The Judaeo-Stoicism of 4 Maccabees

by

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Abstract

Hellenistic philosophy in general, and Stoicism in particular, exerted a profound influence on the pseudepigraphal Jewish work 4 Maccabees. This thesis is devoted to a broad discussion of this influence, exploring the philosophical underpinnings of 4 Maccabees and its background in Jewish law and tradition. We conclude that Stoicism, though not the only element in the background of 4 Maccabees, was the dominant element, and that the work may therefore justifiably be called Judaeo-Stoic. Chapter 1 consists of an overview of the history of the Stoic school and its ethical system so as to provide a baseline against which to measure 4 Maccabees. Chapter 2 introduces 4 Maccabees, attempting to shed some light on questions such as the work's authorship and audience. Ultimately, the work should be regarded as a "successful failure" in light of its internal success but its lack of any substantial influence on subsequent Jewish thought. Chapter 3 is devoted to a new translation of the first three chapters of 4 Maccabees and a detailed commentary on the same.[*]

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[*]Unless otherwise noted, all translations of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew texts are my own throughout this thesis.

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Dedication

Chapter 1

Stoicism and its ethical system

In order to embark on our eventual project of evaluating the success of the Jewish pseudepigraphal book of 4 Maccabees as a work of Judaeo-Stoicism, we will need to establish a baseline against which to measure it. Therefore, the goal of this chapter will be to define what we mean by Stoicism, specifically in terms of its ethical system. Ideally such a definition would draw upon a variant of Stoicism that existed in roughly the same cultural milieu as the composition of 4 Maccabees.[1] However, this endeavour is problematical. For one thing, the date of composition of 4 Maccabees is not certain; for now we will assume an approximate date sometime in the late first century or early second century CE, probably after the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE by the Romans.[2] But a greater problem is the uncertain nature of the exact form the Stoic philosophical school took in antiquity, especially roughly around this time period. As we shall see, the problem essentially reduces to one of reception of the doxographical tradition—that is, how we choose to understand the transmission of the tenets of

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[1]In this regard, this chapter is a continuation of work I have previously begun on Stoicism, its theological and ethical systems, and the interface between the two; see Tucker (2007), especially 1–53.

[2]We will return to the problem of dating the text in Chapter 2.

Stoic philosophy between the various generations of the school in antiquity.

Once we have gone over the history of Stoicism in general, we will turn our attention to its ethical system in particular, giving an outline that will provide the baseline against which to measure 4 Maccabees. We will furthermore take special notice of those doctrines of the ethical system that most closely bear on the content of 4 Maccabees, particularly including the rôle of *logos* in the Stoic theory of action. Through examining the primary sources that relate Stoic doctrines on these topics, we will establish criteria against which to measure the success of the fusion of Judaism and Stoicism that takes place in 4 Maccabees.

1.1   History of the Stoic school

Traditionally, Stoicism sees itself as having its roots in Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy, though traces of what would later become Stoic doctrine have their beginnings in pre-Socratic philosophers, even as far back as the sixth century BCE.[3] Stoicism was properly founded in the late fourth century BCE and is therefore called a "Hellenistic" philosophy by modern scholars, as it began flourishing in Hellenistic Greece during and after the reign of Alexander the Great. The Stoic "school" saw most of its competition from

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[3]On the origins of Stoicism in pre-Socratic philosophy, see Kirk et al. (1983), Frede (1999), and Long (1996), chapter 2. For the influence of the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, see especially Hahm (1977), Sandbach (1985), Long (1996), Sedley (1999), and Sedley (2002). For an exploration of the theological implications of this influence, see Tucker (2007), 24–30.

the rival Epicurean school of thought, founded during roughly the same time period, which would remain its adversary for centuries and even into Roman times. Other significant rivals to Stoic philosophy included Academic scepticism, which school was the direct descendant of Plato's Academy, and Peripatetic philosophy, descended from Aristotelian thought. Much of the surviving scholarship that records Stoic doctrines was written by philosophers of rival schools—being critical of Stoicism, they preserved their doctrines in order to rebut and refute them.

Calling Stoicism a coherent "school" of philosophy for its entire existence is somewhat misleading, since there was never a formal academy or institution of learning in which classes were taught, exams written, and so forth. Furthermore, the "school" ceased to exist as a coherent unit at or around the year 109 BCE, with the death of Panaetius and the subsequent beginning of the decentralization of Hellenistic philosophy from Greece. What unified the Stoics as a body was their adherence to a common doctrine, but even within the confines of this doctrine there appears to have been a tremendous amount of freedom of thought and expression of difference rather than enforced adherence to a rigid orthodoxy. This will become important for our understanding of the philosophical "eclecticism" dominated by Stoicism as espoused by the author of 4 Maccabees.

The founder of Stoicism was Zeno of Citium (335–263 BCE);[4] he lectured

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[4]Dating follows the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (2003), revised third edition, edited by Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth, published by Oxford University Press. All dates, of course, should be treated with the requisite amount of healthy skepticism.

from a painted porch (*stoa poikilē*) on the northern side of the *agorā* in Athens, and his followers eventually became known as the Stoics after this porch. The term Stoa is also used by scholars to refer to the school as a unit,[5] although as we have noted, understanding the school as a unit may also be somewhat misleading due to the lack of specific concern with orthodoxy on the part of many Stoic philosophers. Nevertheless, Zeno's favourite pupil Aristo seems to have been widely perceived as an unorthodox heretic and is consequently condemned by many of the ancient sources;[6] the Stoic school continued under the leadership of Cleanthes of Assos (332?–232 BCE) and Chrysippus of Soli (280?–206 BCE). It is the teachings of Chrysippus that seem to have been regarded as more or less "orthodox" by the ancients, and it is this man who eclipsed both of his predecessors' reputations in the history of the Stoa.[7] With Chrysippus' death, the so-called Early Stoa came to an end.

The next period of the Stoic school's existence, and the most relevant to our project, is the Middle Stoa, which began with the succession of Zeno of Tarsus (dates unknown; turn of the third century BCE) to the leadership of the Stoa. A succession of shadowy figures, a group of poorly understood individual leaders of the school, follows: Diogenes of Babylon (240?–152? BCE), Antipater of Tarsus (dates unknown; second century BCE), Panaetius

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[5]Indeed, this usage is ancient, as in the famous statement, εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἦν Χρύσιππος, οὐκ ἂν ἦν στοά, "If there had been no Chrysippus, there would not be a Stoa" (DL 7.183).

[6]See, for example, DL 7.161; though Aristo's apparent focus on ethics rather than physics and logic would prefigure the refocussing of the school in later times.

[7]Sedley (2003b), 17.

(185?–109? BCE), and Posidonius (135?–51? BCE). Of these philosophers, it is the last two—Panaetius and Posidonius—who seem to have had the most lasting impact on the Stoic school. There is no single explanation for this apparent doctrinal stagnation of Stoic philosophy for roughly a century and a half; probably one major factor was the recent "Chrysippean overhaul" that served to formalize what constituted the orthodox Stoicism which exerted such a pervasive influence on the Stoa for the remainder of its existence and especially through the immediately subsequent Middle Stoa.[8] The Mithridatic War (89–84 BCE) marked the end of the Middle Stoa and the end of institutional Stoicism in general. This war saw two philosophers—Athenion, Peripatetic and onetime tyrant of Athens, and the Epicurean Aristo—lead Athens into war against Rome on the side of Mithridates. Under the dictator Sulla, Rome subsequently sacked Athens, and with the city's defeat came a rather violent end to the practice of philosophy therein.[9]

It is also important to note the continuing decentralization of Stoicism away from Athens, and Greece more generally, and its expansion into the rest of the Mediterranean world, especially parts to the east. In fact, none of the heads of the Stoa ever hailed from Greece proper: the first Zeno was from Cyprus, Cleanthes, Chrysippus, the second Zeno, and Antipater were from Asia Minor, Diogenes was from Babylon, Panaetius was from Rhodes, and Posidonius was from Syria. When Athens was the centre of cultural and

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[8]Sedley (2003b), 17.
[9]For a discussion of this war's implications for the history of Hellenistic philosophy, see especially Ferrary (1988).

philosophical learning in the ancient world, these individuals moved there to pursue their philosophical careers, but later when the centre started to shift elsewhere, the Stoa as an organization lost its coherence.[10] The consequences of the Mithridatic War were great: the contents of the great philosophical libraries of Athens were scattered around the Mediterranean, and philosophers left the city in droves, due not only to the difficulty of finding new students but also to the fact that they were now considered political targets. From this point the term "Stoa" was no longer used to refer to the school as a whole, since both the physical *stoa* itself, as well as the institutions surrounding the school, were uprooted after this war.[11]

The problem with the most far-reaching implications arising from the early and middle Stoic schools is that the total number of texts to have survived from this critical period in the school's history is very small, especially compared to the number of texts we know were produced. Later doxographers, notably Diogenes Laertius and Sextus Empiricus, give multiple lengthy lists of book titles, none of which survive to this day.[12] The sole example of a text that does survive in its entirety is Cleanthes' celebrated *Hymn to Zeus*, a poem celebrating Zeus as the *logos*, or ordering principle,

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[10]The apparent domination of the Stoa by eastern Hellenized people was not unusual among Hellenistic philosophical schools, and serves to illustrate the *Zeitgeist* of cultural influence of the Greek world in post-Alexandrian times. For more on this point, see Sedley (2003b), 8–9.

[11]Sedley (2003b), 26–27 advances the theory that the Stoa ceased to exist as a formal organization after the death of Panaetius in approximately 109 BCE, because Posidonius began to shift the centre of learning away from Athens toward Rhodes, and it would shift again later in the direction of Rome.

[12]See, for example, one such lengthy list of titles of books by Chrysippus (DL 7.189–202).

of the entire cosmos, essentially making him out to be the Stoic god.[13] But
other than this text, almost nothing appears to have survived in its original
form. For example, Zeno's lost *Republic*, which seems to have set forth his
(apparently rather unusual) notions of how the ideal city-state ought to be
run, is lost except for a few later summaries and quotations.[14] As for the
Middle Stoa, likewise, very little survives: this may be party because much
of the formalization of Stoic philosophy into orthodox doctrine by this time
had been completed by Chrysippus, but there was still work being done, par-
ticularly increasing the focus on practical ethics as applied to the common
person and not simply the sage. Panaetius is probably to be credited with
this development in Stoic ethics, at least if Seneca can be trusted, but the
direct evidence is slim.[15] This lack of contemporaneous sources dictates that
for our information about Stoicism prior to the beginning of doxographical
records, we must rely on sources much later than the authors they purport
to represent.

Things become somewhat better, at least from the doxographical point of
view, when the philosophical scene shifts to Rome after the Mithridatic War.

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[13]For more on the fascinating *Hymn to Zeus* (preserved in Stobaeus 1.1.12), which we
will not discuss at length here, see especially Thom (2005), as well as Dragona-Monachou
(1971) and Long and Sedley (1987), 331–333.

[14]E.g. Plutarch, *St. rep.* 1034b and Athenaeus 561c, the latter of which actually purports
to quote Zeno's *Republic* by its Greek name ΠΟΛΙΤΕΙΑ. See also Schofield (1991) for a
full exploration of this fascinating lost work and of Stoic political philosophy in general.

[15]Seneca quotes Panaetius, answering whether the sage should become a lover, as giving
advice to the ordinary person as well: *'de sapiente' inquit 'videbimus: mihi et tibi, qui
adhuc a sapiente longe absumus …'*, "'As for the sage,' [Panaetius] said, 'we shall see; as
for me and you, who are yet far removed from wisdom, …'" (*Ep.* 116.5). See Long (1985),
140, *pace* Sedley (2003b), 24 note 35.

As Rome grew in size and influence, its assimilation of Hellenistic culture, notably of philosophy, grew more pronounced. By this time, as we have noted, there was no formal Stoic school at all, and there was no titular head of the Stoa. Stoicism was transmitted by individual philosophers who lectured and taught in public in addition to composing treatises and epistles on various philosophical subjects.[16] At this time, we also start to observe the rise of doxography—that is, the tradition of individual scholars attempting to sort out which philosopher said what and when, which doctrines appeared at what times, and compiling their work into various treatises and books. We will return to doxography and the problems it poses for our scholarship shortly.

Stoicism seems to have begun to gain traction among the Romans during the first century BCE, when several influential Romans embraced the philosophy and went on to become archetypal Roman Stoics from the perspective of later Roman Stoics. One of the first and most notable Roman Stoics was Cato the Younger (95–46 BCE), who experienced (from the Roman side) the Mithridatic War and its effects on Hellenistic philosophy. He, or at least a persona based on him, appears to represent Stoic philosophy in several of Cicero's philosophical dialogues. Another famous early Roman Stoic was the infamous conspirator M. Iunius Brutus (85–42 BCE). Perhaps the most famous Roman Stoic was L. Annaeus Seneca the Younger (4? BCE–65 CE), onetime adviser to the emperor Nero. Seneca's prolific writings, including es-

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[16]See additionally Sedley (2003b), 29–32 for more on the history of the Stoic school at this time.

says, epistles, and dramas, are the first Stoic writings to survive from ancient times more or less completely intact. As did Zeno of Citium and Cleanthes before them, these three famous Roman Stoics committed suicide as a final demonstration of their commitment to Stoic principles—in Cato's and Brutus' case, because they could not bear to live in a Rome ruled by Julius Caesar; in Seneca's case, because he was ordered to after being accused of participating in the Pisonian conspiracy to assassinate Nero.[17] There were many other individuals, both Roman and non-Roman, who produced Stoic philosophical work in imperial Rome, notably L. Annaeus Cornutus (dates unknown; first century CE) and Musonius Rufus (dates unknown; first century CE).

One of the most significant was Epictetus (55?–135? CE), a Greek brought to Rome as a slave of a wealthy freedman of Nero's named Epaphroditus; he was permitted to attend the lectures of Musonius Rufus, and when he was later freed, he established himself as a philosopher and lecturer in his own right. Epictetus wrote nothing himself, but his student Arrian compiled his teacher's lectures as the *Discourses*, as well as a handbook of Epictetus' teachings called the *Enchiridion*, or "Handbook". Finally, the emperor Marcus Aurelius (121–180 CE; ruled from 161 CE until his death) authored his own Stoic philosophical work, the *Meditations*,[18] on campaign between

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[17]For Zeno's suicide see DL 7.28; for Cleanthes' see DL 7.176; for Cato's see Plutarch, *Cat. Min.* 70; for Brutus' (and his wife Porcia's) see Plutarch, *Brut.* 52; for Seneca's see Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.61–64.

[18]The Greek title is ΤΑ ΕΙΣ ΕΑΥΤΟΝ, literally *Things to himself.*

170 and 180 CE. However, the contributions of these few individuals seem to have constituted the bulk of original Stoic philosophy done at Rome, while the classical canon of Stoic teachings had remained relatively constant from the earlier periods of the Stoa.[19] Yet it was not the case that all Stoic philosophy under Rome was monolithic; it has been argued that various Roman-era Stoics were unorthodox, and there were in addition various "rival Stoic clubs calling themselves 'Diogenists,' 'Antipatrists,' and 'Panaetiasts'",[20] continuing the trend begun in the Middle Stoa.

