

Six Kingdoms

Daniel describing and explaining - Nebuchadnezzar's dream

"You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth." (Dan 2:31-35)

"You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all – you are this head of gold. But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others. Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay."

"And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

"Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold – the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure." (Dan 2:37-45)

"But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever." (Dan 7:18)

From previous studies, we know that the kingdoms are the following:-

- 1) Gold – Babylonian Kingdom
- 2) Silver - Mede and Persian Kingdom
- 3) Bronze – Greek Kingdom
- 4) Iron – Roman Kingdom
- 5) Iron and clay - Roman and Jewish Temple rulers together over Israel.
- 6) Stone - The kingdom of God – Jesus Christ is the Rock.

The area of focus, is the land which was promised to Abraham. From the River Euphrates down to the River of Egypt, named in Genesis 15:18. The dream's period is from the rule of Nebuchadnezzar, up till the day of the first Resurrection, when the righteous people are taken up from the earth (1Th 4:16 and Rev 20:5).

According to my calculations this will be some time before 2033AD, when the 1000y Sabbath day begins. See (<http://www.tangram.co.za/history.htm>)

The main issue, is the question of worship, all these kingdoms worshipped false gods and idols, including Israel who repeatedly corrupted themselves with idol worship. The majority were devout people of faith, who kept the old covenant law, and worshipped in the Temple. When John the Baptist started to preach and baptise, he proclaimed the new covenant; which had been foretold by the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Jesus Christ also proclaimed the New Birth.

Jesus Christ's crucifixion on 3rd April 33AD, brought an end to the old covenant, as He was the final perfect blood sacrifice for mankind's sin. From His death onwards the Christians baptised, made converts and spread throughout the earth, entering all the kingdoms of the world. This is why the Kingdom of God will increase and consume all the other kingdoms. After Judgement Day it will be the only kingdom ruling on the New Earth, and will last forever.

From my 'History of Mankind' study I have the 'Proclamation of Cyrus' as 540BC, 'Rome conquering Jerusalem' as 58BC, and Jesus birth as 2BC. From the Proclamation of Cyrus to Jesus birth was 539y, or 77 x 7w of years. I wondered if there were other 7w time periods which could be clearly identified.

From listening to Bible presentations on television, I've heard that the kingdom of Media and Persia was from 539BC – 331BC. The Greek kingdom was from 331BC – 168BC, and the Roman kingdom was from 168BC – 476AD.

Medes & Persians -	541BC to 331BC	is 210y	or 30 x 7w of years.
Greeks -	331BC to 164BC	is 168y	or 24 x 7w of years.
Romans -	163BC to 58BC	is 105y	or 15 x 7w of years.
Romans & Jews -	58BC to 2BC	is 56y	or 8 x 7w of years.

"Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy." (Dan 9:24)

The first 49y or 7 x 7w, were spent rebuilding the temple and Jerusalem. The balance of the years is the 70w of years mentioned in Daniel's prophecy.

Alexander takes control of Jerusalem

But Sanballat thought he had now gotten proper opportunity to make his attempt, so he renounced Darius, and taking with him seven thousand of his own subjects, he came to Alexander; and finding him beginning the siege of Tyre, he said to him, that he delivered up to him these men who came out of places under his dominion, and did gladly accept of him for their lord instead of Darius. So when Alexander had received him kindly, Sanballat thereupon took courage, and spake to him about his present affair. He told him, that he had a son-in-law, Manasseh, who was brother to the high priest Jaddua; and that there were many others of his own nation now with him, that were desirous to have a temple in the places subject to him; that it would be for the king's advantage to have the strength of the Jews divided into two parts, lest when the nation is of one mind and united, upon any attempt for innovation, it prove troublesome to kings, as it had formerly proved to the kings of Assyria. Whereupon Alexander gave Sanballat leave so to do; who used the utmost diligence, and built the temple, and made Manasseh the priest, and deemed it a great reward that his daughter's children should have that dignity; but when the seven months of the siege of Tyre were over, and the two months of the siege of Gaza, Sanballat died.

Now Alexander, when he had taken Gaza, made haste to go up to Jerusalem; and Jaddua the high priest, when he heard that, was in agony, and under terror, as not knowing how he should meet the Macedonians, since the king was displeased at his foregoing disobedience. He therefore ordained that the people should make supplications, and should join with him in offering sacrifices to God, whom he besought to protect that nation, and to deliver them from the perils that were coming upon them; whereupon God warned him in a dream, which came upon him after he had offered sacrifice, that he should take courage, and adorn the city, and open the gates; that the rest appear in white garments, but that he and the priests should meet the king in the habits proper to their order, without the dread of any ill consequences, which the province of God would prevent. Upon which, when he rose from his sleep, he greatly rejoiced; and declared to all the warning he had received from God according to which dream he acted entirely, and so waited for the coming of the king.

