (1 Macc 11:67–74)

The final occurrence of prayer in First Maccabees concerns an embarrassing situation and thus a possible challenge to the present argument about Maccabees’ depictions of prayer. In 11:67–74 the author must explain how Jonathan recovered from defeat when surprised by an ambush, from which all the Jewish soldiers flee except Jonathan and his two commanders (ἄρχοντες, 11:70a) Mattathias and Judas. In such a desperate situation, the author depicts Jonathan praying while mourning with rent garments and dust on his head (11:71). There is no description of the content of Jonathan’s prayer. Instead, the continuing narrative asserts that Jonathan’s return to battle inspired the fleeing soldiers likewise to come back and rout Demetrius’ officers (11:72–74).²⁷

Thus, Jonathan’s prayer and mourning constitutes a vague but nevertheless integral turning point. The author emphasizes both the efficacy of this leader’s prayer and his bravery. As observed above in 1 Maccabees 7,

²⁷ Historically speaking, the account is of course an oversimplification. Goldstein, *First Maccabees* (see n. 2), 443 interjects that “the two commanders who stood firm [were] surely accompanied by some of their subordinates” and notes that Josephus “guessed that some fifty subordinates stood firm (Jos., Ant. xiii 5.7.161)”. Moreover, Abel, *Les Livres des Maccabées* (see n. 8), 219 notes how Josephus “passe sous silence la prière”.

the important issue is to fight on the side of the right leader, even if a setback should occur. When the leader whom God approves prays, that leader's supplication and initiative are sufficient to turn the tide of the battle (cf. 1 Macc 11:63).

7. Summation: Prayer in First Maccabees Contrasted with Second Maccabees

The first point of contention between First and Second Maccabees concerns the former work's association of prayer with fighting on Judas' side (1 Macc 3:43–60). These two authors likewise portray differently those who passively die (1 Macc 2:28–38) and the martyrs whose intercession is integral to Judas' success in (2 Maccabees 7–8). Moreover, when exhorting prayer before battles Judas compares the experience to the Exodus from Egypt, asking not for miraculous intervention but for victory through “the sword of those who love” God (1 Macc 4:8–11, 30–34). Later, Judas leads the initiative to cleanse the Temple sanctuary and is recognized by the fleeing enemy forces (1 Macc 4:36–41; 5:30–34). Once when Judas prays for a miracle, the subsequent narrative reports that Judas actually accomplishes a more triumphant victory *without* divine intervention than the biblical encounter to which he alludes (1 Macc 7:41 f; cf. 2 Kgs 19:35–37). Finally, after Jonathan's army is scattered by an ambush, his prayer and mourning offer a turning point and prelude to a remarkable victory, thus underscoring the importance of his leadership, including his prayers (1 Macc 11:67–74). This section has also noted the consistently contrasting depictions of prayer in the parallel passages of Second Maccabees, which reduce Judas' importance. The next section explores further this tendency in Jason's depictions of the Maccabees at prayer.

II. Anti-Hasmonean and Deuteronomistic Prayers in Second Maccabees

Heretofore this article has addressed passages in First and Second Maccabees that ostensibly report the same developments. In the former work the depictions of prayer serve the author's agenda of emphasizing the significance of Judas and Jonathan as God's chosen leaders and, by implication, of corroborating the legitimacy of the Hasmoneans who eventually succeeded them. In his response to First Maccabees, Jason consistently offers additional causes for Judas' amazing victories. This section will examine

four passages that reflect these tendencies of Jason. First, the intercession of the high priest Onias and others demonstrates that, long before Judas' engagement in battle, beseeching God for spectacular deliverance was the proper response and cause of the Jews' victory (2 Macc 3:13–34). Second, Jason introduces the suffering and the efficacious prayer of the martyrs as a cause of the next victory (2 Macc 7:1–8:5); Judas and his companions acknowledge this needed assistance when they call upon the Lord (ἐπικαλέω) “to hearken to the blood that cried out to him” (8:2f). Third, 2 Macc 10:1–4 sets a deuteronomistic tone when the people pray that they not fall into transgression again. Their prayer stipulates that the present crisis is precipitated by their own sin. The corresponding remedy lies not in leadership from a great proto-Hasmonean leader but in repentance. Fourth, at the final, climactic scene of the drama (14:31–15:27), Jason places on the lips of Judas the exhortation not to trust in the natural strength of weapons but, rather, in the Lord's deliverance (15:11, 21). With this characterization Jason demonstrates how completely dependent Judas was on a host of non-military preparations and prayers from the people, as well as on assistance from heaven.