Stoicism divided the practice of philosophy into three distinct disciplines: logic, physics, and ethics.[21] The early Stoa seems to have focussed on logic and physics, building a coherent system, based on first principles and extended according to logical and rational reasoning, to explain the physical workings of the cosmos. Their ethical teachings were limited, and presented in idealized form for the consumption of the "sage"—the individual who had achieved the highest level of order and rationality in his own life and who had consequently become something more than an ordinary human being. However, Stoic doctrine even from the early Stoa held that no human being had ever achieved true sagehood, but that nevertheless such a state was not inconceivable.[22] The problems this presents for our understanding of the

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[19]Gill (2003), 36.

[20]Sedley (2003b), 29*ff.*, especially note 54. See also Athenaeus 186a.

[21]There was naturally disagreement concerning the primacy of particular disciplines over others; see SE *AM* 7.19 and 7.22, but also DL 7.39, which order is followed by Long and Sedley (1987). Furthermore, the deviant Aristo seems to have rejected this tripartite division and with it the disciplines of logic ("none of our concern") and physics ("beyond us") as well (DL 7.160).

[22]One of Zeno's famous syllogisms about the existence of the gods—"One might rea-

early Stoic ethical system are significant, since very little of it appears to have been formulated with the "common man" in mind. It is only later, beginning with the middle Stoics and especially later under the Roman Stoics, that the Stoic school begins to become more concerned with ethics than physics or logic, and along with this change of focus the Stoic school starts to focus more on the ordinary human being rather than the sage.

Beginning with the early Stoa, the Stoic philosophers did not seem to regard their philosophy as a uniquely Greek invention; this attitude would give Stoicism a certain appeal to non-Greeks that it might not otherwise possess.[23] The early Stoics, possibly even beginning with Zeno and his lost *Republic*, seem to have held the attitude that a Stoic was a "citizen of the world" (*kosmopolitēs*, whence English "cosmopolitan") and felt that his home was the entire world rather than a particular state or city. Of course, it is easy to profess such an attitude from a position of power, e.g. Athenian or Roman, and consequently to assert that ethnicities and borders make no difference to a man's becoming master of himself.[24] Nevertheless, we ought to note

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sonably honour the gods; one might not reasonably honour those things that do not exist; therefore the gods exist" (SE *AM* 9.133)—was parodied by his contemporary Alexinus (*ibid.*), who used the same argument to demonstrate that the sage must exist, since one might reasonably honour him (note that in Stoic logic, the proposition "*x* exists" means "*x* exists *now*"). This was evidently anathema to Stoic orthodoxy, since the sage did not yet (μέχρι τοῦ νῦν) exist but might come into existence at some point in the future. Diogenes of Babylon later tried to rescue the syllogism by recasting its minor premise as "One might not reasonably honour those things that are of such a nature as not to exist", thereby including the gods and excluding the sage. See Long and Sedley (1987), 331–332, Bobzien (1999), 95, and Algra (2003), 164.

[23]The fact that the Stoa never once had a head who was from Greece proper himself might be seen to bear upon this point.

[24]Seneca employs a similar argument with regards to slavery: that since man's spiritual

that Stoic philosophy did seem to eschew ethnocentrism in favour of internationalism, and subsequently becomes an attractive philosophy to non-Greek peoples—the Romans, certainly, but also at least a few Jews, such as the author of 4 Maccabees. This ties in to the notion, which we mentioned earlier, that what bound Stoics together was adherence to a common doctrine.

1.2 Problems of doxography

As we noted earlier, very little in the way of actual firsthand writings survives from the early and middle Stoics, and it is not until the first century CE that literature representing Stoic philosophy begins to survive in its original form in significant quantities. Although archaeology and palaeography do from time to time produce new witnesses of primary sources,[25] the amount of what can be recovered in these areas pales in comparison to the amount of primary source material we know we have lost. A wealth of material does survive, however, having been transmitted through various attempts to record, catalogue, and organize all of these ancient teachings: this practice, in both its ancient and modern forms, is referred to as doxography, from the Greek *doxa*, "opinion", and *graphein*, "to write". We are forced to rely on various doxographers' accounts for our information about the doctrines of the early

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welfare is the only thing that truly matters, a condition of slavery in this world is no impediment to attaining rationality. See *Ep.* 22.10, 47, 77, and 80.9.

[25] *PHerc* 307, part of Chrysippus' lost *Logical Investigations*, is one such primary source recovered from a recently discovered papyrus; see Mansfeld (1999), 9.

and middle Stoic philosophers.[26]

The first ancient doxographer was the Roman of late republican times M. Tullius Cicero (104–43 BCE). The purpose of Cicero's philosophical dialogues and treatises is not explicitly doxographical, but they nevertheless preserve much in the way of early and middle Stoic doctrines. Unfortunately, it is apparent from his writing that even by Cicero's time—the end of the middle Stoa—much of the origins of the Stoic tradition had become muddled, and it was no longer certain who had written what when. At times he seems uncertain exactly which philosopher held what doctrine or to whom a particular point can be ascribed, and he occasionally differs from later doxographers on various points, although the scope of his uncertainty seems for the most part limited to uncertainty over which philosopher in a given time period held particular doctrines. One further problem with Cicero is that some of his surviving works are themselves fragmentary; his dialogue *On the nature of the gods* suffers from several lacunae in the third book, and his *On the republic* is extremely fragmentary.

The next major source is the Roman Plutarch (46?–127? CE), whose philosophical treatises *On common conceptions against the Stoics* and *On Stoic self-contradictions* record Stoic doctrines for the purpose of refuting them; his *Moralia* also quotes Chrysippus at length.[27] Two other doxographers of

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[26]For more on doxography and the problems posed by the state of the sources, see especially Mansfeld (1999).

[27]An abstract of Plutarch's essay *The Stoics talk more paradoxically than the poets* also survives, but we do not have the treatises he devoted exclusively to refuting Stoic and Epicurean philosophy. See Mansfeld (1999), 10 and Sellars (2006), 21.

note are Sextus Empiricus (dates unknown; probably second century CE), a Neo-Pyrrhonist physician and philosopher, and Diogenes Laertius (dates unknown; probably third century CE), who wrote ten books of biographical doxographies of various Hellenistic philosophical schools. And there are others, both pagan and Christian: Stobaeus, Aëtius, Galen, Clement, Athenaeus, Origen, Arius Didymus, and so on.

The nature of the sources forces us to compromise in our reconstruction of authentic, orthodox Stoic doctrine, and in many cases unfortunately excludes a diachronic reconstruction. Furthermore, we cannot simply rely on the "orthodoxy" of early Stoic doctrine to provide us with a reliable measuring stick against which to evaluate a text produced against the background of middle and late Stoicism. Although the doctrinal traditions seem not to have changed a great deal over the centuries, the increased focus on ethics as pertaining to the ordinary human being as opposed to the sage, which begins to be found in the middle Stoa, means that a reconstruction based solely on early Stoic doctrines will be incomplete. However, even by the time of the earliest doxographers the traditions of philosophical transmission had become confused; furthermore, for the most part, even in antiquity the doxographers by and large do not try to understand Stoic doctrine diachronically. On the contrary, proceeding with the conceit that they are representing the doctrines of an entire philosophical school, many of the doxographers present the evidence synchronically, and thereby lose the variations and historical minutiae of the development of philosophical ideas through time. Further-

more, the modern doxographers in large part proceed the same way.[28] This should not deter us from attempting to read the philosophical tradition diachronically where possible, but for the most part a synchronic reading of Stoic philosophy will suffice for establishing general facts about "orthodox" Stoic doctrine.

1.3 Outline of the Stoic ethical system

To evaluate 4 Maccabees as a Stoic work, it will be necessary to devise, at least in outline, a reconstruction of the Stoic ethical system. A full discourse would fill several volumes; therefore we will restrict ourselves to an exploration of those topics that will prove of greatest relevance to our discussion of 4 Maccabees in subsequent chapters.[29]

It is certain that most Stoics partitioned the ethical system into various parts; what is not certain is the exact nature of this partition. The most widespread scheme seems to have been an eightfold partition which seems to have been devised by Chrysippus and Posidonius,[30] though the doxographer also notes that Zeno and Cleanthes followed an older scheme and made less

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[28]Beginning with Hans von Arnim's monumental *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* (1903–1905 and 1924), and up through the modern tradition of Long and Sedley (1987) and Inwood and Gerson (1997), the modern doxographers have followed the ancient tradition of organizing by theme rather than by chronology, and even in many cases neglecting chronology within themes.

[29]For fuller expositions of this topic, see especially Inwood and Donini (1999), Schofield (2003), and Brennan (2003).

[30]DL 7.84.

of this formalized partition. In one place, Cicero follows this same scheme,[31] while in another, he gives a different tripartite scheme that may have its roots in Panaetius.[32] Seneca posits three categories of moral philosophy,[33] and Epictetus comes up with his own tripartite division.[34] It is less important to go over the ins and outs of each philosopher's particular scheme than to note the Stoics' apparent proclivity for the partition and subpartition of their philosophical system. As far as determining the "orthodox" division, we should bear in mind that individual philosophers most likely felt free to teach the subject however they pleased; evidently they did not lack for paradigms from which to choose.

The fundamental principle of Stoic ethics is that an individual's happiness and unhappiness are solely constituted, respectively, by moral excellence (*aretē*) and moral failing (*kakia*).[35] This is a direct repudiation of the Aristotelian and Peripatetic doctrine that good fortune is a necessary ingredient of the good life.[36] A good one-line encapsulation of the Stoic ethical system might be ὠφελεῖν δέ ἐστι κινεῖν ἢ ἴσχειν κατ᾽ ἀρετήν, βλάπτειν δὲ κινεῖν ἢ ἴσχειν κατὰ κακίαν, "To benefit is to move or to continue in accordance with moral excellence; to harm is to move or to continue in accordance with moral

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[31]Cicero, *Fin.* book 3.
[32]Cicero, *Off.* 2.18; cf. Long and Sedley (1987), vol. 2, 342.
[33]Seneca, *Ep.* 89.14.
[34]Epictetus, *Diss.* 3.2.
[35]Long and Sedley (1987), 357 and Sellars (2006), 110–114.
[36]See for example Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* 7.13. Also see Cooper (2003), 145–148 and Long and Sedley (1987), 398 for a fuller exploration of the rôle of fortune in Aristotle's conception of the good life.

failing" (DL 7.104). The notion of action in accordance with a particular principle should bring up the crucial Stoic notion of *oikeiōsis*, or "orientation".[37] *Oikeiōsis* is what drives living creatures to seek out what morally excellent things are appropriate for their particular surroundings and incorporate them into their lives; in other words, it is the instinct to self-preservation, or "self-love".

Self-love is demonstrated by animals—rational and non-rational alike—by moving themselves towards the situation in which they are the least threatened by destruction. Cicero has his character Cato give an important explication of this point in the form of an extended "cradle argument" which attempts to extrapolate a being's true nature from its behaviour while young, before socialization or cultural indoctrination (*Fin.* 3.16):[38]

> *placet his, inquit, quorum ratio mihi probatur, simulatque natum sit animal—hinc enim est ordiendum—ipsum sibi conciliari et commendari ad se conservandum et ad suum statum eaque, quae conservantia sint eius status, diligenda, alienari autem ab interitu iisque rebus, quae interitum videantur adferre. id ita esse sic probant, quod ante, quam voluptas aut dolor attigerit, salutaria appetant parvi aspernenturque contraria, quod non fieret, nisi statum suum diligerent, interitum timerent. fieri autem non posset ut appeterent aliquid, nisi sensum haberent sui eoque se diligerent. ex quo intellegi debet principium ductum esse a se diligendo.*
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> Those whose theory I accept, began Cato, have the following view. Every animal, as soon as it is born (this is where one should start), is concerned with itself, and takes care to preserve itself. It favours

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[37]The traditional translation of this term is "appropriation" (as per Long and Sedley (1987), 351), but also encountered are "affiliation" (Inwood and Donini (1999), 677), and the paraphrase "to live according to virtue" (Inwood and Gerson (1997), 191, §II-94).

[38]The translation is Woolf's, in Annas (2001), 69–70.

> its constitution and whatever preserves its constitution, whereas
> it recoils from its destruction and whatever appears to promote
> its destruction. In support of this thesis, the Stoics point out that
> babies seek what is good for them and avoid the opposite before
> they ever feel pleasure or pain. This would not happen unless
> they valued their own constitution and feared destruction. But
> neither could it happen that they would seek anything at all un-
> less they had self-awareness and therefore self-love. So one must
> realize that it is self-love which provides the primary motivation.

The argument given here is directly anti-Epicurean: where the Epicureans held that a baby's reactions are nothing more than responses to pleasure and pain, the Stoics held that the baby is essentially self-aware, possessing some knowledge of what it is even before its socialization, and able to employ *oikeiōsis* in making its choices.[39]

Proper actions constitute a special category in Stoic ethics: *kathēkonta*, derived from the phrase κατά τινας ἥκειν, "to come into accordance with certain [impulses]" (DL 7.107). This concept is variously translated as "proper functions" or "duties", and reflected in the title of Cicero's *De officiis*, "On Duties". *Kathēkonta* are acts committed by means of proper orientation in accordance with *logos*, which we will define shortly. It is proper to perform some *kathēkonta* under "normal" conditions, such as maintaining one's health, while other *kathēkonta* become proper to perform under extraordinary circumstances; suicide is an example.[40] Furthermore, given that an individual's

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[39]Cf. the Epicurean perspective, which Cicero rejects (*Fin.* 2.30*ff.*). See also Annas (1992), 70 note 8, as well as Erler and Schofield (1999), 649–650.

[40]DL 7.109 makes this distinction between context-dependent and context-independent *kathēkonta*; though he does not explicitly mention suicide, Griffin (1986a), 72–73 and Englert (1994), 70 note 11 justify its inclusion in this category.

circumstances change throughout his or her life, what constitutes appropriate proper actions, and consequently proper *oikeiōsis*, changes along with it. As originally formulated, the Stoic ethical system was quite idealized, and it was the middle Stoics who began to emphasize those aspects that were most suited to wider consumption. Cicero based his *De officiis* on such a lost work of Panaetius.[41]

Rationality, or *logos*, plays a crucial rôle in determining which actions are proper and which are not. It is beyond the scope of our discussion to offer a full exposition of the rôle of *logos* in Stoic philosophy; let it suffice to note that the Stoics equated *logos* with reason, rationality, the active principle that pervades all matter, fire, breath, nature, the cosmos, and god.[42] Making choices in accordance with *logos* is regarded as the hallmark of the rational being; it is what distinguishes human beings from ordinary animals: καθήκοντα μὲν οὖν εἶναι ὅσα λόγος αἱρεῖ ποιεῖν, "Proper actions are ones which reason dictates performing" (DL 7.108).[43] The locus of *logos* is thought to be the rational soul, which, as an extension and reflection (both metaphorically and constitutively) of the divine cosmic *logos*, possesses rationality and therefore has the capacity to take actions in accordance with that *logos*. The soul is able to distinguish between impulses to good and bad things in accordance

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[41]Panaetius' book was probably called something like ΤΑ ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΚΑΘΗΚΟΝΤΟΥ, *On proper actions*, as at Cicero, *Ep. Att.* 16.11. Cf. Long and Sedley (1987), 427.

[42]See Tucker (2007) for an exploration of the function of *logos* in Stoic philosophy, especially theology and ethics.