And when he understood that he was not far from the city, he went out in procession, with the priests and the multitude of the citizens. The procession was venerable, and the manner of it different from that of other nations. It reached to a place called Sapha; which name, translated in Greek, signifies a prospect, for you have thence a prospect both of Jerusalem and of the temple; and when the Phoenicians and the Chaldeans that followed him, thought they should have liberty to plunder the city, and torment the high priest to death, which the king's displeasure fairly promised them, the very reverse of it happened; for Alexander, when he saw the multitude at a distance, in white garments, while the priests stood clothed with fine linen, and the high priest in purple and scarlet clothing, with his mitre on his head having the golden plate on which the name of God was engraved, he approached by himself, and adored that name, and first saluted the high priest.

The Jews also did all together, with one voice, salute Alexander, and encompass him about: whereupon the kings of Syria and the rest were surprised at what Alexander had done, and supposed him disordered in his mind. However, Parmenio alone went up to him, and asked him how it came to pass, that when all others adored him, he should adore the high priest of the Jews? To whom he replied,

"I did not adore him, but that God who hath honoured him with that high priesthood; for I saw this very person in a dream, in this very habit, when I was at Dios, in Macedonia, who, when I was considering with myself how I might obtain the dominion of Asia, exhorted me to make no delay, but boldly to pass over the sea thither, for that He would conduct my army, and would give me the dominion over the Persians; whence it is, that having seen no other in that habit, and now seeing this person in it, and remembering that vision and the exhortation which I had in my dream, I believe that I bring this army under the Divine conduct, and shall therewith conquer Darius, and destroy the power of the Persians, and that all things will succeed according to what is in my own mind."

And when he had said this to Parmenio, and had given the high priest his right hand, the priests ran along by him, and he came into the city; and when he went up into the temple, he offered sacrifice to God, according to the high priest's direction, and magnificently treated both the high priest and the priests.

And when the book of Daniel was showed him, wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended; and as he was then glad, (! Read the full account of this prophecy, in Daniel 8:1-27.)

he dismissed the multitude for the present, but the next day he called them to him, and bade them ask what favors they pleased of him: whereupon the high priest desired that they might enjoy the laws of their forefathers, and might pay no tribute on the seventh year.

He granted all they desired: and when they entreated him that he would permit the Jews in Babylon and Media to enjoy their own laws also, he willingly promised to do hereafter what they desired: and when he said to the multitude, that if any of them would enlist themselves in his army on this condition, that they should continue under the law of their forefathers, and live according to them, he was willing to take them with him, many were ready to accompany him in his wars. (The Antiquities of the Jews 11.8.4 – 11.8.5 - Josephus)

What happened in the year 164BC?

1st Witness

Not long after Timothy was defeated, Lysias, the king's guardian and relative, and head of the government, heard what had happened. He became angry and led eighty thousand infantry and all his cavalry against the Jews with the intention of turning Jerusalem into a Greek city. The Temple would be taxed, as were all Gentile places of worship, and the office of High Priest would be up for sale each year. Lysias was so pleased with his tens of thousands of infantry, his thousands of cavalry, and his eighty elephants that he failed to take into account the power of God. He invaded Judaea and attacked the fort of Bethzur, about thirty kilometers south of Jerusalem. When Judas and his men heard that Lysias was laying siege to their forts, they and all the people cried and wept, begging the Lord to send a good angel to save them. Judas was the first to take up his weapons, and he urged the others to join him in risking their lives to help their fellow-Jews. So with great eagerness they all set out together. But they had not gone far from Jerusalem, when suddenly they noticed that they were being led by a horseman dressed in white and carrying gold weapons.

Immediately all of them together thanked God for His mercy; He had made them brave enough to attack not only men, but also the most savage animals or even walls of iron. So they marched in battle formation, and with them went the one whom the Lord in His mercy had sent to fight on their side. Then they charged into the enemy like lions, killing 11000 infantry and 1600 cavalry, and forcing the rest to run for their lives. Most of those who ran were wounded and had lost their weapons, and Lysias himself managed to escape only because he ran away like a coward.