According to Second Maccabees, because the priests, Judas, and the people cry out for miraculous intervention – sometimes coming in the form of a delivering or “good” angel – more responsibility for the Jews' deliverance rests with the Lord's mercy and the people as a whole than with Judas as a liberator (11:6; 15:22). In Jason's presentation, Judas thus receives a demotion from his status in First Maccabees: no longer is he a vital link in the Hasmonean succession who merits comparison with Moses or David. On the contrary, Judas' actions not only fit within but are also dependent upon a larger scheme of God's interactions with the covenant people when they turn from sin and to prayer. The crucial point in Second Maccabees, reflected also in this work's depictions of prayer, is that one repents looking to the Lord for deliverance rather than to Judas, from whose legacy the Hasmoneans would later derive legitimacy.

1. Prayer Acknowledging Divine Intervention (2 Macc 3:13–34)

The first points at which Jason depicts prayer exemplify how to beseech the Almighty in a time of crisis.²⁸ Heliodorus insists that money be “confiscat-

28 Since the prayers of 2 Maccabees 1–2 occur in two letters at the beginning of this epitome and neither letter seems to be formative for later petitions in 2 Maccabees 3–15, the former are not included in the present discussion. The relationship of these initial letters

ed for the king's treasury" (3:13). 2 Macc 3:14–21 relates how, in response, the priests and the people pray prior to the anticipated encounter. In 3:22, the imperfect (ἐπεκαλοῦντο) emphasizes that they continued to pray also when Heliodorus arrived with his bodyguard to collect: "While they were calling upon the Almighty Lord that he would keep what had been entrusted safe and secure for those who had entrusted it, [23] Heliodorus went on with what had been decided" (3:22f). The proof of their prayer's efficacy becomes evident when a horseman and two young men (νεανία) assault Heliodorus so severely that he has no hope of recovery (cf. διὰ τὴν θεῖαν ἐνέργειαν, 3:29). The author follows this success story with the further triumph that Heliodorus' friends ask Onias to call upon (ἐπικαλέω, 3:31) the Most High for their leader not to die (3:31–34). In this remarkable tale of deliverance the real power lies not in Judas' initiative but in prayer.

In contrast to the first battle preparations with Judas in charge in 1 Macc 3:43–60, 2 Maccabees 3 offers a diametrically opposed depiction of the people's response to the initial threat to the holy city's "unbroken peace" (cf. 2 Macc 3:1). Above it was observed that, although prayer before an encounter is important in 1 Macc 3:50b–53 and 4:30–33, military preparation also plays a key role. Instead of such preparations, Second Maccabees substitutes a supernatural intervention in order to pass over in silence whatever actual resistance prevented Heliodorus from completing his mission. By passing over in silence details about the battle and, instead, emphasizing the sufficiency of prayer, Jason argues that long before Judas enters the narrative as a military leader (beginning in 2 Macc 8:1), the response of beseeching God proved to be sufficient for the Israelites' needs. Additionally, two similar explanations recount Antiochus' first coming to the Temple and death in Persia (2 Macc 5:1–4; 9:1–29): the people pray (ἄξιόω) that an apparition of a "golden-clad cavalry charging through the air ... might prove to have been a good omen" (5:2, 4), and Antiochus dies because the Lord "struck him with an incurable and invisible blow" (9:5).

2. The Martyrs' Intercession as Integral to Judas' Victory (2 Macc 7:1–8:5)

2 Maccabees 7 offers the martyrs' intercession as the key explanation for Judas' successes. Later, Judas himself will dutifully recognize the significance of repentance, prayer, and the suffering of the just (8:1–4). Given

(2 Maccabees 1–2) to the rest of this work is a complex question and beyond the scope of this article.

this agenda it is perhaps no accident that Judas “and nine others” take refuge in the wilderness (5:27) before a detailed description of the people’s sufferings – in particular, those of the martyrs – follow in 2 Maccabees 6–7. When Judas departs, no remedy exists for the evils that the usurping high priests Jason and Menelaus brought. It is not yet time for the Maccabean to save the day because, just as prayer resulting in divine intervention constituted the cause of deliverance in 2 Maccabees 3, the author will again offer a plausible alternative, construing the source of redemption as those who suffer.