[43]For more on the distinction between animals and human beings from the perspective of *logos*, see Inwood (1985), especially 26.

with rational principles, and subsequently to give or withhold assent from a particular impulse, which in turn is acted upon (or not) by the individual.

Acting in accordance with *logos* is the means striving toward the goal, or *telos*, of life, which is commonly defined as to "live well" (εὐ ζῆν), making progress towards moral excellence and thereby achieving a state of greater happiness (Stobaeus 2.77):

> τέλος δέ φασιν εἶναι τὸ εὐδαιμονεῖν, οὗ ἕνεκα πάντα πράττεται, αὐτὸ δὲ πράττεται μὲν οὐδενὸς δὲ ἕνεκα· τοῦτο δὲ ὑπάρχειν ἐν τῷ κατ᾽ ἀρετὴν ζῆν, ἐν τῷ ὁμολογουμένως ζῆν, ἔτι, ταὐτὸν ὄντος, ἐν τῷ κατὰ φύσιν ζῆν.
> [The Stoics] say that the goal is to be happy: everything is done for its sake, but it is done for the sake of nothing. This entails living in accordance with moral excellence, living in agreement, or—being the same thing—living in accordance with nature.

This is a reflection of the Stoic belief, which we have already encountered, that happiness is determined solely by acting in accordance with moral excellence. Furthermore, it is established that happiness is the ultimate goal of life, which is the same as being *homologoumenos*, or living literally in the same *logos*, as nature. This goes along with an early definition of Zeno's, brought down by Stobaeus,[44] that happiness was τὸ ὁμολογουμένως ζῆν, "living in agreement", which Stobaeus glosses as καθ᾽ ἕνα λόγον καὶ σύμφωνον ζῆν, "living according to one *logos* and harmony". This definition was expanded by successive heads of the Stoa: Cleanthes added the phrase τῇ φύσει, "with nature", and Chrysippus introduced the reformulation ζῆν κατ᾽ ἐμπειρίαν

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[44]Stobaeus 2.77.

τῶν φύσει συμβαινόντων, "living according to the experience of what occurs in nature" (Stobaeus 2.76). Later Stoics also accepted this formulation as authoritative,[45] and the reverse also appears to have been regarded as true (Plutarch, *St. rep.* 1024a):

> οὐσίαν κακοδαιμονίας ἀποφαίνει τῆν κακίαν, ἐν παντὶ βιβλίῳ φυσικῷ καὶ ἠθικῷ γράφων καῖ διατεινόμενος ὅτι τὸ κατὰ κακίαν ζῆν τῷ κακοδαιμόνως ζῆν ταὐτόν ἐστιν.
> [Chrysippus] maintains that moral failing constitutes unhappiness. He writes this in every book on physics and ethics, insisting that living in accordance with moral failing is the same thing as living unhappily.

Furthermore, Cleanthes held that human beings are naturally inclined toward moral excellence.[46] Seneca held the tendency toward moral excellence to be the seeds of knowledge or wisdom (*semina scientiae*),[47] recalling a favourite Stoic metaphor for god and *logos*: sperm contained within the seminal fluid, infusing the cosmos with rationality.[48]

The Stoics also held that the end of life should be treated with the same attention to determine what constitutes proper actions, given one's context. This is the source of the Stoic doctrine holding suicide to be a rational and acceptable means of exit—an *eulogos exagōgē*, "well-reasoned departure"—from the world under particular circumstances, namely when most of what one has

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[45]DL 7.87*ff.*

[46]Stobaeus 2.65.

[47]*Ep.* 120.4.

[48]DL 7.136. The notion of *spermatikoi logoi*, the "seminal principles" by which the universe is continually created and re-created in Stoic cosmology, is further seen in SE *AM* 9.101, Aëtius 1.7.33, DL 7.86, and cf. Cleanthes' famous *Hymn to Zeus*. See also Furley (1999), 436-439.

is not in accordance with nature, or is believed to be so.[49] We will return to the issue of the Stoic view of suicide later, as it will prove particularly illuminating with respect to the martyrologies and the ethics of 4 Maccabees.[50]

1.4 Conclusion

In this chapter we have explored the history of the Stoic philosophical school and outlined its ethical system. We have seen how the school evolved over time, particularly with regards to how it became more personalized and less focussed on the sage as time went on and the school became more decentralized. Furthermore, we have seen that the Stoics regarded the sole constituent of the good life to be making one's choices in accordance with *logos*, and that happiness and rationality are therefore crucially entwined. All these points will be vital to understanding the way in which 4 Maccabees places itself within the Stoic philosophical tradition.

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[49]Cicero, *Off.* 3.60. See likewise DL 7.130, as well as Plutarch, *St. rep.* 1039d, 1042a–d, and 1063d.

[50]For further treatments of this difficult topic from the Stoic perspective, see Griffin (1986a), Griffin (1986b), Long and Sedley (1987), 428-429, Englert (1994), and Inwood and Donini (1999), 735-736.

Chapter 2

Introduction to 4 Maccabees

כָּל אִישׁ יְצַו אָחִיו לְבִלְתִּי יֶחֱטָא, לֵאמֹר שְׁמָר־לָךְ פֶּן יְסִיתְךָ יֵצֶר,
וּבְעֵת חֲטֹא, שָׂח מַה בְּיַד אִישׁ לַעֲשׂוֹת? הַיְצוּר וְהַיֵּצֶר בְּיַד הַיּוֹצֵר!

Every man encourages his fellow not to sin, saying, "Take care not to let your craving lead you astray."
But when he himself sins, he sighs, "What's a man to do? Both creature and craving are the Creator's craft!"

—Judah Ha-Levi

In this chapter we will give an overview of 4 Maccabees, introducing the
book particularly in its dimension *qua* philosophical and rhetorical composi-
tion. We will investigate several questions including the work's authorship,
its provenance, its intended audience, its genre, and whether it was composed
for any particular occasion. Although we will not be able to answer defini-
tively many of these questions that have eluded scholars for centuries, we will
at least be able to consider possible responses to each and the consequences
that they present for our understanding of the work. We will then move on
to an identification of the goals of 4 Maccabees and attempt to figure out
whether the author succeeds in these goals in the course of the work. Finally,
we will propose that while the author may not have explicitly identified with
the Stoic school of philosophy, he does depend on it for much of his book's
philosophical content, and we will attempt to evaluate the book's success as
a work of Judaeo-Stoic philosophy. We will conclude that the book might
best be regarded as a "successful failure" in that it accomplishes what it sets

out to do, but that it exerted little if any influence on the long history of Jewish philosophy and theology.

2.1 Synopsis of the book

4 Maccabees appears in the Pseudepigrapha, a collection of deuterocanonical works that were not included in either the canonical Jewish scriptures or the Apocrypha. No Jewish and very few Christian groups regard 4 Maccabees as canonical. The name 4 Maccabees (ΜΑΚΚΑΒΑΙѠΝ Δ′) is barely appropriate, for unlike the books of 1 or 2 Maccabees, 4 Maccabees (along with 3 Maccabees) does not deal at all with Judah, the Maccabees, or the Hasmonean revolt against the Seleucids in the second century BCE. In fact, there is good evidence that in antiquity the book was titled something else, probably something like ΠΕΡΙ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΟΣ ΛΟΓΙΣΜΟΥ, *On the absolute mastery of reason.*[51] Nevertheless, as we shall discuss later, the author of 4 Maccabees was familiar with 2 Maccabees.

The author certainly regards his book to be a unified whole.[52] It follows a rhetorical formula standard to Hellenistic oratory: it is first introduced with an exordium, then the thesis is defined and developed, after which the author proceeds to a lengthy recounting of several narrative examples, and

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[51]This title is given both by Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.10.6 (though Eusebius is familiar with grouping the work among the books called "Maccabees"), and by Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 13. Nevertheless, deSilva (2006) is quite correct to point out, "While this title cannot be attributed to the original author, it is more in keeping with the practice in antiquity of referring to a work by its principal subject" (xiv).

[52]"As a moral discourse it is thoroughly homogenous" (Townshend (1913), 654).

finally the whole thing is concluded with a peroration.[53] Along the way, the author intersperses his own commentary on the narratives that make up the bulk of the work. For our purposes, the book may be split, broadly, into two sections. The first three chapters comprise a treatise in which, through formal argumentation and rhetorical demonstration by example, the author asserts and attempts to prove his major thesis: "that the absolute master of the passions is religious reasoning" (1.1). The second, much longer section, is a combined narrative history and funeral oration praising several instances of Jewish martyrdom, lasting the remaining fifteen chapters of the book. What unifies these two sections is the author's treatment of the martyrologies of the second part as simply a set of extended rhetorical examples analogous to those found in the first part; the overtly philosophical aspect that dominates the first part is not diminished in the second.[54] It is therefore somewhat improper to speak of two separate sections of 4 Maccabees; nevertheless, the distinction will be useful for our purposes since the bulk of our discussion will be focussed on the "philosophical" content making up the first part of the book.

The main thesis of the work is to demonstrate that reason may control the emotions.[55] It is crucial to note four things regarding this seemingly innocu-

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[53]Cf. deSilva (2006)'s comprehensive outline (xxviii–xxix).

[54]deSilva (2006), xxi. See also Weigold (2007) for an exploration of the relationship between the flood imagery found near the end of 4 Maccabees and the ethical implications of the first part of the work.

[55]I use "passion" and "emotion" interchangeably for the Greek *pathos* in my discussion; cf. note 114 to 1.1.

ous proposition. First, the author never formally defines what constitutes an "emotion", apparently believing that a list of examples may suffice for a definition.[56] Second, the author's thesis relates to what should be more properly termed "reasoning" rather than "reason"—*logismos* rather than *logos*; though both words are used in the work to denote equivalent things. Third, the type of reasoning the author advocates is specifically called *eusebēs*, "pious" or "religious". Although he does not use this epithet most of the time, it is used at the introduction of the thesis (1.1) and is meant to be understood even when subsequently left implicit.[57] Fourth and finally, the notion proposed by the author is that correctly applied reasoning of the proper type may control the emotions rather than eliminating them outright.[58] This last point will be pivotal for our investigation of the success of the book from the perspective of Stoic philosophy.

The philosophical part of the book is devoted to an exposition and formal demonstration of this argument. The author brings up a number of narrative and legal examples in support of his thesis; despite his conceit that he will utilize "many and varied sources" (1.7) in the course of his argument, all the examples he cites are in fact Jewish—and more to the point, come from the Jewish scriptures.[59] The longer narrative section of the book is taken up with the stories of the martyrdoms of a number of individuals, whose examples

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[56]Cf. note 133 to 1.14.
[57]Cf. note 115 to 1.1.
[58]Cf. notes 123 to 1.6 and 193 to 3.5.
[59]Hadas (1953), 147.

the author holds up as righteous and worthy of imitation. It will be helpful to consider the legal and narrative sets of examples separately and then to try to discover what the author sees as the relationship between these two types of evidence.

Let us turn first to the proofs from Jewish law. There was a tradition among Hellenized Jews who remained apologists for Judaism of finding justifications for some of the more unusual or outlandish laws prescribed by the Hebrew Bible, and the author of 4 Maccabees is no exception.[60] The author's position is that adherence to these laws will promote self-control and moderation; he offers this twice as an explicit justification for the dietary restrictions the Torah places upon observant Jews (1.34 and 5.25–26). At points, whether owing to inaccurate memory or overzealous attribution, the author seems to refer to Biblical laws that do not exist.[61] His point seems to be that these are commonsense notions that fit with his conception of what the Torah could have said, and therefore deserve consideration in the same breath as commandments that actually are in the text of the law. In his estimation, the Torah is designed to encourage the development of traits that make one into not only a good Jew but also a virtuous individual.

The narrative demonstrations are the other source of proof the author

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[60]For more on the tradition of this sort of defence, see e.g. Josephus, *Ap.* 2.137, Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.4.3, and Juvenal, *Sat.* 14.98–99. Cf. also note 153 to 1.34.

[61]Beginning at 2.9b, the author lists a number of "commandments" that he attributes to the Torah, even though a number of these seem to be overstatements of what is actually in the Torah at best, or made up entirely at worst; see notes 170, 172, and 174 to 2.10–12. This overzealous attribution of commandments the author thinks relevant also occurs in 2.14, at least according to one reading of the text; see note 176 *ad loc.*

brings for his thesis; he holds up both examples from Jewish scripture and retells examples of Jewish martyrdom to make his point. The length of the demonstrations varies widely, from one sentence containing a single oblique reference[62] to larger sequences or verses and even complete chapters.[63] All of these are intended to demonstrate an instance in which an individual gained mastery over his or her passions by means of pious self-control. The examples given in narrative form in the second part of 4 Maccabees are all martyrdoms: these individuals showed self-control right up to the end and died for *kiddush ha-shem*, "sanctification of the Name", and are therefore worthy examples to hold up to the rest of the Jewish people. Accordingly, their stories are told in the style of a funeral oration, full of encomiastic praise for the stoicism with which they met their ends. On the other hand, the examples given in the first three chapters are not martyrdoms, but instances of individuals who were faced by a personal challenge and who overcame their passions by means of proper application of religious self-control. The individuals specified in the first part (the likes of Joseph, Moses, and King David) may have been exceptional in holiness given their Biblical stature and removal of time period from the audience, while the martyrs the author holds up as examples in the second part are not exceptional in stature and were closer in time period to the audience, thus relating them more personally to the Jews being addressed in this text. The thrust of the argument is that

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[62]E.g. Moses' anger at Dathan and Abiram (3.17).

[63]E.g. each of the seven brothers' arguments (9.10–12.19) and the example of Eleazar Agonistes (5.1–6.30).

every Jew has the potential within himself or herself to be just like these examples by following the prescription for self-control laid out in the Torah.

Our first impression may be of two entirely different types of proof—legal and narrative—which the author brings to support his thesis. Yet both are appropriate given the way in which the author frames his argument. The thesis that reason may control the passions seems like an abstract argument that would demand a formal proof in the Hellenistic philosophical tradition, and the author does indeed provide this (or at least a large part of one). The legal examples are relevant to this part of the argument: by following some particular law, one may achieve self-control over some particular desire. But the thesis is also a prescription for action, advanced (presumably) with the hope that people will pay heed, take its advice, and thus lead more virtuous lives. To this end, 4 Maccabees provides practical examples in the form of narratives of Biblical characters and Jewish martyrs who achieve control over their passions. The link between the narrative demonstrations and the examples from Jewish law are therefore contained within the prescription for self-control. The work itself makes this explicit when, during every pause in the narrative section, the author turns back to his philosophical thesis, and explains the relationship between the example at hand and the thesis in general.[64] Furthermore, this union of theoretical philosophy and practical advice

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[64]His descriptions, based on preceding narrative examples, of how reason masters affection between brothers (13.9–14.1) and how it masters love for children (14.13–20 and 15.4–10) are particularly good instances of the interrelationship between all parts of this work. Cf. also deSilva (2006), xxi.

is aligned with the trend, begun in the Middle Stoa and continued throughout the rest of the school's existence, of personalizing Stoic philosophy and bringing its ethical teachings into the mainstream of practical possibility.[65] We will return to this point with reference to some of the specific philosophical content in 4 Maccabees later in our discussion.