Lysias was no fool. As he thought about the defeat he had suffered, he realized it was because the mighty God had fought for the Jews, making it impossible for them to be defeated. So he sent a message to the Jews, trying to persuade them to agree to a just settlement and promising to do all he could to make the king friendly towards them. Judas Maccabaeus considered what would be best for the people, and so he agreed to all the proposals Lysias had made, since the king had granted every written request that Judas had presented to Lysias.

Here is a copy of the letter which Lysias wrote to the Jews:

"Lysias to the Jewish people, greetings. Your representatives John and Absalom have delivered to me the official document which you sent with them, and they have asked me to agree to what is contained in it. I have informed the king of the matters that needed to be brought to his attention, and he has agreed to do whatever is possible. If you continue to be loyal to the government, I will do everything I can in the future to benefit your nation. I have instructed your representatives and mine to meet with you to discuss the details of these matters. May all go well with you. Dated the twenty-fourth day of the month of Dioscorinthius in the year 148."

This is a copy of the king's letter:

"King Antiochus to the honourable Lysias, greetings. Now that my father has gone to be with the gods, I want the subjects of my kingdom to conduct their own affairs without interference. I understand that the Jews do not wish to adopt the Greek way of life, as my father had intended, but prefer their own way of life and have requested that they be allowed to live according to their own customs. Since I desire that they live undisturbed like the other nations in my empire, I hereby decree that their Temple be restored to them and that they be allowed to live according to the customs of their ancestors. Please inform them of this decision and assure them of my friendship, so that they may conduct their own affairs in peace, without anything to worry about."

Here is a copy of the king's letter to the Jewish people:

"King Antiochus to the Jewish leaders and all the Jews, greetings. I hope that all is going well for you. I am in good health. Menelaus has informed me of your desire to return home and attend to your own affairs. So then, those of you who return home by the thirteenth of the month of Xanthicus may rest assured that you have nothing to fear. You may continue to observe your food laws and other laws, as you used to do, and no Jew will be punished for any crime done in ignorance. I am sending Menelaus to set your minds at ease. May all go well with you. Dated the fifteenth day of the month of Xanthicus in the year 148."

The Romans also sent the Jews the following letter:

"Quintus Memmius and Titus Manius, representatives of the Romans, to the Jews, greetings. We are in complete agreement with all that has been granted to you by the noble Lysias. We are now on our way to Antioch, so please examine carefully those matters that Lysias referred to the king. Then send a reply to us immediately so that we can represent your best interests before him. Do this as soon as you can, without delay, so that we may know what you have decided. May all go well with you. Dated fifteenth day of the month of Xanthicus in the year 148."
(2Mc 11:1-38)

The year, which they called 'the year 148', corresponds to the year 164BC.

2nd Witness

The Gentile troops that escaped went to Lysias and reported all that had happened. When Lysias heard that his troops had lost the battle, he was shocked and disappointed that Israel had not been defeated as the king had commanded. In the following year Lysias gathered an army of sixty thousand well-trained infantry and five thousand cavalry, intending to conquer the Jews. They marched into Idumea and camped at Bethzur. Judas came to meet them with ten thousand men. When Judas saw how strong the enemy's army was, he prayed,

"We will praise you, Saviour of Israel. You broke the attack of the giant by the hand of your servant David and you let Saul's son Jonathan and the young man who carried his weapons defeat the entire Philistine army. Now in the same way let your people Israel defeat our enemy. Put them to shame, in spite of all their confidence in their infantry and cavalry. Make them afraid; let their bold strength melt away; let them tremble at the prospect of defeat. We love and worship you; so let us kill our enemies, that we may then sing your praises."

The battle began, and in the hand-to-hand fighting about five thousand of Lysias' men were killed. When Lysias saw that his army was being defeated and when he saw the reckless courage of Judas and his men, who showed that they were ready to live or die with honour, he returned to Antioch. There he recruited some mercenaries and planned to return to Judaea later with a much larger army.

Judas and his brothers said,

"Now that our enemies have been defeated, let's go to Jerusalem to purify the Temple and rededicate it."

So the whole army was assembled and went up to Mount Zion. There they found the Temple abandoned, the altar profaned, the gates burnt down, the courtyards overgrown with a forest of weeds, and the priests' rooms torn down. In their sorrow, they tore their clothes, cried loudly, threw ashes on their heads, and fell face downwards on the ground. When the signal was given on the trumpets, everyone cried out to the Lord. Then Judas ordered some of his soldiers to attack the men in the fort, while he purified the Temple. He chose some priests who were qualified and who were devoted to the Law. They purified the Temple and took the stones that had been defiled and put them in an unclean place. They discussed what should be done with the altar of burnt-offerings, which had been desecrated by the Gentiles, and decided to tear it down, so that it would not stand there as a monument to their shame.