For example, Jason quotes the last of these martyrs in 2 Macc 7:37 as follows: “I, like my brothers, give up body and life for the laws of our ancestors, appealing to God (ἐπικαλούμενος τὸν θεόν) to show mercy soon to our nation ...”²⁹. The martyr’s summary of his prayer commends the effectiveness of the suffering and prayer of the martyrs, who “bring to an end the wrath of the Almighty that has justly fallen on our whole nation” (7:38). This depiction correlates with the summary of the first prayer of Judas and his companions, occurring at nearly the half-way point of the book:

They implored (ἐπικαλέω) the Lord to look upon the people who were oppressed by all; and to have pity on the temple that had been profaned by the godless; [3] to have mercy on the city that was being destroyed and about to be leveled to the ground; to hearken to the blood that cried out to him (τῶν καταβοώντων πρὸς αὐτὸν αἱμάτων εἰσακοῦσαι); [4] to remember also the lawless destruction of the innocent babies and the blasphemies committed against his name; and to show his hatred of evil. (2 Macc 8:2–4)

Their prayer asks for the Lord’s mercy but does not highlight *them* as the source of deliverance. The following verse reports the result of their prayer: “As soon as Maccabeus got his army organized, the Gentiles could not withstand him, for the wrath of the Lord had turned to mercy” (8:5). Therefore according to Second Maccabees the spilled blood and prayer of those who suffered, combined with Judas’ recognition of the value of their suffering and prayer, are the source of his military success. With Goldstein we thus conclude that Judas’ prayer acknowledging dependence

29 J.A. Goldstein, *Second Maccabees: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 41 A; Garden City, NY 1983) 317 observes that the request for mercy “is probably a paraphrase of ‘relent’ at Deut 32:36, the text on which the martyrs (vs. 6) placed their faith”. Cf. 2 Macc 7:6: “The Lord God is watching over us and in truth has compassion on us, as Moses declared in his song that bore witness against the people to their faces, when he said, ‘And he will have compassion on his servants.’”

on his dead predecessors (cf. 2 Macc 8:2–4) “is the counterpart to the glorification of Judas in the poem at I [Maccabees] 3:3–9”.³⁰

As noted above, Judas’ army materializes at a comparatively late point in the narrative in contrast to the leader’s prompt introduction in 1 Maccabees 3.³¹ Since some common source material seems to lie behind the two accounts,³² this difference in organization and emphasis further illustrates the antithetical agendas of these two authors. Whereas in the one account Judas “takes command” (1 Macc 3:1), in the other his small band “secretly entered the villages” to look for additional support (2 Macc 8:1).

Additionally, Second Maccabees offers numerous other brief references to prayer that do not reflect the above tendencies. 2 Macc 8:14 mentions how some “sold all their remaining property, and at the same time implored (ἀξιόω) the Lord ...”. After the battle there is an additional prayer in response to the victory (8:29). They also pray before facing the Idumeans (10:16) and Timothy (10:25f). Moreover, in 11:6 they ask “the Lord to send a good angel to save Israel” (cf. 15:23). When a series of battles ensues in 2 Maccabees 12, further petitions likewise follow (12:6, 15, 28, 36). On a later occasion, Judas orders the people to call on the Lord day and night (13:10–12). Furthermore, Judas is far from being an autonomous leader of a dynasty since he asks advice from the elders and commits his decision to the Creator (δοὺς δὲ τὴν ἐπιτροπὴν τῷ κτίστῃ, 13:14). These brief depictions of prayer may be seen as accentuating how much the Maccabean and his troops relied upon divine assistance for victory. As a result, the Judas of Second Maccabees finds it necessary to pray more often and to request more divine intervention than the Judas of First Maccabees does.

3. Deuteronomistic Implications of 2 Macc 10:1–4

Above 2 Macc 10:1–4 was discussed in comparison with 1 Macc 4:36–41 and the rededication of the Temple. We return to the prayer in this subsection because it is integral to this author’s argument. Jason depicts “Mac-

³⁰ Goldstein, *Second Maccabees* (see n. 29), 324.

³¹ Bartlett, *First and Second Maccabees* (see n. 8), 277 likewise observes this point but curiously offers the title “The revolt of Judas Maccabaeus” (emphasis added) for 2 Macc 8:1–11.

³² Goldstein, *Second Maccabees* (see n. 29), 321–323, at 321: “Not one of the differences between the two accounts invalidates the parallels which point to a common source. It is hard to see how such close parallels in two such different works could arise merely from the fact that the two narrate the same course of events.”

cabeus and his followers” (10:1) as praying “that they might never again fall into such misfortunes, but that, if they should ever sin (ἐάν ποτε καὶ ἁμάρτωσιν), they might be disciplined by him [the Lord] with forbearance and not be handed over to blasphemous and barbarous nations” (10:4). Their prayer implies that the cause of the present crisis is the people’s sin, and the Almighty gives victory in response to the people’s cry. Consequently, the solution must begin with the people’s repentance and cannot stem primarily from a proto-Hasmonean redeemer like Judas.³³

4. Prayers before the Culminative Battle with Nicanor (2 Macc 14:31–15:37)

Beginning in 14:31, Jason recounts the final episode in the struggle against Nicanor for control of the Temple. It is certain that a fight will ensue after the foreign general vows to level the Temple unless the Jews hand over Judas (14:33). In accordance with other depictions of Judas in Second Maccabees, in this final climactic scene Judas is likewise shown to be dependent upon a host of other individuals’ actions, as well as his own prayers and devotion.