2.2 Authorship and audience

The text of 4 Maccabees itself makes no claims as to the authorship, date, location, or audience of the work. Traditionally, 4 Maccabees was ascribed to the Jewish historian Josephus, an identification that goes back as far as Eusebius and Jerome,[66] but this was doubted even at the beginning of critical scholarship in the nineteenth century. This ascription is probably due in part to the fact that 4 Maccabees appears in manuscripts of the works of Josephus,[67] but a large catalogue of stylistic, historical, religious, and philosophical factors militate against it.[68] We will therefore dispense with

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[65]For more on this trend see §1.1.

[66]Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.10.6, and Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 13 and *Contr. Pelag.* 2.6.

[67]Ewald (1868), vol. 4, 633 suggests that another man also named Josephus wrote 4 Maccabees, thus accounting for the traditional ascription of 4 Maccabees and its inclusion in the manuscripts of Josephus, but since the author does not identify himself, this proposal can only be taken as fantastical.

[68]For example, Josephus correctly identifies Antiochus IV Epiphanes as the brother of Seleucus IV Philopator (*Ant.* 12.4), whereas he is incorrectly identified as his son in 4 Maccabees (4.15; cf. also 3.20 and my note 206 *ad loc.*). Additionally, Josephus displays no familiarity with 2 Maccabees, which the author of 4 Maccabees seems to possess. Furthermore the writing style is entirely different: where Josephus writes as an historian, the author of 4 Maccabees writes as a philosopher-cum-rhetorician. Townshend (1913), 656–657 shrewdly points out that Josephus does not use the indeclinable Hebrew forms of Biblical names, but rather substitutes the Greek versions, unlike the author of 4 Maccabees,

the traditional ascription and concentrate on what we may glean from the text of 4 Maccabees itself.

Although we will not be able to make any positive personal identification of the author of 4 Maccabees, we can be confident in saying a few things about him. Firstly, modern scholarship is in agreement that the book is the work of a single hand.[69] He is certainly a Jew, though one quite familiar with Hellenistic philosophy and rhetoric. Given that the rhetorical flourishes with which the discourse is delivered are well beyond the standard of most of the other literature in the Septuagint, we may be reasonably certain in saying that our author had some kind of formal training in Hellenistic rhetoric.[70] Furthermore, given the ease with which the author makes the text flow, it seems likely that Greek was the author's native language.[71] The author also appears to have been familiar with Jewish law and scripture, possibly indicating that he was either a practicing Jew or a formerly practicing Jew; his prescription advocating adherence to Jewish law seems to indicate that he took his legal obligations as a Jew seriously.[72]

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who uses only the Hebrew forms (excepting Ἱεροσόλυμα for Jerusalem and Ἐλεάζαρος for Eleazar). And it is further unlikely that the famed Romanophile or collaborator (depending on one's loyalties) would praise the heroes and martyrs of Jewish resistance against Seleucid rule, as in 4 Maccabees. See further Anderson (1985a), 533, Williams (1988), and the stylometric analysis of Williams (1992).

[69]Townshend (1913), 655–656.

[70]Klauck (1989), 665; though deSilva (2006) rightly points out that "given the author's uncompromising devotion to Torah, it is more likely that he would have received this in a Jewish setting rather than by participating as a youth in the Greek ephebate of his city" (xii–xiii).

[71]Anderson (1985a), 532. See also Townshend (1913), 655, who goes so far as to call the author's style "over-decorated" due to its floridity and ornateness.

[72]"He will traffic willingly with the Greek for intellectual wares, but when it comes to

Beyond these fairly general facts, though, it is impossible to pin down our author to any specific time, locality, or identity. No information is forthcoming about the place of composition of the work, though Jerusalem is an obvious candidate as a nexus of Hellenistic thought and the centre of Jewish learning in the ancient Near East.[73] Other cities, such as Alexandria and Antioch, have been proposed by various scholars; we cannot tell for certain, though the region north of the Levant around Antioch has been gaining in favour in modern scholarship.[74] As for the time period, 4 Maccabees appears to have been written sometime between the late first century BCE and the middle of the second century CE; various arguments have been proposed for specific dates or ranges of dates throughout this wide period.[75] The bulk of scholarship seems to be inclined to favour a date at the later end of the range

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the moral sense he will pray in another temple" (Townshend (1913), 668 note 15).

[73]deSilva (2006) calls the notion of the candidacy of Jerusalem "the enduring legacy of Hengel" (xvii), referring to Hengel (1974) and Hengel (1980). The author of 4 Maccabees slips when he says that ἐπ' αὐτῇ τῇ ἄκρᾳ τῆς πατρίδος ἡμῶν γυμνάσιον κατασκευάσαι, "[Antiochus Epiphanes] built a gymnasium on the very acropolis of our homeland" (4.20), when in fact the gymnasium was below the acropolis in Jerusalem (2 Macc. 4.12). If this is construed as a "rhetorical embellishment" rather than an error, the candidacy of Jerusalem is not weakened (deSilva (2006), xvii–xviii).

[74]The main claim for the location of Alexandria seems to be based on its status as a centre of Hellenistic philosophy around the time of the Second Sophistic, combined with the fact that Philo lived in that city; see Townshend (1913), 657. Antioch has been advanced both because of a perceived reminiscence between the martyr veneration displayed in 4 Maccabees and a quasi-cultic feature of religious observance there (cf. especially John Chrysostom, *Homily 4 Against the Jews*), and because of (admittedly scant) internal linguistic and stylistic evidence (the so-called "Asianic style"). See Dupont-Sommer (1939), 67–75, Hadas (1953), 109–113, Anderson (1985a), 534–535, Nickelsburg (1987), 226, Klauck (1989), 666–667, Wilson (2001), 362 and 5.1n., and deSilva (2006), xviii–xix.

[75]See deSilva (2006), xiv–xvii for a comprehensive survey; he eventually favours "the latter part of the proposed range of 19–72 CE" (xvi–xvii) to take most of the points of scholarship he raises into consideration.

(i.e. the late first or early second century CE) for a number of reasons, especially based on linguistic and stylistic analysis of the text.[76] Other factors, such as trying to determine whether the Second Temple (destroyed 70 CE) was still standing at the time of the book's composition, are less productive given the paucity of concrete information in the book itself. Broadly speaking, we may align 4 Maccabees with the so-called "Second Sophistic" in its presentation of philosophy fused with rhetoric and religious thought, and more particularly with contemporary or near-contemporary Jewish texts, such as the works of Philo, the *Letter of Aristeas*, and the *Wisdom of Solomon*, that seek to fuse religion and (particularly Stoic) Hellenistic philosophy. We will return to this point later; let us leave the question of time period with an acknowledgment of its difficulty but with a tentative commitment to the late first or early second century CE.

Less difficult is an inquiry into what literature the author of 4 Maccabees was familiar with. This question is impossible to answer with any certainty regarding non-Jewish books, for while the author was undoubtedly familiar with Greek-language rhetorical and philosophical literature, exactly what was studied as part of a standard rhetorical education is uncertain. The dialogues of Plato suggest themselves, as well as Aristotle; in this case we could probably also posit familiarity with certain Stoic texts, though since the specific identities of these texts have largely become lost to us, it is impossible to say what a Stoic education might have looked like in ancient

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[76]See, for example, the survey of *hapax legomena* in Breitenstein (1978).

times.[77] We can say with greater certainty what the author was familiar with in terms of Jewish literature. He knew the Hebrew Bible well, though it is virtually certain that most, if not all, of this knowledge came from the Septuagint.[78] It is usually taken as incontrovertible by scholars that 4 Maccabees is nearly free of Hebraisms, the only one consistently cited being δόξαν διδοὺς τῷ πανσόφῳ ΘΩ, "giving glory to God the all-wise" (1.12).[79] As we will demonstrate more fully in Chapter 3, the text presents us with several other candidates for phrases that may be either overt Hebraisms or Hebrew-influenced language: one example may be found at 2.2, and two others at 2.23. We are not proposing that the author knew Hebrew; simply that the text may be seen to demonstrate allegiance to its Jewish heritage through linguistic choices in addition to religious ones to a greater degree than previously thought.

In addition to the Septuagint, we may also say that the author of 4 Maccabees was certainly familiar with the book of 2 Maccabees; the influence of the latter on the former was noted as early as the beginning of critical scholarship, though the notion that both books derive from a common source was rejected not long thereafter.[80] There are multiple points of contact be-

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[77]For more on the challenge of reconstructing Stoic doctrine from incomplete and imperfect doxography, see §1.2.

[78]This knowledge is indubitable despite the author's embellishments on laws in the Torah; see note 61 above.

[79]Dismissals of this type include "His work is conspicuously devoid of semitisms" (Anderson (1985a), 532), or "δόξαν διδοὺς τῷ πανσόφῳ ΘΩ combines an obvious, and in this text, lonely, Hebraism…" (deSilva (2006), 84).

[80]The favourite nineteenth-century argument was that both books derive from the lost work of Jason of Cyrene (2 Macc. 2.23; see Freudenthal (1869), 72–90 and Deissmann

tween these two works, but they are confined to the narrative histories in 4 Maccabees. Since they do not bear on the philosophical argumentation, we omit a detailed description of borrowings here; suffice to say the list is extensive and demonstrates conclusively that the author of 4 Maccabees knew 2 Maccabees.[81]

Turning to the question of the intended audience of 4 Maccabees, we should consider the points we have just raised about the author's own literary knowledge. Clearly, the work is intended for consumption by Jews. It is addressed to them in its peroration—"O Israelites, children descended from Abraham's seed, obey this law…" (18.1)—and the author does not have anything to say to any non-Jewish audience.[82] What is more, 4 Maccabees relies on an intimate familiarity with Judaic scripture and tradition to make its argument. The author evidently expects his audience, at least in large part, to be able to understand allusions and citations ranging from the well-explained to the oblique and opaque. The Jews to whom the book is addressed are obviously expected to be able to follow a formal rhetorical argument expressed in elevated prose and to relate the philosophy proposed within therein to their own lives; they are "looking for ways in which to affirm their heritage

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(1900), 156). Recognition of the didactic and programmatic purposes of the changes the author of 4 Maccabees makes to the narratives in 2 Maccabees has caused this idea to fall out of favour (deSilva (2006), xxx–xxxi). See also Dupont-Sommer (1939), 26–32, Hadas (1953), 92–95, Anderson (1985a), 540–541, and Klauck (1989), 654.

[81]See deSilva (2006), xxx for the comprehensive catalogue; also cf. Nickelsburg (1987), 223–229 for the wider context of late Biblical and post-Biblical Jewish literature.

[82]*Contra* Anderson (1985b), 179, who believes that the author anticipated non-Jewish interest; if this is the case, it is strange that the author has nothing specific to say to them, and does not address them directly as he does Jews (deSilva (2006), xx).

in conversation with the Greek cultural milieu rather than in isolation from (and rejection of) it."[83] The key word here is "conversation": they are not so Hellenized as to reject any stigma associated with Judaism and its concomitant traditions, but they are not so observantly Jewish that they will avoid engaging with certain aspects of Hellenistic philosophy in which they may find personal fulfilment. It is to these Jews that the author of 4 Maccabees addresses his work.[84]

We will close this section with an exploration of the questions of genre and occasion, naturally arising out of the question of audience. First, we must determine whether 4 Maccabees was intended to be delivered oratorically, and then, if this is the case, we must answer what occasion it was meant to be delivered on. Pinning down the exact genre of 4 Maccabees is impossible, since it straddles many different literary and rhetorical archetypes: panegyric, funeral oration, philosophical treatise, sermon, and others.[85] deSilva's suggestion of "epideictic rhetoric"[86] is about as close as we can get, encompassing the work both as a philosophical discourse intended to persuade its audience of the manifest truth of its position in Second Sophistic style, and as an encomium in praise of both the moral excellence of rationality and the

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[83]deSilva (2006), xix.

[84]Townshend (1913), 653 advances the theory (echoed by Hadas (1953), 95–96 and Nickelsburg (1987), 226) that the work originally represented a critique of the Roman deification of emperors in general, and possibly was a specific reaction against Caligula's attempt to erect a statue of himself in the Temple of Jerusalem.

[85]See deSilva (2006), xxi for a partial list of what scholars have imputed what genre to this work.

[86]deSilva (2006), xxi; cf. the preference of Woschitz (2005), 108 for "*epitaphios logos*".

worthy examples of the martyrs.

Scholars have long believed that the language of 4 Maccabees seems to provide several indications that the work was intended to be delivered oratorically, and probably on some particular occasion.[87] Much of this line of argumentation depends on two things. First, the book's frequent use of the first person, addressing an audience in the second person, initiates a didactic style that keeps the "conversation" moving along. However, it is difficult to tell whether this means there is an actual address taking place or whether this simply represents a rhetorical gambit.[88] Second, the author twice uses the word *kairos* in the work (1.10 and 3.19); this usage is often taken to indicate a particular "season" or "anniversary" during which this oration was meant for delivery. If this is not another rhetorical gambit (i.e. the author simply feels the "time" is right to introduce a new topic of discussion), we must ask which "anniversary" this refers to, since no particular occasion is specified in the work.[89] The holiday of Hanukkah suggests itself, though we would be hard-pressed to explain the absence of Judah, the Maccabees, or the Maccabean revolt from the work.[90] Other holidays, notably ones which

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[87]This begins with Freudenthal (1869), 105, who advances the (improbable) theory that the work was a sermon intended for delivery in a religious context, contradicted by Townshend (1913), 653. See also Dupont-Sommer (1939), 67–73, Hadas (1953), 147 and 161, Anderson (1985a), 535–536, Nickelsburg (1987), 227, Klauck (1989), 688, and deSilva (2006), xxiii–xxv.

[88]Compare the common gambit of phrasing philosophical exposition in dialogue form, patterned after Plato, or of addressing it to particular individuals, regardless of whether or not this has any actual bearing on the philosophical content of the work.

[89]Hadas (1953), somewhat counterintuitively, tries to make this fact into an argument *for* oral delivery of the work: "the audience (unlike the reader) would not need to be told what the occasion was" (104).

[90]Townshend (1913), 667 note 10 argues for Hanukkah. deSilva (2006) attempts to res-

celebrate the giving of the law such as Shavuot (Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks) and Simchat Torah ("Celebration of the Torah"—the final day of Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles), also present themselves, due to the work's aspect as encomium to the Law; in this case, the examples of the martyrs "provide the best proof of the value of the Torah" because their lives and deaths, following its example, sanctified it.[91] To this catalogue, we should add the (admittedly very improbable) possibility that the holiday in question was Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement) or another solemn holiday such as the Ninth of Ab on which martyrdoms might have been commemorated.[92]

2.3 Evaluating the book's success

In order to answer the question of whether 4 Maccabees is a successful work of Judaeo-Stoicism, we must first define Judaeo-Stoicism, then identify the goals of 4 Maccabees, and then determine the degree to which it succeeds in these goals. The substantive goal of 4 Maccabees is to promote Jewish orthopraxy and to link it with a broadly conceived Stoic orthodoxy; we will call this fusion of philosophies Judaeo-Stoicism. Jewish orthopraxy,

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cue Hanukkah from the objection noted above by noting that "there would be ample opportunity to give the Hasmoneans their due in the course of an eight-day festival were community leaders so inclined" (xxv), and the fact that "liberation and purification", themes of the holiday, "are also prominently celebrated" in 4 Maccabees (xxiv).

[91]deSilva (2006), xxv.