So they tore down the altar and put the stones in a suitable place on the Temple hill, where they were to be kept until a prophet should appear and decide what to do with them. Then they took uncut stones, as the Law of Moses required, and built a new altar like the old one. They repaired the Temple, inside and out, and dedicated its courtyards. They made new utensils for worship and brought the lampstand, the altar of incense, and the table for the bread into the Temple. They burnt incense on the altar and lit the lamps on the lampstand, and there was light in the Temple! They placed the loaves of bread on the table, hung the curtains, and completed all the work.

The 25th day of the ninth month, the month of Kislev, in the year 148 was the anniversary of the day the Gentiles had desecrated the altar.

On that day a sacrifice was offered on the new altar in accordance with the Law of Moses. The new altar was dedicated and hymns were sung to the accompaniment of harps, lutes, and cymbals. All the people bowed down with their faces to the ground and worshipped and praised the Lord for giving them victory. For eight days they celebrated the rededication of the altar. With great joy they brought burnt-offerings and offered fellowship-offerings and thank-offerings. They decorated the front of the Temple with gold crowns and shields, rebuilt the gates and the priests' rooms and put doors on them. Now that the Jews had removed the shame which the Gentiles had brought, they held a great celebration. Then Judas, his brothers, and the entire community of Israel decreed that the rededication of the altar should be celebrated with a festival of joy and gladness at the same time each year, beginning on the 25th of the month of Kislev and lasting eight days. Then they built high walls and strong towers round Mount Zion, so that the Gentiles could not come in and trample and defile it again. Judas placed a detachment of soldiers there to guard the Temple. He also fortified the town of Bethsur, so that the people of Israel would have a fortress facing Idumea. (1Mc 4:26-61)

3rd Witness

Hereupon Lysias was confounded at the defeat of the army which he had sent, and the next year he got together sixty thousand chosen men. He also took five thousand horsemen, and fell upon Judea; and he went up to the hill country of Bethsur, a village of Judea, and pitched his camp there, where Judas met him with ten thousand men; and when he saw the great number of his enemies, he prayed to God that He would assist him, and joined battle with the first of the enemy that appeared, and beat them, and slew about five thousand of them, and thereby became terrible to the rest of them. Nay, indeed, Lysias observing the great spirit of the Jews, how they were prepared to die rather than lose their liberty, and being afraid of their desperate way of fighting, as if it were real strength, he took the rest of the army back with him, and returned to Antioch, where he listed foreigners into the service, and prepared to fall upon Judea with a greater army.

When, therefore, the generals of Antiochus's armies had been beaten so often, Judas assembled the people together, and told them, that after these many victories which God had given them, they ought to go to Jerusalem, and purify the temple, and offer the appointed sacrifices. But as soon as he, with the whole multitude, was come to Jerusalem, and found the temple deserted, and its gates burnt down, and plants growing in the temple of their own accord, on account of its desertion, he and those that were with him began to lament, and were quite confounded at the sight of the temple; so he chose out some of his soldiers, and gave them order to fight against those guards that were in the citadel, until he should have purified the temple. When therefore he had carefully purged it, and had brought in new vessels, the candlestick, the table [of shewbread], and the altar [of incense], which were made of gold, he hung up the veils at the gates, and added doors to them. He also took down the altar [of burnt offering], and built a new one of stones that he gathered together, and not of such as were hewn with iron tools. So on the five and twentieth day of the month Casleu, which the Macedonians call Apelleus, they lighted the lamps that were on the candlestick, and offered incense upon the altar [of incense], and laid the loaves upon the table [of shewbread], and offered burnt offerings upon the new altar [of burnt offering]. Now it so fell out, that these things were done on the very same day on which their divine worship had fallen off, and was reduced to a profane and common use, after three years' time; for so it was, that the temple was made desolate by Antiochus, and so continued for three years.

This desolation happened to the temple in the hundred and forty-fifth year, on the twenty-fifth day of the month Apellus, and on the hundred and fifty-third olympiad: but it was dedicated anew, on the same day, the twenty-fifth day of the month Apellus, in the hundred and forty-eighth year, and on the hundred and fifty-fourth olympiad.