The first response to the crisis is the prayer of the priests that the house of God remain undefiled (2 Macc 14:36; cf. 1 Macc 7:33–38). Following this intercession is an extended description of the voluntary martyrdom of Razis, who dies confident that he will receive his body parts back from the Lord (14:37–46). The text does not denote any connection between his death and the anticipated battle, however. In light of 2 Macc 6:1–8:7 this point could be argued for 14:37–46 but is uncertain. Goldstein suggests that a key omission is that “Razis confesses no national sin”.³⁴ Instead of blaming the people’s transgressions, the author finds the cause of Nicanor’s attack in the Seleucid general’s reckless demand that the people deliver Judas (14:33). Perhaps at this point in the narrative there is no need for the people to repent again (cf. 10:1–4; 12:40–43a). The final battle thus gives them an opportunity collectively and triumphantly to achieve liberation now that the anger of the Almighty no longer burns against them for their sinful ways.

³³ Deuteronomistic theology likewise underlies 2 Macc 12:40, according to which only Jewish soldiers who carried “sacred tokens of the idols of Jamnia, which the law forbids the Jews to wear”, died in battle. Afterward the people as a whole repented of this sin, and Judas collected a sin offering (2 Macc 12:41–43a).

³⁴ Goldstein, *Second Maccabees* (see n. 29), 490.

In addition, Judas emphasizes how much he and all the Jews depend on the Lord (15:7–11). Afterward the former high priest Onias reappears and prays (κατεύχομαι) for all the Jews (15:12). Onias also experiences a vision of the prophet Jeremiah and commends Judas to this prophet of old, who gives the Maccabean a sword and a promise of victory (15:13–16; cf. 15:11). The spotlight then returns to Judas, who seeks to arouse courage in the troops (15:17–19). Judas prays, calling “upon the Lord who works wonders; for he [Judas] knew that it is not by arms, but as the Lord decides, that he gains the victory for those who deserve it” (15:21b; cf. Judas’ dream in 15:11). Judas also asks for “a good angel” to perform a miracle as in Hezekiah’s time.³⁵

Finally, with the above in place – the priests’ prayer, Razis the zealous martyr, Judas’ exhortation, Onias’ prayer and vision, Judas’ motivating his soldiers, and Judas’ prayer for angelic intervention – the battle can commence. The mere three verses describing the battle (15:25–27) are quite brief in comparison with the multifaceted preludes to victory (14:34–15:24). With such a host of non-military forces working together for Judas, the author minimizes any heroic description of the conflict that could ascribe greatness to Judas or his successors in particular.

In light of these observations we must disagree with F.M. Abel’s suggestion concerning Judas’ prayer in 15:21 that “Judas se présente sous les dehors d’un chef religieux ...”³⁶. Jason’s goal is the very opposite of presenting Judas as a religious leader. The purpose of highlighting so many activities before the battle is to illustrate how the Maccabean satisfies only one of several necessary preconditions for success in battle. Indeed, after the battle Judas drops out of the picture entirely. When Second Maccabees concludes its account of how the city came to be “in the possession of the Hebrews” (ὑπὸ τῶν Εβραίων, 15:37), the author is conspicuously silent about the eventual Hasmonean leadership over Jerusalem and the Jews in this region. Nevertheless, Jason’s point would have validity if one were to accept his explanations about the deuteronomistic origins of the crisis and how the victory was achieved. Jerusalem should belong to the Jewish people (and not to the Hasmonean leadership), since they all together repented, prayed, suffered, and fought.

³⁵ Gk.: ἀποστείλον ἄγγελον ἀγαθὸν ἔμπροσθεν ἡμῶν, 2 Macc 15:23; cf. 8:18; 11:6; 2 Kgs 18:13–19:35; Isaiah 36–37.

³⁶ Abel, *Les Livres des Maccabées* (see n. 8), 476.