[92]The traditional martyrology currently recited as part of the worship service on Yom Kippur (the so-called *Eleh Ezkerah* after its incipit, "These I remember") was not added until medieval times; cf. also early midrashic works such as *Lamentations Rabbah* and the so-called *Arzê ha-Lebanon* ("Cedars of Lebanon") for other martyrologies and the rôle they may have played in a didactic or liturgical context. See also Hadas (1953), 108–109.

to our author, means the observance and practice of Jewish law as it is set down in the Torah and the traditions of the Jewish community. The philosophy promoted by the author is not purely or rigidly Stoic—elements of other philosophical systems are introduced when the author wishes to—but nevertheless it is identifiably and overridingly Stoic.[93]

It is essential to keep in mind that the author does not demand adherence to a rigidly orthodox form of Stoic philosophy: the philosophy he dispenses in the course of the work and upon which he founds his ethical recommendations, while broadly Stoic, does not represent purely orthodox Stoicism in some respects, as we shall see. He is more concerned with adapting those elements of Stoic ethics that seem to him to be most valuable to furthering the "conversation" between Judaism and Hellenism to which we alluded earlier. Judaeo-Stoicism cannot concern itself with being wholly orthodox from the Jewish point of view, since the Hellenistic influence of Stoicism would no doubt be taken to be an influence on Judaism encouraging assimilation and therefore to be avoided. However, a fusion of Judaism and Stoicism might be taken as orthodox from a Stoic frame of reference, since the restrictions of Jewish law are meant to encourage proper Stoic virtues, and being a good Jew makes one a good Stoic if the proper kind of pious reason underlies

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[93]Idenitfying 4 Maccabees exclusively with one school or another is a losing battle; nevertheless we are proposing a much more pronounced (though not exclusive) identification with the Stoic school than most modern scholars have been willing to commit to. Pfeiffer (1949) and Renehan (1972) come closest to this point of view in their scholarship. We will dismiss the argument that the author is not a philosopher at all, rather a dilettante who picked up enough philosophical language at school or in the general culture to enable him to fake it (cf. Schürer (1986), 590).

one's actions as a Jew. For the author of 4 Maccabees, there does not exist any conceptual or practical difference between orthodoxy and orthopraxy in a Judaeo-Stoic context. If one is orthodox, then one will recognize the necessity of keeping the commandments insofar as they are both Stoic-type guidelines about how to live one's life as well as the law of God. Likewise, if one is orthoprax, then one will be observing laws that have the effect of causing one to live by Stoic principles. Orthodoxy leads to orthopraxy—belief leads to deed—and *vice versa*.

What makes this chain of causation philosophically possible is the interface between ethics and theology: the broad equation of God with the concept of *logos*, the universal rational principle that pervades everything, and the identification of *logos* as the source of *aretē*, moral excellence. We have already seen evidence that Stoic orthodoxy took *logos* and the divine to be synonymous concepts; 4 Maccabees understands the Jewish God (i.e. Yahweh) to stand for the divine in this equation.[94] Theology is key to understanding the philosophical goal of the book: by linking God with rationality, the ethical and moral imperatives that the author promotes in the work are given a strong backing in rational thought. When the Law commands something, it must be because observance of that principle is a rational thing to do. Hence the crucial theological innovation, equating the Stoic God, the Jewish God, and the Torah, which is what underlies the philosophy of 4

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[94]The same applies to Judaeo-Stoicism in other contexts as well, e.g. Philo, as well as to the *Letter of Aristeas*, which equates Zeus with Yahweh (*Let. Aris.* 15).

Maccabees.[95]

Those who believe the author was not Stoic frequently cite the fact that not all of the philosophy offered in 4 Maccabees is orthodox Stoicism.[96] The principal deviation is the conceit, running throughout the work, that the passions are meant to be controlled rather than completely eliminated.[97] Subordinate points include the author's identification of pleasure and pain as the two cardinal emotions rather than the more orthodox Stoic enumeration of four cardinal emotions,[98] and an interpretation of the king's rebuke to Eleazar and Eleazar's subsequent defence as an attack on and refutation of Stoic doctrine.[99] We will refute this idea in two ways. First, the major point about control of the passions, though not popularly accepted, is not seen to be completely unorthodox by certain Stoics, notably Posidonius, who held that the goal was not life without emotions (*apatheia*) but instead control and mastery over one's internal state in accordance with rationality.[100]

Second, Stoic tolerance for unorthodoxy was far greater than often surmised. Even if the point were universally rejected as unorthodox (which it is not), this does not disqualify it from the realm of the Stoic. On the contrary, Stoicism admitted a great amount of individual variation among individual teachers and practitioners. Indeed, as we have previously discussed, this grow-

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[95]Cf. note 186 to 2.23.

[96]Hadas (1953), 115–118 is preeminent among these; see also Townshend (1913), 653, Wolfson (1947), and Gutman (1949).

[97]See especially 2.24–3.5 and cf. 1.5–6.

[98]See 1.20 and note 140 *ad loc.*

[99]Hadas (1953), 117.

[100]See note 123 to 1.6 and 193 to 3.5.

ing individualism was a feature of the Middle Stoa and became commoner as the philosophy shifted from away from a centralized model.[101] Hadas's strongly worded position that "the Stoics allowed no gradations in sin—a miss, in their sight, being as bad as a mile"[102] misses by a mile.[103]

A large inventory of philosophical doctrines espoused in 4 Maccabees demonstrate a substantial influence from the Stoic tradition. Much of the author's vocabulary is obviously drawn from Stoic discourse, notably large concepts like reason and rationality (*logos* and *logismos*), or the concept of the mind as the "conductor" (*hēgemōn*, or ruling faculty) of reason. The proposition that one may control (if not eliminate) one's emotions by means of application of this reasoning with the mind as conductor of rationality shows definite Stoic origins.[104] The author's definition of "wisdom"—"knowledge of divine and human matters and the causes of these" (1.16)—is exactly equivalent to the orthodox Stoic definition.[105] To these commonly cited examples we should also add the author's praise of the martyrs for their selfless sacrifice and meeting their deaths with self-control. This is aligned with the Stoic view

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[101]See §1.1 and §1.2 above.

[102]Hadas (1953), 118.

[103]Renehan (1972) is quite correct to point out the inherent contradictions in some of what Hadas (1953) says about the matter: "To derive, with Hadas, everything philosophic in the discourse directly from Plato seems to me to be a case of special pleading which seriously fails to account for the clear affinities to and echoes of post-Platonic philosophy in the work. To write, as Hadas does, 'He knew Stoicism, of course, and at many points uses Stoic language and echoes Stoic views' and then maintain that 'our author drew directly from Plato and not from secondary sources' is, in the homely phrase, to have one's cake and eat it too" (228).

[104]See note 149 to 1.30a.

[105]See note 135 *ad loc.* for references to this doctrine in orthodox Stoicism, as well as modern scholarly reactions.

of suicide as an *eulogos exagōgē*, a "departure" from the world which may be regarded as "well-reasoned" under certain circumstances.[106] The author of 4 Maccabees certainly would place the deaths of the martyrs he describes in the same category of departures that are well-reasoned, alongside the deaths of the likes of Zeno or Cleanthes or Cato or Seneca. That they died for their *ethnos* as well as their philosophy enables yet another link between Jewish and Stoic values, which further strengthens the case the author wants to make for linking these worldviews.

A greater acknowledgement of the author's philosophical sophistication in recent scholarship, replacing "earlier prejudicial evaluations of the author as a philosophical dilettante",[107] has led to an appreciation of the depth of the philosophical content of 4 Maccabees. Much of what might be put down to sloppy philosophy on the part of the author has been re-evaluated as representing the eclecticism popular in Hellenistic philosophy of the Second Sophistic.[108] The work deserves the moniker "Judaeo-Stoic" because of the success of its fusion of Jewish thought with a synthesis of Hellenistic philosophy that is overridingly represented by Stoicism. But it also deserves to be called a "successful failure" because, despite its internal philosophical and theological success, the unification of philosophies that this text represents gained virtually no traction in later Jewish thought; rather, this text is representative of a different Judaism that might have been, but is no longer.[109]

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[106]See the discussion of this doctrine at §1.3 above.

[107]deSilva (2006), xiii.

[108]See Renehan (1972) for one of the most important of these re-evaluations.

[109]The most enduring aspect of 4 Maccabees is the martyr stories, which may be familiar

So we are left with the same question as we had when we began: is 4 Maccabees a successful work? We have hinted at two different definitions of "success": internal and external consistency with a given tradition, in this case represented by a fusion of Hellenistic Judaism and Stoicism, as well as a broader sense involving longer-term acceptance. We have seen that 4 Maccabees succeeds given the first definition, and in fact helps us to refine the very notion of Judaeo-Stoicism. But as to the second type of success, there can be little doubt that 4 Maccabees was not a long-term success. It appears to have gone largely, if not completely, unnoticed in the both the Jewish and Christian traditions; although some aspects of Stoic doctrine would gain favour within Christianity and to a much lesser extent in some aspects of Judaism, these doctrines did not have their roots in 4 Maccabees. Indeed, 4 Maccabees is possessed of a nebulous canonical status, being included only in extremely permissive Christian canons and relegated to the Pseudepigrapha elsewhere. Therefore, we should be confident of evaluating 4 Maccabees, as we noted earlier, as a "successful failure": successful within the goals it sets for itself, but failing in the longer perspective of religious scriptures and doctrines.

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even to some modern Jews in the larger context of Jewish martyrologies of the Hadrianic persecutions (see e.g. *Lamentations Rabbah*). The influence of 4 Maccabees upon the early Christian church, however, is far more substantial; see deSilva (2006), xxxi–xxxviii for a comprehensive overview of the influence of this text on early Christian thought.

Chapter 3

The first three chapters of 4 Maccabees: a new translation and commentary

My goal in this chapter is to provide an interpretive and critical translation of the first three chapters of 4 Maccabees and a commentary on the same, which comprise a rhetorical and philosophical treatise that makes up most of the "philosophical" content of the book. As we have observed in Chapter 2, of course, the entire book is itself philosophical, but I will restrict myself to the material that is not anecdotal or historical in nature, most of which is comprised in these chapters.

In my commentary, I hope to explore points of agreement and disagreement between the content of 4 Maccabees and the philosophical doctrines of the Middle Stoa, as well as to explore the specific Jewish laws and stories under discussion and to elucidate how the author believes these connect to his larger philosophical theme. I will refrain from making many comments of a textual nature; I have assumed the text of deSilva (2006) as well as some of that editor's emendations. His text is based on the mid-third-century CE Codex Sinaiticus (ℵ), but I have noted other textual witnesses where appropriate. In addition to the text of ℵ and the notes of some of the correctors

of that manuscript, I have relied additionally on the fifth-century CE Codex Alexandrinus (A). The mid-fourth-century CE Codex Vaticanus (B) lacks all the books of the Maccabees, but B is supplemented by the ninth-century Codex Venetus (V). There is also an early translation of 4 Maccabees into Syriac, which I omit from my textual criticism since it does not bear upon any particular point I wish to make regarding the first three chapters.[110] Previous editions and commentaries, notably those of Rahlfs (1935), Dupont-Sommer (1939), Hadas (1953), Klauck (1989), and the NRSV and Wilson (2001)'s associated commentary in the third edition of the *New Oxford Annotated Bible*, have also been introduced where appropriate.

My translation attempts to stick rather closely to the syntax and dictional consistency of the Greek original, but where perspicuity demanded I have taken the occasional liberty. For clarity's sake I have given the original Greek of 4 Maccabees in the notes to illustrate some of my choices in translation, and when I have introduced a quotation in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin I have given the original language as well. I have attempted to translate technical terminology as consistently as possible throughout the text; deviations from this practice are marked in the notes. My translation is neither so free but loose as that of Hadas (1953) nor so strict but inelegant as that of deSilva (2006); rather I hope it occupies a happy mean between these two poles.[111]

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[110]Townshend (1913), 654 notes that generally the Syriac version supports the readings of א over A. See Klauck (1989), 678–680 for a more extensive (albeit preliminary) grouping of the manuscript families relating to 4 Maccabees.

[111]I am also indebted to deSilva (2006) for the use of section headings throughout the translation, though I have departed from his usage in a number of places.

3.1   Chapter 1

Exordium

1 A most philosophical subject[112] I am about to demonstrate:[113] that the absolute master of the passions[114] is religious reasoning.[115] I would rightly advise you to pay close heed to philosophy.[116] **2** For the subject is essential to everybody as a science, and besides, it includes a panegyric to the greatest moral excellence, by which I mean prudence.[117] **3** Indeed,[118] if reason

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[112]The accusative direct object φιλοσοφώτατον λόγον is fronted for emphasis, making it clear that the main concern of the book is its philosophical content, demonstrated by the histories and anecdotes that occupy the majority of its space. Cf. the fronted μῆνιν in *Il.* 1.1 and Homer's focus on Achilles' rage as the main topic of the *Iliad*. The superlative form φιλοσοφώτατος has a literary and philosophical antecedent in Plato (*Rep.* 498a, οἱ φιλοσοφώτατοι ποιούμενοι, cf. Hadas (1953), 144).

[113]The first twelve verses of the first chapter constitute an exordium in the Hellenistic rhetorical tradition during which the author states his intention to "demonstrate" (ἐπιδείκνυμι, a technical term for sustained reasoned argumentation characteristic of the Second Sophistic) his proposition.

[114]I use "passion" and "emotion" interchangeably for the Greek πάθος in my notes and discussion. However, in my translation, for the sake of consistency, I have chosen to stick with "passion" throughout.

[115]The author has postponed ὁ εὐσεβὴς λογισμός to the final position, subtly altering the semantics of the proposition he intends to demonstrate: it is effective here as a rhetorical device for emphasis, and is imitated throughout the work where the effect is not specifically called for.

[116]The focus on philosophy is recalled at the end of the first sentence, where the author advises his audience to "pay close heed to philosophy" (τῇ φιλοσοφίᾳ) in general, and not specifically to any specific philosophical inquiry (*pace* deSilva (2006), 3).

[117]Here the author blends theory and practice (ἐπιστήμη and ἀρετῆ), the first indication that he intends to deliver a work suitable for theoretical audiences as a philosophical treatise as well as a practical guide on how to live one's life. For the Stoic, living in accordance with moral excellence is the sole constituent of the happy life (see §1.3); the author shows his audience the benefits of living one's life in such a way both through theoretical and practical means.

[118]This whole passage (1.3–6) seems to be damaged in some way; the wording is confused and the order the passions are presented here does not line up with the subjects when they reappear later in the book. Beginning with Freudenthal (1869), 148–150, scholars have theorized about why this might be and have proposed various emendations to the

is demonstrated to master the passions which impede moderation, such as gluttony and lust, **4** but also appears to rule over the passions which impede justice, such as malice and anger,[119] and those impeding manliness,[120] such as fear and pain[121], **5** how, then,[122] someone might perhaps ask, if reason rules over the passions, does it not master forgetfulness and ignorance? This attempt at argument is laughable. **6** For reason does not rule over its own passions, but those inimical to justice and manliness and moderation, and it rules over these not in order to destroy them, but in order not to yield to them.[123]

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text. My translation follows the suggestion of deSilva (2006), 72–73, who proposes moving nothing but the phrase θυμοῦ τε καὶ in 1.4 to preserve as much of the text of א as possible as it currently stands.

[119]Moving θυμοῦ here.