And this desolation came to pass according to the prophecy of Daniel, which was given four hundred and eight years before: for he declared that the Macedonians would dissolve that worship [for some time].

(! Read the full account of this prophecy, in Daniel 8: 1-27.)

Now Judas celebrated the festival of the restoration of the sacrifices of the temple for eight days; and omitted no sort of pleasures thereon: but he feasted them upon very rich and splendid sacrifices; and he honoured God, and delighted them, by hymns and psalms. Nay, they were so very glad at the revival of their customs, when after a long time of intermission, they unexpectedly had regained the freedom of their worship, that they made it a law for their posterity, that they should keep a festival, on account of the restoration of their temple worship, for eight days. And from that time to this we celebrate this festival, and call it Lights. I suppose the reason was, because this liberty beyond our hopes appeared to us; and that thence was the name given to that festival. Judas also rebuilt the walls round about the city, and reared towers of great height against the incursions of enemies, and set guards therein. He also fortified the city Bethsura, that it might serve as a citadel against any distresses that might come from our enemies.

(The Antiquities of the Jews : 12.7.5 – 12.7.7 by Josephus)

Why, you may ask, did I include three accounts of this event? The reason is to show the overwhelming evidence, which indicates that this prophecy of Daniel was fulfilled in the year 148, which was 164BC.

Pompey takes control of Jerusalem

Now when Pompey had pitched his camp at Jericho (where the palm tree grows, and that balsam which is an ointment of all the most precious, which, upon any incision made in the wood with a sharp stone, distills out thence like a juice), he marched in the morning to Jerusalem. Hereupon Aristobulus repented of what he was doing, and came to Pompey, and [promised to] give him money, and received him into Jerusalem, and desired that he would leave off the war, and do what he pleased peaceably. So Pompey, upon his entreaty, forgave him, and sent Gabinius, and soldiers with him, to receive the money and the city: yet was no part of this performed; but Gabinius came back, being both excluded out of the city, and receiving none of the money promised, because Aristobulus's soldiers would not permit the agreements to be executed. At this Pompey was very angry, and put Aristobulus into the prison, and came himself to the city, which was strong on every side, except in the north, which was not so well fortified, for there was a broad and deep ditch, that encompassed the city, and included within it the temple, which was itself encompassed about with a very strong stone wall.

Now there was a sedition of the men that were within the city, who did not agree what was to be done in their present circumstances, while some thought it best to deliver up the city to Pompey; but Aristobulus's party exhorted them to shut the gates, because he was kept in prison. Now these prevented the others, and seized upon the temple, and cut off the bridge which reached from it to the city, and prepared themselves to abide a siege; but the others admitted Pompey's army in, and delivered up both the city and the king's palace to him. So Pompey sent his lieutenant Piso with an army, and placed garrisons both in the city and in the palace, to secure them, and fortified the houses that joined to the temple,

and all those which were more distant and without it. And in the first place, he offered terms of accomodation to those that were within; but when they would not comply with what was desired, he encompassed all the places thereabout with a wall, wherein Hyrcanus did gladly assist him on all occasions; but Pompey pitched his camp within [the wall], on the north part of the temple, where it was most practicable; but even on that side there were great towers, and a ditch had been dug, and a deep valley begirt it round about, for on the parts towards the city were precipices, and the bridge on which Pompey had gotten in was broken down. However, a bank was raised day by day, with a great deal of labor, while the Romans cut down materials for it from the places round about; and when this bank was sufficiently raised, and the ditch filled up, though but poorly, by reason of its immense depth, he brought his mechanical engines, and battering-rams from Tyre, and placing them on the bank, he battered the temple with the stones that were thrown against it; and had it not been our practice, from the days of our forefathers, to rest on the seventh day, this bank could never have been perfected, by reason of the opposition the Jews would have made; for though our law gives us leave then to defend ourselves against those that begin to fight with us and assault us, yet does it not permit us to meddle with our enemies while they do anything else.

