

2ND BOOK OF MACCABEES – PT 1

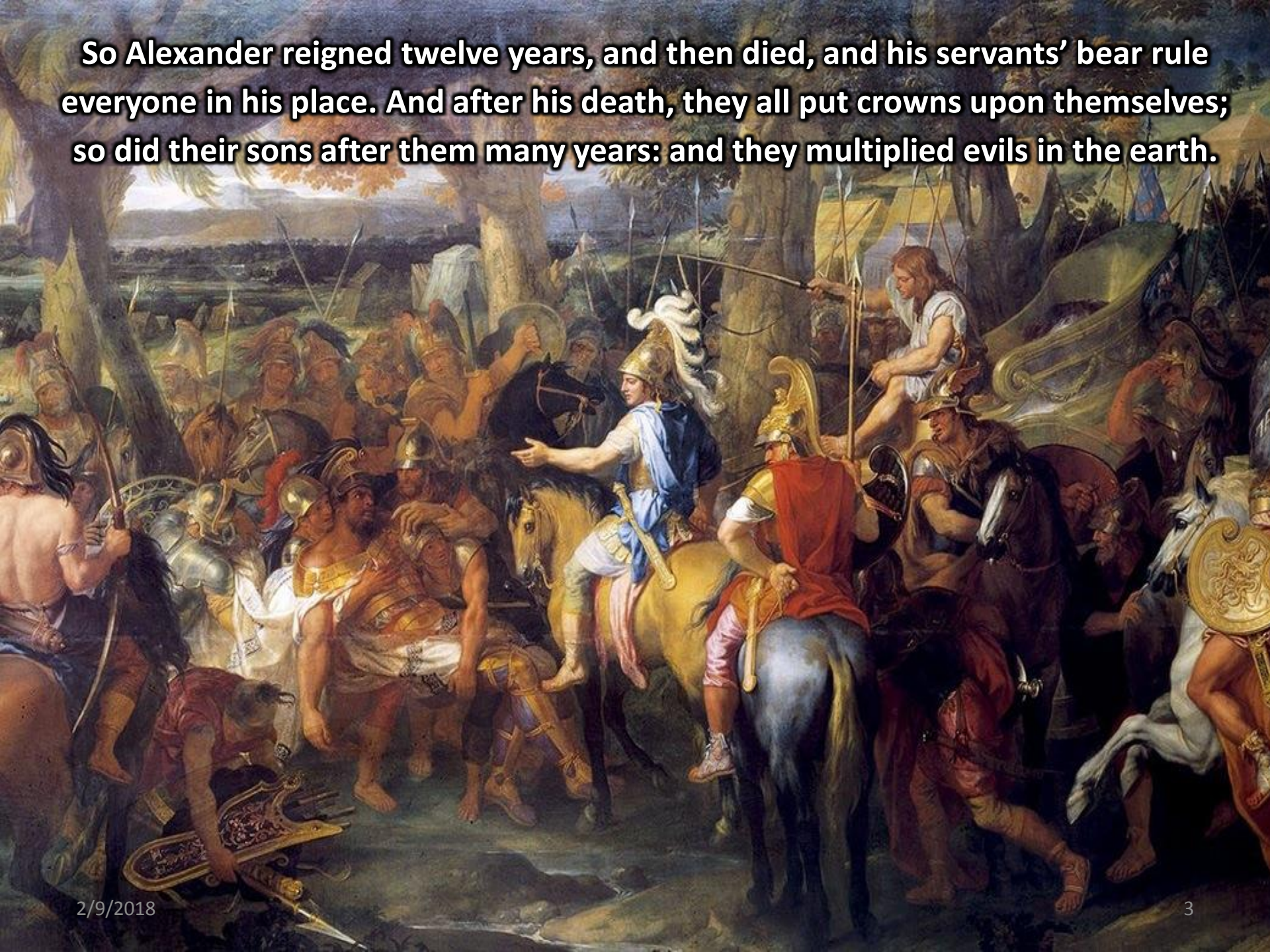
What on earth were we thinking?



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So Alexander reigned twelve years, and then died, and his servants' bear rule everyone in his place. And after his death, they all put crowns upon themselves; so did their sons after them many years: and they multiplied evils in the earth.



There came out of them a wicked root Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes son of Antiochus the king who had been a hostage at Rome (BC 176), and he reigned in the hundred and thirty and seventh year of the kingdom of the Greek (BC 175).