[120]The virtue of ἀνδρεία is often rendered "courage"; see Hadas (1953), 147, as well as deSilva (2006), 3, though the latter correctly points out elsewhere that "'manliness,' as its very name implies, is a 'gendered' virtue" (74).

[121]Having moved θυμοῦ, "anger", to the previous list.

[122]1.5–6 is a doublet of the objection presented in 2.24–3.1, where it fits the sense much better. See note 189 *ad loc.*

[123]This point, like its doublet in 2.24–3.5, is unorthodox from a Stoic perspective. The orthodox Stoic goal was *apatheia*, the complete elimination of the passions, rather than mastery or control over them. deSilva (2006) notes that the middle Stoic Posidonius taught that the passions were to be controlled but not eliminated, but Cicero (*Tusc. Disp.* 3.22) and Seneca (*Ep.* 116.1) argued strongly against this point "on the grounds that the passions were a disease of the soul. A moderate case of a disease was still ill-health; a moderate evil was still evil" (77). Instead, deSilva also identifies the position taken by our author as more consistent with the position taken by the Peripatetic school and Plutarch (*Mor.* 442c–443d). The argument of 4 Maccabees seems to be the opposite of the one made by most Stoics, that the Stoic goal of *homologia*, living in accordance with nature (or *logos*), simply means using the logical faculties of the rational human being to control the passions that nature has placed there. It might be possible to see in this argument an example of the movement away from the theoretical, sage-oriented, and impracticable early Stoic ethical system to the more popularized and practical ethical system during the middle Stoa (and cf. Marcus Aurelius' similar instructions regarding prayer; note 193 to 3.5). It is also consistent with the author's assertion that God deliberately planted the passions in human beings, which means that the goal should not be to eliminate them (for they are part of God's creation), but to control them by leading one's life in accordance with

7 Through many and various sources[124] I would be able to demonstrate to you that reason[125] is absolute ruler of the passions, **8** but I might demonstrate this far better from the heroism[126] of those who died for the sake of moral excellence, namely Eleazar, and the seven brothers and the mother of those. **9** For all these, by despising their suffering even up to death, demonstrated that reason completely rules the passions. **10** I am therefore bound to praise those men and their mother who died at this season[127] for their nobility and goodness,[128] and I would account them blessed them for their honours.[129] **11** For being admired for their manliness and endurance not only by all people but also by their tormentors, they became causes of the disintegration of

God's Torah. Furthermore, this anticipates a later rabbinic approach: that one should moderate, not eliminate, one's desire to perform forbidden acts, such as eat forbidden food (cf. 1.33–34), and one should control rather than extirpate one's inclination to evil (cf. *Sifre, Kedoshim* 11.93d, Mishnah *Aboth* 4:1, and BT *Yom.* 69b, and also Hadas (1953), 151 and deSilva (2006), 78).

[124]Despite the conceit, all the cases our author cites in fact derive from Judaic scriptures (Hadas (1953), 147).

[125]The epithet "religious" (εὐσεβής) is missing in the text of ℵ but is witnessed by A; however, ℵ retains the qualifier at other key places (notably 1.1, 6.31, and 13.1). The freedom with which the author seems to flow between "reasoning" and "religious reasoning" probably should be taken as an indication that he does not see a distinction of any importance between these things. See also deSilva (2006), 79.

[126]The virtue of "heroism" (ἀνδραγαθία) is far commoner in the Greek classics than in Judaic writings; LXX only notes the word three times, and that in two apocryphal books (Esth. 10:2, 1 Mac. 5:56, and 2 Mac. 14:18, cf. Hadas (1953), 147). Here we see an attempt to take Hellenistic values and map them onto the Judaic tradition.

[127]This expression is repeated at 3.19; see note 205 *ad loc.* Hadas (1953), 147 suggests that this constitutes proof that the book was intended as an oration to be delivered on some particular occasion; also cf. the NRSV's translation "on this anniversary".

[128]The Greek compound καλοκἀγαθίας derived from the classical and Hellenistic notion of the virtuous goal of being "noble" (*kalos*) and "good" (*agathos*); my translation follows deSilva (2006), but cf. Hadas (1953), 147, who proposes "gentlemanliness".

[129]deSilva (2006), 81 rightly points out the linguistic parallel (τῶν δὲ τιμῶν μακαρίσαιμ᾽ ἄν) between our text and the trope of funeral orations, cf. Lysias, *Or.* 2.81.

the tyranny against our nation, since they vanquished the tyrant by their endurance, with the result that through them, the homeland was purified. **12** But it will suffice to speak of these things presently; I shall begin with my thesis, as is the custom,[130] and so shall I return to the subject regarding them, giving glory to God the all-wise.[131]

Definitions of terms

13 So then, we are inquiring into whether reason is absolute master of the passions. **14** We are determining what is "reason" and what is "passion", and how many kinds[132] of the passions there are, and whether reason completely masters all of them.[133]

15 So then, "reason" is a mind preferring with proper judgment[134] a life of

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[130]It is unclear whether the author is referring to some specific custom of his own, to a custom that would be appropriate to the particular season during which this oration was delivered (if it was delivered in such a manner at all), or simply to the customary format of well-structured rhetorical dissertations. Dupont-Sommer (1939) and Hadas (1953) *ad loc.* are proponents of the second point of view, especially in light of 1.10 and 3.19; see notes 127 and 205 *ad loc.* However, Occam's razor might direct us to the third reason—that this indicates a knowledge of the principles of well-structured rhetoric—and indeed, this reason might hold even alongside the first or second possibilities given above.

[131]Appropriately enough given its religious focus, "giving glory" (δόξαν διδοὺς) is a Hebraism (לָתֵת כָּבוֹד), and is probably derived from LXX (Hadas (1953), 148). It is often taken to be the only Hebraism in the entire work, though there may be one at 2.2 and two at 2.23 (see notes 157, 186, and 187 *ad loc*). The epithet "God the all-wise" (τῷ πανσόφῳ Θῷ) is unknown in LXX but is found in other Hellenistic Jewish authors, e.g. Philo, *Plant.* 28 (deSilva (2006), 84).

[132]Possibly better "forms", per deSilva (2006), 5, but the notion of the forms (ἰδέαι) in a Platonic sense does not really seem appropriate here.

[133]These two sentences introduce the first formal philosophical arguments in the book: the author states his goals, and follows them with a series of axioms against which he intends to evaluate his examples later in the work. Dupont-Sommer (1939), 90 and deSilva (2006), 85 are correct to point out that the author never formally defines the notion of "passion", though he does enumerate several kinds of them and demonstrates how reason masters them, which he may have regarded as suffing for a definition.

[134]μετὰ ὀρθοῦ λόγου, recalling that *logos* should dictate the choices of the rational faculty

wisdom, **16** and wisdom, then, is knowledge of divine and human matters and the causes of these.[135] **17** This wisdom,[136] then, is the education gained from the Law,[137] through which we learn divine matters reverently[138] and human matters advantageously. **18** The kinds of wisdom comprise prudence, justice, manliness, and moderation, **19** but the most superior of all is prudence, through which reason completely rules the passions. **20** Of the passions,[139] the two most comprehensive types are pleasure and pain,[140] each of which

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of the mind. Epictetus saw the cultivation of the *orthos logos* to direct one's actions as the goal (*telos*) of philosophy (*Diss.* 4.8.12).

[135]This is exactly equivalent to the orthodox Stoic definition of wisdom: cf. Cicero, *Tusc. disp.* 4.25.57: *sapientiam esse rerum divinarum et humanarum scientiam cognitionemque quae cuiusque rei causa sit*, "Wisdom is knowledge of divine and human matters and understanding of the causes of these." Cf. also Cicero, *Off.* 2.2.5, Seneca, *Ep.* 89.5, Philo, *Congr.* 79, and Aëtius, *Placit. philos.* 1 pref. 2. See also Dupont-Sommer (1939), 34*ff.*, deSilva (2006), 85, and Tucker (2007), 51. Renehan (1972), 228 is correct to point out that this definition was not specifically Stoic but extended to other Hellenistic and post-Hellenistic authors and philosophers. However, deSilva (2006) overstates his case that this is an effectual divorce from the Stoic school; as we have seen, this text represents a fusion of philosophies, rather than an alignment "quite clearly not with Stoicism, but with the Jewish philosophical school" (85).

[136]Sc. σοφία.

[137]The notion of education (παιδεῖα) was a common philosophical subject in Hellenistic times and into the Second Sophistic and beyond; here, the author presents the decidedly non-Greco-Roman idea that the proper education can be understood in the context of biblical law (νόμος in this context refers to the law of the Torah). deSilva (2006), 86 rightly points to Jewish wisdom literature as a source of inspiration here, e.g. the instructions of Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus): ἐπεθύμησας σοφίαν διατήρησον ἐντολάς καὶ Κύριος χορηγήσει σοι αὐτήν, "If you desire wisdom, keep the commandments, and the Lord will grant it you" (Sir. 1.25), as well as ῥίζα σοφίας φοβεῖσθαι τὸν Κύριον καὶ οἱ κλάδοι αὐτῆς μακροημέρευσις, "The root of wisdom is fear of the Lord, and her branches are long life" (Sir. 1.20; possibly *šrš ḥkmh yrᵓt yhwh wᶜnph ᵓrk ymm*, per the fragmentary 2QSir from the Dead Sea Scrolls). Cf. also Ps. 111.10 and Prov. 1.7.

[138]The Greek σεμνῶς has definite religious overtones, cf. e.g. Hermes' ἐν δ' ἀνακτόροις / θεοῦ καταζῇ δεῦρ' ἀεὶ σεμνὸν βίον, "here in the god's temple he has always lived a thoroughly reverent life" (Euripides, *Ion* 55–56). I therefore prefer the translation of Hadas (1953), 149 ("reverently") to that of deSilva (2006), 5 ("honorably").

[139]The author lets examples stand for a formal definition of "passion".

[140]The identification of pleasure (ἡδονή) and pain (πόνος in our text, but λύπη, "sorrow",

has sprung up[141] around [the body and] the soul.[142] **21** There are many passions that attend both pleasure and pain: **22** before pleasure is desire, and after pleasure is joy; **23** before pain is fear, and after pain is sorrow; **24** and anger is a passion common to pleasure and pain, if one considers how he falls into it.[143] **25** There is a malicious disposition even in pleasure,[144] which is the most varied of the passions, **26** comprising with reference to the soul: arrogance, avarice, fame-seeking, pugnacity, and grudge; **27** and with reference to the body: immoderate eating, eating in secret, and gluttony. **28** So, just as pleasure and pain are two trunks of the body and the soul, there are many branches to these trunks,[145] **29** and reason, the gardener of

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[141]Following the suggestion of deSilva (2006), 87; cf. the explicit analogy to plant life at 1.28–29.

[142]It is a strange omission, given the balanced focus later on the passions as they relate to the soul *and* the body (cf. 1.26–27), that "the body" (τὸ σῶμα is not included in either the text of א or A; deSilva (2006), 87 believes that the witnessed καί should be read as an intensifier ("even around the soul"); various editors including Rahlfs (1935) and Hadas (1953) include "the body" nevertheless.

[143]The physical sense of περιέπεσεν is most definitely called for here, given that this is something to avoid "falling into". deSilva (2006) is correct to point out that by grouping anger with *both* pleasure and pain, our author has given "a profound insight into the nature of a common and often troublesome emotion, as well as a window into the self-awareness that undergirded ethical philosophy at many junctures" (88), *contra* Dupont-Sommer (1939), 91, Hadas (1953), 150, and Klauck (1989), 692, who see this clause (ἐὰν ἐννοηθῇ τις ὅτι αὐτῷ περιέπεσεν) as grammatically troublesome.

[144]The author seems not to regard pleasure *per se* as evil, given that he cautions against the "malicious disposition" (κακοήθης διάθεσις) that pleasure contains. This explains his thesis (1.31*ff.*) of the Torah's ability to cultivate self-control over the impulse to pleasure (deSilva (2006), 89).

[145]A and V both read παθῶν for φυτῶν in the second instance; my translation follows א

everything,[146] who cleans and prunes and binds and waters and irrigates[147] each of these in many ways, cultivates the wild woods of the inclinations and the passions.[148] **30a** For reason is the conductor[149] of moral excellences, and the absolute ruler of the passions.

The moderating influence of the Law

30b Now first observe through deeds that impede moderation, that reason is absolute master of the passions, **31** and furthermore, moderation is complete rulership over the desires.[150] **32** Of the desires, some are spiritual and some are bodily, and reason obviously completely rules over both of

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in continuing the plant metaphor.

[146]The term πανγέωργος (or, as per the correction of Rahlfs (1935), παγγέωργος) is much more loaded than deSilva (2006) gives it credit for: reason is not merely a "master gardener" (5, cf. 90) but literally the *pan–geōrgos*, the gardener of everything—that is, everything that exists. This fits very with established Stoic metaphors regarding *logos*, which pervades and directs everything (cf. §1.3), and is also evident in Jewish literature of a similar persuasion (e.g. Philo, *Quod det. pot.* 105–106).

[147]There is a subtle difference between watering each plant individually (μεταχέων) and irrigating whole systems (ἐπάδρων); I follow Dupont-Sommer (1939), 92, Hadas (1953), 151, and deSilva (2006), 90 and his references.

[148]1.28–29 constitute an extended metaphor on plant life begun in 1.20. This analogy has precedents in Hellenistic discourse as well as in specifically philosophical discussions of ethics; cf. Cicero, *Tusc. disp.* 4.26.57, Plutarch, *Mor.* 451c, and Philo, *Det.* 105 and *Leg.* 1.47. deSilva (2006) accurately sums up that our author, "like so many other moralists, sees a garden rank with weeds and thorns but also ripe with potential for beauty and order" (90). Cf. also Ben Sira's comparison of wisdom and long life to a plant's roots and branches (Sir. 1.20), which we saw earlier (note 137 to 1.17).

[149]The word ἡγεμών is a particularly loaded term in Stoic ethical discourse, referring to the mind as the focal point of control of the rational ruling faculty (Iamblichus, quoted in Stobaeus 1.369, *SVF* 2.83). In our text, our author has it not only encompassing the *logos* of the soul, but also directing that *logos* to control one's actions; hence "conductor". See also Tucker (2007), 45–46.

[150]This is similar to the Aristotelian definition, which specifies *logos* as the mechanism by which moderation controls the impulses of the self (*Virt.* 5.1).

these. **33** Otherwise how, when we are drawn to the forbidden foods,[151] do we turn away from the pleasures they afford? Is it not because reason has the ability to completely master the appetites? For I think it is.[152] **34** This is the reason that although we desire seafood, fowl, quadrupeds, and every sort of animal that is forbidden to us according to the Law, we abstain on account of reason's complete rulership.[153] **35** For the passions of the desires are endured and controlled by the moderate mind, and all the stirrings[154] of the body are stilled by reason.[155]

3.2 Chapter 2

1 And why should it be amazing that the desires of the soul for the enjoyment of beauty are rendered ineffective?[156] **2** For this very reason the

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[151]See Lev. 11:1–47 and Deut. 14:3–21 for many of the Jewish dietary laws.

[152]Cf. note 123 to 1.6.