Which thing when the Romans understood, on those days which we call Sabbaths, they threw nothing at the Jews, nor came to any pitched battle with them, but raised up their earthen banks, and brought their engines into such forwardness, that they might do execution the next days; and anyone may hence learn how great piety we exercise towards God, and the observance of His laws, since the priests were not at all hindered from their sacred ministrations, by their fear during this siege, but did still twice each day, in the morning and about the ninth hour, offer their sacrifices on the altar; nor did they omit those sacrifices, if any melancholy accident happened, by the stones that were thrown among them; for although the city was taken on the third month, on the day of the fast, upon the hundred and seventy-ninth olympiad (! 60-57BC), when Caius Antonius and Marcus Tullius Cicero were consuls, and the enemy then fell upon them, and cut the throats of those that were in the temple, yet could not those that offered the sacrifices be compelled to run away, neither by the fear they were in of their own lives, nor by the number that were already slain, as thinking it better to suffer whatever came upon them, at their very altars, than to omit anything that their laws required of them; and that this is not a mere brag, or an encomium to manifest a degree of our piety that was false, but is the real truth, I appeal to those that have written of the acts of Pompey; and, among them, to Strabo and Nicolaus [of Damascus]; and besides these, to Titus Livius, the writer of the Roman History, who will bear witness of this thing.

But when the battering-engine was brought near, the greatest of the towers was shaken by it, and fell down, and broke down a part of the fortifications, so the enemy poured in apace; and Cornelius Faustus, the son of Sylla, with his soldiers, first of all ascended the wall, and next to him Furius the centurion, with those that followed, on the other part; while Fabius, who was also a centurion, ascended it in the middle, with a great body of men after him; but now all was full of slaughter; some of the Jews being slain by the Romans, and some by one another; nay, some there were who threw themselves down the precipices, or put fire to their houses, and burnt them, as not able to bear the miseries they were under. Of the Jews there fell twelve thousand; but of the Romans very few. Absalom, who was at once both uncle and father-in-law to Aristobulus, was taken captive; and no small enormities were committed about the temple itself, which, in former ages, had been inaccessible, and seen by none; for Pompey went into it, and not a few of those that were with him also, and saw all that which it was unlawful for any other men to see, but only for the high priests.

There were in that temple the golden table, the holy candlestick, and the pouring vessels, and a great quantity of spices; and besides these there were among the treasures two thousand talents of sacred money; yet did Pompey touch nothing of all this, on account of his regard to religion; and in this point also he acted in a manner that was worthy of his virtue.

The next day he gave order to those that had the charge of the temple to cleanse it, and to bring what offerings the law required to God; and restored the high priesthood to Hyrcanus, both because he had been useful to him in other respects, and because he hindered the Jews in the country from giving Aristobulus any assistance in his war against him.

He also cut off those that had been the authors of that war; and bestowed proper rewards on Faustus, and those others that mounted the wall with such alacrity; and he made Jerusalem tributary to the Romans, and took away those cities of Celesyria which the inhabitants of Judea had subdued, and put them under the government of the Roman president, and confined the whole nation, which had elevated itself so high before, within its own bounds.

Moreover, he rebuilt Gadara, which had been demolished a little before, to gratify Demetrius of Gadara, who was his freedman, and restored the rest of the cities, Hippos and Scythopolis, and Pella, and Dios, and Samaria, as also Marissa, and Ashdod, and Jamnia, and Arethusa, to their own inhabitants; these were in the island parts. Besides those that has been demolished, and also of the maritime cities, Gaza, and Joppa, and Dora, and Strato's Tower: which last Herod rebuilt after a glorious manner, and adorned with havens and temples; and changed its name to Caesarea. All these Pompey left in a state of freedom, and joined them to the province of Syria.

(*'The Antiquities of the Jews : 14.4.1 – 14.4.4'* by Josephus. One can also read an account of this in *'The Wars of the Jews : 1.6.4 – 1.7.7'* by Josephus.)

We are used to hearing people quote Romans 10:17 - "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." This is true, but I think - "Strong faith comes by comparing scripture texts, and by reading and studying the Word of God."

The texts I've quoted from 1&2 Maccabees, come from the 'Good News Bible with Deutero-Canonical Books' - Today's English Version - ISBN : 978-0-7982-1155-0

The texts I've quoted from 'The Antiquities of the Jews', comes from the Book of 'Josephus – The Complete Works' - ISBN : 978-0-7852-5049-4

I regard these books as scripture, because they testify to the truth of the Bible, and through reading them, they have provided me with additional insight. Along with the Book of Jasher, they serve as second witnesses to the Bible's accounts. The Book of Jasher covers Genesis - Joshua, and the Book's of Josephus, give a second historical account of the events in the Bible. Anyone who desires to understand the Bible must acquire copies of these books, then they can read the two accounts together for maximum benefit. These books are very valuable for understanding the history of the Bible, and the meanings hidden within Bible text. These books are freely available from most book stores, www.kalahari.net and www.amazon.com

The Book of Jasher, edited by Joseph B. Lumpkin - ISBN: 978-1-9335-8089-0

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