5. The Terminology of Prayer in First and Second Maccabees

An additional point concerns the different vocabulary for praying in these two works. First Maccabees exclusively uses προσεύχομαι and βοάω, of which only the former occurs (occasionally) in Second Maccabees.³⁷ In Second Maccabees the typical designations for prayer are ἐπικαλέω and ἀξιώω, words First Maccabees never associates with prayer.³⁸ In all likelihood we should not attach any particular significance to this difference in vocabulary.³⁹ Nevertheless, Jason's choice of words in Second Maccabees is consistent with the thesis that in responding to First Maccabees he did not copy the rival account's formulas for calling on God but, instead, crafted depictions of prayer according to his historiographic and political agenda.⁴⁰

III. Conclusion

At the beginning of this article I made reference to the saying of Prosper of Aquitaine that the rule of supplication should establish the rule of faith (... *ut legem credendi lex statuat lex supplicandi*).⁴¹ This article's analysis of First and Second Maccabees supports a conclusion running in the opposite direction: each author's convictions about the significance of Judas the Maccabean in the Jews' eventual liberation from Seleucid rule has a decisive influence on these works' contrasting presentations of Judas and other Jews at prayer. The pro-Hasmonean propaganda of First Mac-

37 Occurrences of προσεύχομαι: 1 Macc 3:44; 4:30; 7:40; 11:71; 2 Macc 1:6, 23, 24; 2:10 (twice); 12:44; 15:14. It is interesting that in Second Maccabees the occurrences are in the initial epistles (i. e., chapters 1–2) and toward the end of the epitome. The verb βοάω occurs in 1 Macc 3:50, 54; 4:10, 40; 5:33.

38 Instances of ἐπικαλέω: 2 Macc 3:15, 22, 31; 7:37; 8:2; 12:6, 15, 28, 36; 13:10; 14:34, 46; 15:21, 22. In First Maccabees this term appears designating names (1 Macc 2:2–5) and referring (in a prayer, 1 Macc 7:37) to the house called by the Lord's name. The verb ἀξιώω occurs in 2 Macc 2:8; 5:4; 8:14, 29; 10:4, 16; 12:42. In addition, the verb ἱκετεύω, a word not present in First Maccabees, appears once in 2 Macc 11:6. Its meaning in this context does not seem markedly different from ἐπικαλέω. See further LSJ, *Greek English Lexicon*, 272, 379 (s.v. ἐπικαλέω and ἱκετεύω).

39 A preference for ἐπικαλέω could suggest how the author of Second Maccabees calls on the Lord under desperate circumstances asking for a miracle, but since the verb is so common with a variety of meanings in the LXX, it would be difficult to demonstrate this point.

40 An analogous point could apply equally to the earlier First Maccabees, which depicts Judas, Jonathan, and other Jews at prayer in support of this work's propaganda for the Hasmonean leaders.

41 See above on Prosper of Aquitaine, *De gratia Dei* indiculus 8.

cabees dictates that Judas must lead initiatives to pray and appear as the anointed conqueror with which Heaven answered the people's cry. For Jason of Cyrene, however, the repentance of the people, requests for miraculous intervention, and the meritorious suffering of the martyrs correlate with alternate depictions of prayer that have the effect of lessening Judas' stature.

Nevertheless, Prosper of Aquitaine's dictum illustrates how each author wishes to inform the beliefs of his audience via the depicted prayers at this time of deliverance. Just as antithetical goals of propaganda *statuerunt legem supplicandi*, each author hopes that his prayerful Judas will incline the beliefs of others, either for or against the prevailing Hasmonean leadership.

As noted in the introduction, this article has been concerned with First and Second Maccabees' *depictions* of prayer in light of these works' overarching, and divergent, politico-religious tendencies. I have intentionally drawn no conclusions about how Jewish prayer "actually" functioned at the time of the Maccabean revolt or a few generations later when these works were written. It is, of course, possible that certain Jews prayed along the lines of both authors' tendencies. Nevertheless, I would suggest that any such historical reconstruction concerning Jewish prayer, let alone liturgical practices, on the basis of First or Second Maccabees would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, since the depictions of prayer in both works are so ideologically driven. Jews who gravitated toward the explanations for the origins of Jewish liberation in First Maccabees or Second Maccabees may well have been inclined to pray according to either author's depictions, especially since the prayers in both works contain numerous allusions to the Hebrew Bible. This problem of potential historical reconstruction is by no means unique to First and Second Maccabees but applies to other ancient Jewish and early Christian depictions of prayer.⁴²

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⁴² See, e.g., the recent collection of essays on this topic: H. Klein, V. Mihoc and K.-W. Niebuhr (eds), *Das Gebet im Neuen Testament: Vierte europäische orthodox-westliche Exegetenkonferenz in Sambata de Sus, 4.–8. August 2007* (WUNT 249; Tübingen 2009).