[153]The author holds up observance of the biblical dietary laws (*kashruth*) as proof that reason is able to restrain one's appetitive cravings. The laws of *kashruth* are a classic example of what rabbinic discourse regards as a *ḥōq*, a law expected to be obeyed without any stated purpose: there is no obvious or self-evident reason why animals with cloven hooves but without ruminant stomachs should be forbidden, for instance, much less any reason given in the text of the Torah. The author's defence goes along with the Hellenistic Jewish tradition of defending inexplicable laws from the Hebrew scriptures; see §2.1. Regarding this particular defence of dietary laws, cf. also the defense of *Let. Aris.* 144–160, which, like Philo (e.g. *Spec.* 4.100 and cf. a similar justification in 4 Maccabees at 5.25–26), allegorizes and moralizes its way out of this problem (deSilva (2006), 92–93).

[154]Following deSilva (2006); "stirrings" neatly captures both the motion and the impulsive qualities present in κινήματα.

[155]There is no break in the sense of the work between Chapters 1 and 2; the subject shifts at 1.30b and again at 2.24.

[156]Multiple editors have pointed out that there is a grammatical problem with this sentence. Dupont-Sommer (1939), 93 believes that the final clause πρὸς τὴν τοῦ κάλλους μετουσίαν ἀκυροῦνται has been displaced from its proper position after the αἱ of αἱ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐπιθυμίαι, and thus indicative of a gloss of a reader believing, based on 2.3, that

moderate Joseph[157] is praiseworthy, because through discernment[158] he completely ruled over the desire for the pleasure of sexual experience,[159] **3** for although he was young and in his prime for sexual intercourse, by means of reason he nullified the madness of the passions.[160] **4** Furthermore, reason obviously rules not only over the madness of sexual desire, but over every desire. **5** Therefore does the Law say, "You shall not desire your neighbour's wife, nor anything that is your neighbour's."[161] **6a** Furthermore, as the Law has ordered us not to desire, I might all the more persuade you that reason

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this sentence also referred to the sexual appetite; Hadas (1953), 152 rightly points out the dictional and substantive parallel to Plato, *Sym.* 206e. deSilva (2006), 94 proposes inserting a second αἱ before πρὸς, which would solve the problem neatly.

[157]Possibly a Hebraism (cf. note 131 to 1.12); the epithet σώφρων applied to Joseph at 2.2 might qualify as a Greek version of הַצַּדִּיק; cf. Hadas (1953), 152. The phrase "Joseph the righteous" is a common rabbinic epithet used even in present times.

[158]It is not, as expected, λογισμῷ ("through reason"), but rather διανοίᾳ ("through discernment" or "mental effort" as per the NRSV), that Joseph is able to exercise moderation, though the author probably does not intend any significant deviation of meaning here.

[159]I follow Hadas (1953), 153 and the NRSV (*pace* deSilva (2006), 7) in understanding the unusual formation ἡδυπαθείας as referring to a desire for the enjoyment that specifically comes from sexual activity.

[160]The reference is to the the story of Joseph's encounter with Potiphar's wife; she propositioned him and he refused her advances (Gen. 39:6b–12). There is a later tradition of reworking and embellishing this story, exemplified by the *Testament of Joseph* 2.7–10.4, which turns these few Biblical verses into a seven-year-long sequence of propositions and refusals (see deSilva (2006), 94). Our author attributes Joseph's refusal to his thorough self-control; the pseudepigraphal work *Joseph and Asenath* similarly praises Joseph's self-control and pious humility.

[161]This is a paraphrase of the tenth commandment, לֹא תַחְמֹד בֵּית רֵעֶךָ לֹא־תַחְמֹד אֵשֶׁת רֵעֶךָ וְעַבְדּוֹ וַאֲמָתוֹ וְשׁוֹרוֹ וַחֲמֹרוֹ וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר לְרֵעֶךָ, "You shall not desire your neighbour's house; you shall not desire your neighbour's wife, or his manservant or his maidservant, or his ox or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbour's" (Ex. 20:17). When Moses retells the law near the end of the Torah, the text changes the object of the first "You shall not desire" to "your neighbour's wife", and the second "You shall not desire" list begins וְלֹא תִתְאַוֶּה בֵּית רֵעֶךָ שָׂדֵהוּ, "And you shall not lust after your neighbour's house, [nor] his field..." (Deut. 5:21). The reason the prohibition against desiring one's neighbour's wife is mentioned at this point in the text is an obvious link with the story of Joseph just mentioned.

is able to rule over the desires.[162]

6b Just so does it rule even over the passions which impede justice; **7** otherwise, how could someone who has the habit of eating in secret, or is a glutton or even a drunkard,[163] be corrected by education,[164] unless reason is clearly lord of the passions? **8** Therefore, as soon as one begins to live in accordance with the Law, even if he were avaricious[165] he restrains his own inclination, and lends to the poor without interest[166] and reduces the debt at the approach of the sabbatical year.[167] **9a** And if someone is stingy,

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[162]I follow Hadas (1953), 152, deSilva (1998), 60–61, and the NRSV (*pace* deSilva (2006), 96) in placing a paragraph break here, rather than treating 6 as one unit and placing the break after it.

[163]The author has already brought up the examples of someone who eats indiscriminately, alone, or to excess (1.27), but here, with the inclusion of the quality of drunkenness (μέθυμος), there may be a subtle influence from the so-called "stubborn and rebellious son" (בֵּן סוֹרֵר וּמוֹרֶה) of Deut. 21:18–21, whose parents are supposed to qualify him before the elders of the town as זוֹלֵל וְסֹבֵא, "a glutton and a drunkard" (Deut. 18:20, cf. later rabbinic perspectives which try to reason their way to eliminating this unpleasant law, viz. Mishnah *Sanh.* 8:1–6, Tosefta *Sanh.* 9.6a–8, and BT *Sanh.* 68b–72b). *Pace* Hadas (1953), who simply sees this as an example of "applications to religious Law alternat[ing] with general principles which are applicable to all men, in keeping with Stoic notions of universal brotherhood" (153), and deSilva (2006), 97, who sees the emphasis shifting at 2.8 to defending obedience to the commandments.

[164]Again we see the continued focus on *paideia* (here μεταπαιδεύεται, "re-educated" or "corrected by education") as the means by which one may condition oneself to master the passions with *logos*.

[165]Cf. 1.26 and 2.15, where this passion (φιλαργυρία) is listed as evil.

[166]The commandment to lend without charging interest (to fellow Jews) is found in Ex. 22:24–27, Lev. 25:35–37, and Deut. 23:19–21, cf. also a prophetic denunciation of charging usurious interest and related practices (Ezek. 18.12*ff.*), as well as later rabbinical perspectives, especially Mishnah and BT *B.M.*, ch. 4–5.

[167]Literally a period of seven years (ἑβδομάδων). Every seven years the Torah commands there to be a remission of debts; see Deut. 15:1–6 and also Neh. 10:32. Hadas (1953), 153 correctly points out that it is unclear from the phrasing of the Greek in our text whether the entire debt is to be cancelled or solely its interest. While Dupont-Sommer (1939), 94 wonders whether this in fact refers to the jubilee year (Lev. 25:8–17), deSilva (2006), 97–98 proposes resolving the question in favour of the sabbatical year due to linguistic similarities between our text and LXX's translations of the relevant passages from the

following the Law, he rules over himself by means of reason, so he neither gleans from his field that has been harvested nor gathers grapes that remain in his vineyard that has been harvested.[168]

9b And in other things[169] too we observe that reason is ruler of the passions: **10** for the Law even limits good will towards parents, so that moral excellence is not abandoned because of them,[170] **11** and it restrains[171] love toward a wife, rebuking her for transgression,[172] **12** and it is sovereign over

Hebrew Bible. One should also note the *prozbul*, a legal innovation ascribed to the Jewish sage Hillel the Elder (probably first century BCE), by which a creditor could transfer an outstanding debt to a *beth din* (rabbinical court) for the duration of the sabbatical year, so as to prevent its cancellation (see Mishnah *Git.* 4:3 and BT *Git.* 34b–37b, as well as Mishnah *Sheb.* 10:3). Finally, a sabbatical year was observed in 162–1 BCE (1 Mac. 6.53; cf. Hadas (1953), 153); it is unclear, however, whether this helps us date the text of 4 Maccabees.

[168]The Greek is compact here; I have expanded for the sake of clarity. The commandment to leave the unharvested sheaves of grain and grapes on the vine for the poor to glean after the harvest is found in Ex. 23:10–11, Lev. 19:9–10 and 23:22, and Deut. 24:19–21; cf. also the narrative account of Ruth 2. deSilva (2006) reads the grouping of this commandment with the previous one with an eye toward the larger picture of social justice: "Once again, the needs of the human community take precedence over the self-indulgence of the individual, and mastery of the passions is part of the means by which justice in human relations can be secured." (98)

[169]Rahlfs (1935) corrects the mss' ἔργων ("by means of deeds"; cf. deSilva (2006), 6) to ἑτέρων ("in other things"); I follow the NRSV in preferring this correction, given the lists of commandments in the following five verses.

[170]This—along with some of the restrictions on interpersonal relationships given in the succeeding verses—may be an overstatement on the author's part; much commoner are Biblical injunctions to parents to restrain their love for their children (see 2.12 and note 173 *ad loc.*, as well as note 163 to 2.7). Perhaps the author is referring to the fifth commandment, כַּבֵּד אֶת־אָבִיךָ וְאֶת־אִמֶּךָ, "Honour your father and mother" (Ex. 20:12)—note the Torah does not command one to "love" one's parents. However, the author seems not so concerned with the specifics of what the Torah actually commands as opposed to what is consistent with the spirit of the author's general point; this attitude permits him to make this overstatement alongside those of 2.11 and 2.13, as well as the statement at the end of 2.14 (see notes 172, 174, and 176 *ad loc.*).

[171]The tone of ἐπικρατεῖν here cannot be so strong as "completely rule" in light of the parallels κρατεῖ (2.10), κυριεύει (2.12), and δεσπόζει (2.13). Cf. deSilva (2006), 7.

[172]Again, this may be an overstatement; deSilva (2006) may be right to note that "the

love for children, punishing them for misdeeds,[173] **13** and it has mastery over associations with friends, rebuking them for wickedness.[174] **14** Likewise, do not think it a paradox that reason is able to rule completely even over enmity: according to the Law,[175] an enemy's fruit trees are not cut down, but one saves an enemy's property from vandals and helps restore what has been destroyed.[176]

15 Reason[177] also obviously rules over the more violent passions: avarice,[178] vanity, pride, arrogance, and grudge, **16** for the moderate mind rebuffs all

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author may have in mind the injunction of Deut. 13:6–11 that should one's family member … entice an Israelite to commit idolatry or worship foreign gods, that Israelite was to be the first to execute justice against the offender" (99).

[173]Cf. the case of the "stubborn and rebellious son" of Deut. 21:18–21, discussed above (note 163 to 2.7), as well as "spare the rod" parallels in Jewish wisdom literature (Prov. 13:24, 19:18, and 29:15–17)

[174]Having referred to the older, equal, and younger generations, the author ends with a caution regarding associations with friends, though this too may be overweighted against what actually appears in the Torah, cf. note 173.

[175]Reading the clause διὰ τὸν νόμον as connected to the following μῆτε… rather than the preceding ἐπικρατεῖν ὁ λογισμὸς δύναται, cf. a similar construction in 2.6.

[176]For the commandment specifically regarding fruit trees, see Deut. 20:19–20, and cf. Josephus, *Ap.* 2.211–212. The last part of this sentence is unclear; τὰ πεπτωκότα literally means "what has fallen down". Hadas (1953) believes the Greek to be "so elliptical as to be unintelligible" (154) and proposes that the second part of this verse is meant to refer to the Torah's commandment to return an enemy's stray livestock (Ex. 23:4–5). If accurate, this reading would support Hadas's claim that this sheds some light on the author's erudition and the level of textual knowledge he expects from his audience, but given that that there is no explicit support for this in the text, I find it rather unlikely. I prefer to read this sentence in the same vein as the "restrictions" the Torah places on various interpersonal relationships in 2.10–13, cf. note 170.

[177]Following Rahlfs (1935) and virtually all succeeding editors in taking the suggestion of the corrector in the manuscript of א to delete the blatantly anomalous postpositive διὰ from καὶ διὰ.

[178]The original text of א seems to have been φιλαργυίας; a corrector has changed it to read φιλαρχίας, "love of power", a reading followed by Rahlfs (1935) and many translations including the NRSV. But φιλαργυίας is more appropriate here given the parallelism between this list of "violent passions" and the list of moral failings that arise out of pleasure's "malicious disposition" (1.25–26; see deSilva (2006), 8 and 100).

these malicious passions, just as it does anger, for it masters even this.[179] **17** When Moses was very angry at Dathan and Abiram, he did nothing against them in anger, but controlled his anger by reason.[180] **18** For the moderate mind is able, as I said, to excel the passions, to alter some of them and render others powerless. **19** Otherwise, why did our all-wise[181] father Jacob excoriate the associates of Simeon and Levi for their irrational massacre of the tribe of the Shechemites, saying, "Cursed be their anger!"?[182] **20** For if reason was not able to restrain anger, he would not have spoken thus.[183]

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[179]deSilva (2006), 100–101 notes that the author of 4 Maccabees does not seem interested in the specifics of how anger might be controlled (cf. Seneca's *De ira*); he has reverted to his earlier mode of demonstrating by example. Our author may be restrained by the lack of commandments in Jewish scripture specifically dealing with this topic; deSilva proposes that Deut. 20:19–20 might apply, but the commandment to refrain from cutting down an enemy's fruit trees does not specifically mention anger, and at any rate the author has already used it in 2.14.

[180]The author refers to the episode in which Korah, joined by Dathan and Abiram, led a short-lived rebellion against Moses' authority (Num. 16; cf. Ps. 106.16–18 (LXX 105) and Sir. 45:18–19). Moses' characteristic attribute, of course, is his meekness (עָנָו and πραΰς, Num. 12.3), which our author indirectly attributes to his ability to control his anger, "not allow[ing] anger to lead him to act unjustly" (deSilva (2006), 101). Aristotelian and Hellenistic ethics see vengeance as the goal (*telos*) of anger (*Rh.* 2.2.1), which makes Moses' refusal to allow anger to lead him into injustice a true vanquishing of the impulse to anger. Cf. Plutarch's treatment of Achilles' violence arising out of his rage (*Mor.* 26e; Klauck (1989), 698).

[181]This epithet of Jacob is not Biblical, but occurs in Philo (*Sacrif.* 48), and is also applied to the other patriarchs Abraham and Isaac, as well as to Moses (Hadas (1953), 156).

[182]Simeon and Levi massacred the inhabitants of the town of Shechem after making deceitful overtures of peace in retaliation for the rape of their sister Dinah (Gen. 34). In his blessings to his sons at the end of his life, Jacob curses Simeon and Levi (Gen. 49:5–7); our author quotes a short part of the curse verbatim from LXX, which is a translation of אָרוּר אַפָּם (Gen. 49:7). My translation of the Greek τοὺς περὶ Συμεων καὶ Λευ<ε>ιν as "the associates of Simeon and Levi" is meant to reflect the conspiratorial overtones in the second verse of Jacob's curse, בְּסֹדָם אַל־תָּבֹא נַפְשִׁי בִּקְהָלָם אַל־תֵּחַד כְּבֹדִי, "Among their associates [lit. 'secret'] let my soul not come, with their assembly let my glory not be united" (Gen. 49:6).

[183]The argument seems to be that Jacob demonstrated temperance by cursing his way-

21 For when God fashioned man, he planted[184] his passions and inclinations, **22** but at the same time he enthroned the mind, the holy conductor, over all things, by means of discernment,[185] **23** and to this [mind] he gave the Law,[186] and anyone who governs himself according to it will dominate a dominion[187] that is moderate, just, good, and manly.[188]

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ward sons rather than responding to their violence in kind, cf. Moses' "temperate" response to Dathan and Abiram (note 180 to 2.17).

[184]Resuming the agricultural and vegetative metaphors from 1.28–29.

[185]The syntax here is potentially ambiguous; it may be clarified by reading τὸν ἱερὸν ἡγεμόνα in apposition to νοῦν, which in turn qualified by διὰ τῶν ἐσθητηρίων (which reading is to be preferred over Rahlfs's correction to αἰσθητηρίων). For the translation of ἡγεμόνα as "conductor" see note 149 to 1.30a. It is also notable that this is the first occurrence in the work of the qualifier ἱερός, "holy", here being linked with the reasoning powers of the mind; compare the stated topic of the work—demonstrating the power of εὐσεβὴς λογισμός (1.1)—a phrase denoting a type of reasoning that is "religious" or "pious".

[186]The occurrence of the adjective "holy" (1.22) referring to the faculty of the intellect appears in tandem with the first explicit mention of God in the work besides the invocation at 1.12. Here the author refers to God at some length as the source of human emotions and inclinations, but also as the source of the faculty of reasoning that allows one to master one's own passions, and the law that, if followed, enables one to achieve this goal (cf. DL 7.52). Essentially, the author makes God, *logos*, and Torah into synonymous concepts; this answers Townshend (1913), 666 note 1, who tries to draw too sharp a distinction between the author's "reasoning" (*logismos*) and "reason" as exemplified by the word of God (*logos*). The link between *logos* and the divine is a Stoic commonplace (see §1.3); the link between these two and the law of God, as represented by the Torah, is the real philosophical innovation of 4 Maccabees. This verse might also be read as another Hebraism, given the fronted conjunction and the archaic-sounding verb δέδωκεν (corrected by Rahlfs (1935) to ἔδωκεν) coupled with the Torah (νόμον) as the object of the act of giving; cf. the Hebrew trope נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה, "he who gives the Torah".

[187]This may be another Hebraism: the cognate accusative, i.e. the use of a verb with an object derived from the same root, is quite common in Biblical Hebrew; it is also known in Greek, but in a clause such as this, and in light of the subject matter under discussion, the possibility that there is some Hebraic influence here should not be overlooked.

[188]The analogy of the sage to a king over himself is found in Stoic literature; e.g. Philo, *Migr.* 197, as well as DL 7.122 (Hadas (1953), 157 and deSilva (2006), 104).

Objection

24 "How is it, then,"[189] you might say,[190] "if reason is master of the passions, that it does not rule over forgetfulness and ignorance?"

3.3 Chapter 3

Reason controls but does not eliminate the passions

1 This objection is thoroughly laughable, for reason obviously does not rule over its own passions but over those of the body. **2** No individual among us[191] is able to eliminate desire from the soul, but reason is able to ensure

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[189]The author changes topics here, one verse before the chapter break, and not at the break itself. This objection and its answer fit much better at this point than at 1.5–6, where it is weaker (though not impossible; see deSilva (2006), 76 for reasons for thinking it might be possible to include it there). There are significant textual problems with this verse and the following one; half of both verses is supplied by a corrector in the margin of ℵ; see the apparatus of deSilva (2006), 8, also 104; but also cf. the decision of Freudenthal (1869), Dupont-Sommer (1939), and Hadas (1953) *ad loc.* to read in a lengthy passage based the first occurrence of the doublet.

[190]Framing this objection as spoken by an imaginary interlocutor is a standard rhetorical gambit (compare 1.5, where the objection is integrated and given in the author's voice). 2.24 is a much likelier place for this objection than 1.5, as we have previously discussed (see note 122 *ad loc.*), even though the objection the author sets up (in both places) is ultimately a straw man—neither here nor at the objection's earlier introduction in 1.5 does the author develop this argument, instead dismissing it as "laughable". Here I follow deSilva (2006) in reading the more rhetorically effective εἴποιτε ἤ of ℵ for the corrector's εἴποι τις ἄν εἰ, per deSilva (2006), 104; cf. 1.5, where ℵ reads εἴποιεν ἄν τις, which a corrector in the manuscript of ℵ has changed to εἴποι (presumably to make the number agree with τις).

[191]The Greek τις οὐ δύναται … ἡμῶν is quite difficult to translate into idiomatic English; the literal "any one of us is unable" (deSilva (2006), 9) simply does not flow. Hadas (1953) sees the repeated second-person addresses in this section as "reinforc[ing] the impression that our discourse was actually spoken" (158), but the shifts between singular and plural number throughout the work, and between first person and second person in this passage (ὑμῶν at 2.4), might militate against this view.

that you not become enslaved to desire. **3** No individual among us is able to cut out anger from the soul, but reason is able to assist with desire. **4** No individual among you[192] is able to cut out malice, but reason is able to fight with you against submitting to malice. **5** For reason is not the destroyer of the passions, but the antagonist.[193]

The example of King David

6 Indeed, this may be considered quite clearly from the thirst of King

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[192]Rahlfs (1935) corrects the mss' ὑμῶν to ἡμῶν, continuing the first person parallelism; if accurate, this may lend credibility to Hadas's argument (see note 191 to 3.2).

[193]In this passage, the author argues at greater length the argument first seen in 1.5–6, namely, that reason possesses the power to control one's emotions rather than eliminate them completely. This point, as noted previously, is unorthodox Stoicism: the passions are not meant simply to be eliminated but to be controlled. Furthermore, given that the author's assertion that God planted the passions in human beings is not far above the text here, the anthropological argument for the moderation of one's God-given passions is strengthened when positioned here, as opposed to early in the first chapter. For more on these points, see note 123 to 1.6. It might also be appropriate to compare Marcus Aurelius' litany of suggestions regarding proper prayer from a Stoic perspective (*Med.* 9.40):

> τίς δέ σοι εἶπεν ὅτι οὐχὶ καὶ εἰς τὰ ἐφ᾽ ἡμῖν οἱ θεοὶ συλλαμβάνουσιν; ἄρξαι γοῦν περὶ τούτων εὔχεσθαι καὶ ὄψει. οὗτος εὔχεται· πῶς κοιμηθῶ μετ᾽ ἐκείνης· σύ· πῶς μὴ ἐπιθυμήσω τοῦ κοιμηθῆναι μετ᾽ ἐκείνης. ἄλλος· πῶς στερηθῶ ἐκείνου· σύ· πῶς μὴ χρῄζω τοῦ στερηθῆναι. ἄλλος· πῶς μὴ ἀποβάλω τὸ τεκνίον· σύ· πῶς μὴ φοβηθῶ ἀποβαλεῖν. ὅλως ὧδε ἐπίστρεψον τὰς εὐχὰς καὶ θεώρει τί γίνεται.
>
> Who told you that the gods do not assist even with things that are in our own power? Begin, then, to pray in this way, and you will see. He prays: "How might I be intimate with this woman?" You pray: "How might I not desire to be intimate with her?" He: "How might I be rid of such-and-such?" You: "How might I not seek to be rid of him?" He: "How might I not lose my child?" You: "How might I not fear to lose him?" Essentially, turn your prayers in this way, and you will see what happens.

Marcus Aurelius is asking his audience to exercise a particular kind of rationality over its prayers, especially as they relate to desire, in the same way that the author of 4 Maccabees exhorts his audience that reason is able to be an ally against the passions. Neither one advocates total elimination of either the passions or of prayer, but rather a repurposing of each in accordance with *logos* to the proper end, which is the key to the good life.

David.[194] **7** For David had been attacking the Philistines[195] all day long, and alongside many soldiers of his nation, had slain many of them,[196] **8** and then, as evening approached, though sweating and dreadfully tired, he came into the royal pavilion, around which our ancestors' whole army had encamped. **9** All the others went straight for their supper, **10** but the king, though exceedingly thirsty, and though possessing abundant springs, was unable to slake his thirst by them; **11** a certain irrational desire for the water which was in the enemy's camp parched him as it constricted and consumed him as it loosened.[197] **12** Whereupon, since his armour-bearers were complaining about the king's desire, two young steadfast soldiers who held the king's desire in greater esteem,[198] arrayed themselves in full panoply, took a

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[194]The following section consists of a retelling and embellishment of 2 Sam. 23:13–17 ($\approx$ 1 Chron. 11:15–19), substantially changed in points from the Biblical accounts: see deSilva (2006), 105–110 for a comprehensive comparison; cf. also Josephus' less extensive embellishments (*A.J.* 7.2.3–4). We will refrain from commenting on these points here and restrict ourselves instead to the story as our author provides it to us, which is "a perfect example of a passion mastered by a virtue" (Hadas (1953), 158). It may also be read, as deSilva (2006), 107 shrewdly notes, as something of a lecture to contemporary (possibly Diaspora) Jews regarding how to control the temptations presented by the neighbouring Hellenistic culture.

[195]ἀλλόφυλοι, literally, people "of another race", is a standard (post-hexateuchal) LXX euphemism for the Philistines, see e.g. Judg. 3:3.

[196]That is, David, together with his soldiers, had slain many of the Philistines. The Greek original suffers from the same syntactic ambiguity as the English: προσβαλὼν τοῖς ἀλλοφύλοις ὁ Δαυ<ε>ιδ πολλοὺς αὐτῶν ἀπέκτεινεν μετὰ τῶν τοῦ ἔθνους στρατιωτῶν, literally, "David, attacking the Philistines, killed many of them alongside the soldiers of his nation" (which is really no better as far as ambiguity goes).

[197]This is, of course, the crux of the issue: David's thirst does not simply address itself to his physical being but to his mind, his power of reasoning, and thus becomes an "irrational desire" (Wilson (2001) *ad loc.*). The author's subsequent language, embellished far beyond the Biblical account, helps to reinforce the notion that David's thirst affected not only his physical body but his spiritual essence.

[198]The participle καταιδεσθέντες is somewhat problematic. I follow the NRSV's "respecting the king's desire" understanding the soldiers to be expressing eagerness to fulfil the

pitcher, and climbed over the enemy's barricades. **13** Escaping the notice of the guards at the gates, they traversed and searched[199] the enemy's entire camp, **14** and when they found the spring, they drew from it and bravely conveyed the drink back to the king. **15** But he, though burning up from thirst, reasoned that a drink considered tantamount to blood constituted a very terrible danger to his soul, **16** whereupon, setting reason against desire, he poured it out as a libation to God.[200] **17** For the temperate mind is able to conquer the pressures of the passions and to quench their flaming prods **18** and to wrestle[201] against bodily pains, no matter how overwhelmingly

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king's request, rather than feeling shame because of it, in contrast to the king's armour-bearers' reaction; this eagerness is played out in the remainder of the story (but cf. the NRSV's alternate "embarrased because of", as well as the suggestions of deSilva (2006), 110).

[199]Following the correction in the ms of א of ἀνευρώμενοι to ἀνερενώμενοι, per deSilva (2006), 10–11.

[200]What exactly has transpired in David's mind in 3.15–16 is unclear, the root of the confusion being the phrase ἰσοδύναμον ποτὸν αἵματι, "a drink considered tantamount to blood" (3.15), possibly "equal in potency" or more generally "in its implications". Biblical law (Lev. 17:10–15; cf. also Acts 15:20) does forbid consumption of blood on the grounds that נֶ֣פֶשׁ הַבָּשָׂר֮ בַּדָּ֣ם הִוא֒, "the soul of the flesh is in the blood" (Lev. 17:11); Wilson (2001) *ad loc.* and deSilva (2006), 108–109 take this to mean that David recognized the boundary between human and divine things, which is why he subsequently poured the water out as an offering to God. However, David's action in pouring the blood out as a drink-offering is not consistent with the sole approved ritual purpose for blood, which is to be used for atonement sacrifices on the altar (Lev. 17:11); nothing is mentioned about drink-offerings, which leads deSilva (2006), 108–109 into a lengthy and somewhat fanciful parallel with Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. A far more elegant solution is proposed by Klauck (1989), 702, who simply maintains that David refused to drink the water out of the fear of bloodshed, thus rendering it tantamount to blood. This solution does not lose sight of the point, as many other attempts have, that the drink is still in fact water, and has not magically transmuted to blood, so the prohibition against drinking blood need not come into play here.

[201]The word καταπαλέσαι has definite athletic overtones, meaning to throw as in a wrestling match; there is also a possible parallel to the famous story of Jacob wrestling with and defeating a "man" (usually taken to be an angel) in Gen. 32:24–32.

strong,[202] and through the nobility and goodness[203] of reason, to spit out every tyranny[204] of the passions.

Introduction to the narrative examples

19 And now, the time[205] calls us to the demonstrations in narrative form regarding moderate reason. **20** For when our ancestors possessed utter peace due to the good Law, and prospering well, to the point that even Seleucus Nicanor,[206] the king of Asia, both provided money to them for the religious service and recognized their state, **21** at that very time, certain innovators against the common concord,[207] brought about manifold disasters.

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[202]Reading the mss' full καθ᾽ ὑπερβολὴν δυνατὰς οὔσας; Rahlfs (1935) omits δυνατὰς.

[203]Here καλοκἀγαθίᾳ, the qualities of nobility and goodness, earlier imputed to the martyrs to be described later (1.10, cf. note 128 *ad loc.*), are imputed directly to reason itself.

[204]The author uses one of the same Greek words (ἐπικρατείας) here that he uses to denote the ideal state of mastery one should have over one's emotions, perhaps as a subtle warning that if one does not control one's internal state, it will control him.

[205]Whether the Greek ὁ καιρὸς means that the author feels he has gone on long enough before switching subjects (Breitenstein (1978), 80) or is an indication that this discourse was meant to be delivered on some set occasion (Hadas (1953), 161, Klauck (1989), 703, Wilson (2001) *ad loc.*, and deSilva (2006), 111) is uncertain; cf. 1.10 and note 127 *ad loc.*

[206]The chronology is wrong; the author has apparently confused the king at the time of the events he describes, Seleucus IV Philopator (ruled 187–175 BCE), for the earlier Seleucus I Nicator (ruled 305–281 BCE); *Nicanor* was not the epithet of any Seleucid king. The author makes another historical error at 4.15, naming Antiochus IV Epiphanes as the son of Seleucus IV rather than his brother. See Wilson (2001) *ad loc.* and deSilva (2006), 112 for a fuller catalogue and exploration of these errors, which, although interesting from the historical perspective, do not really add to the ethical or theological lessons the author wants to draw from the following stories.

[207]The author starts off in the same place as 2 Macc. 3.1, invoking "utter peace" and "common concord" as characteristics of a land governed not simply by just laws but by specifically the laws of God. Setting out the form of the perfect state was a frequent goal of philosophers, including Stoic ones—Zeno's lost *Republic* follows a Platonic and Aristotelian tradition of attempting to set out the ideal state—and it is clear that in the mind of the author of 4 Maccabees, the laws of the ideal state should be in concord with those handed down by God in the Torah. Indeed, this point is the essence of the *Letter of Aristeas*, which holds that the model of proper rulership may be found within the laws of the Torah.

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