The Corpse Flower

Antiochus IV Epiphanes



Antiochus III
223-187 BC

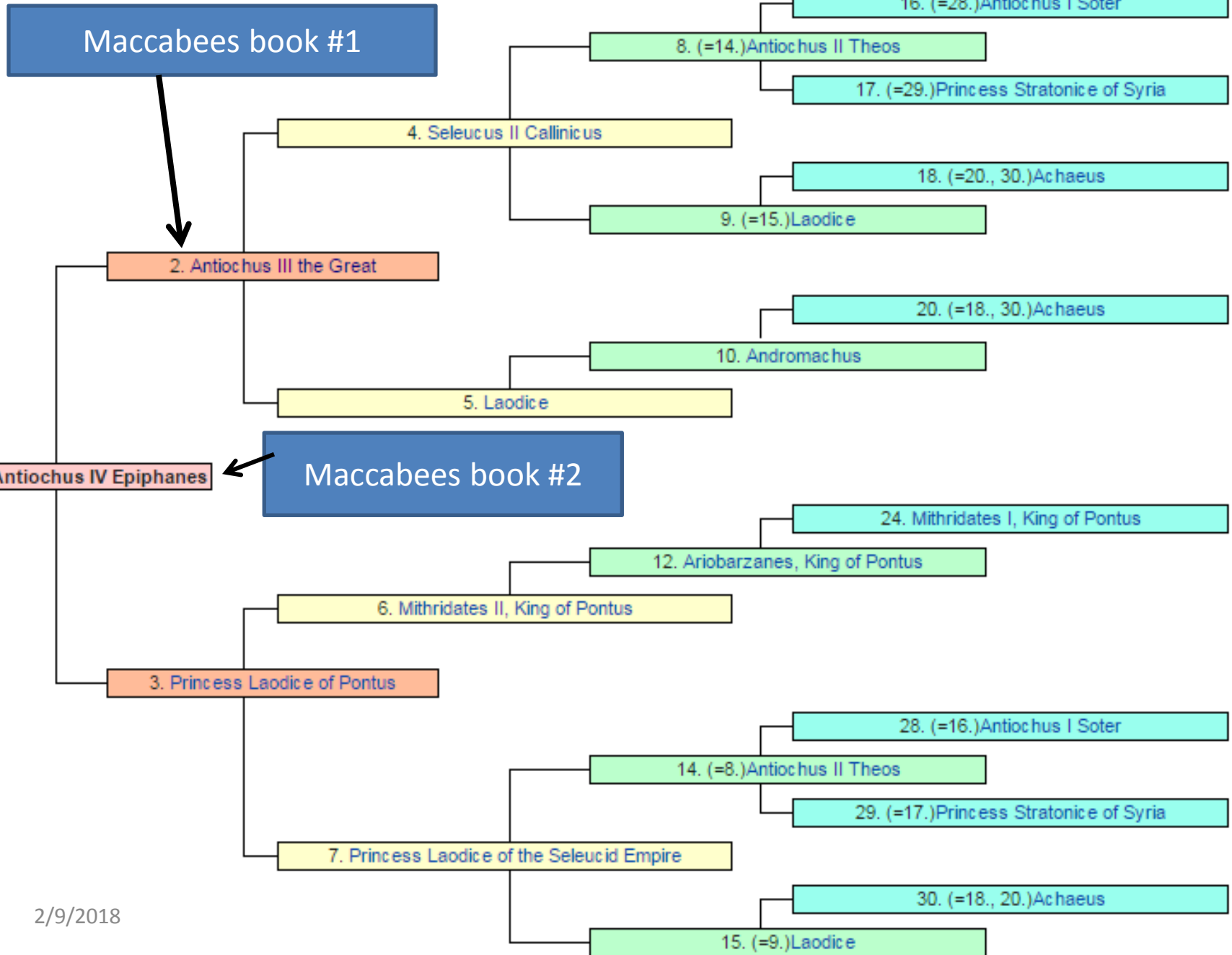


175-164 BC



Seleucus IV
187-175 BC

Daniel 8:8-12 "Therefore the he goat [Alexander] waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up **four** notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them [Syria] came forth a **little horn**, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the **pleasant land**. And **it** waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and **it** cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped on them. Yes, **he** magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by **him** the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the **place of the sanctuary** was cast down. And an host was given **him** against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and **it** cast down the truth to the ground; and **it** practiced, and prospered."

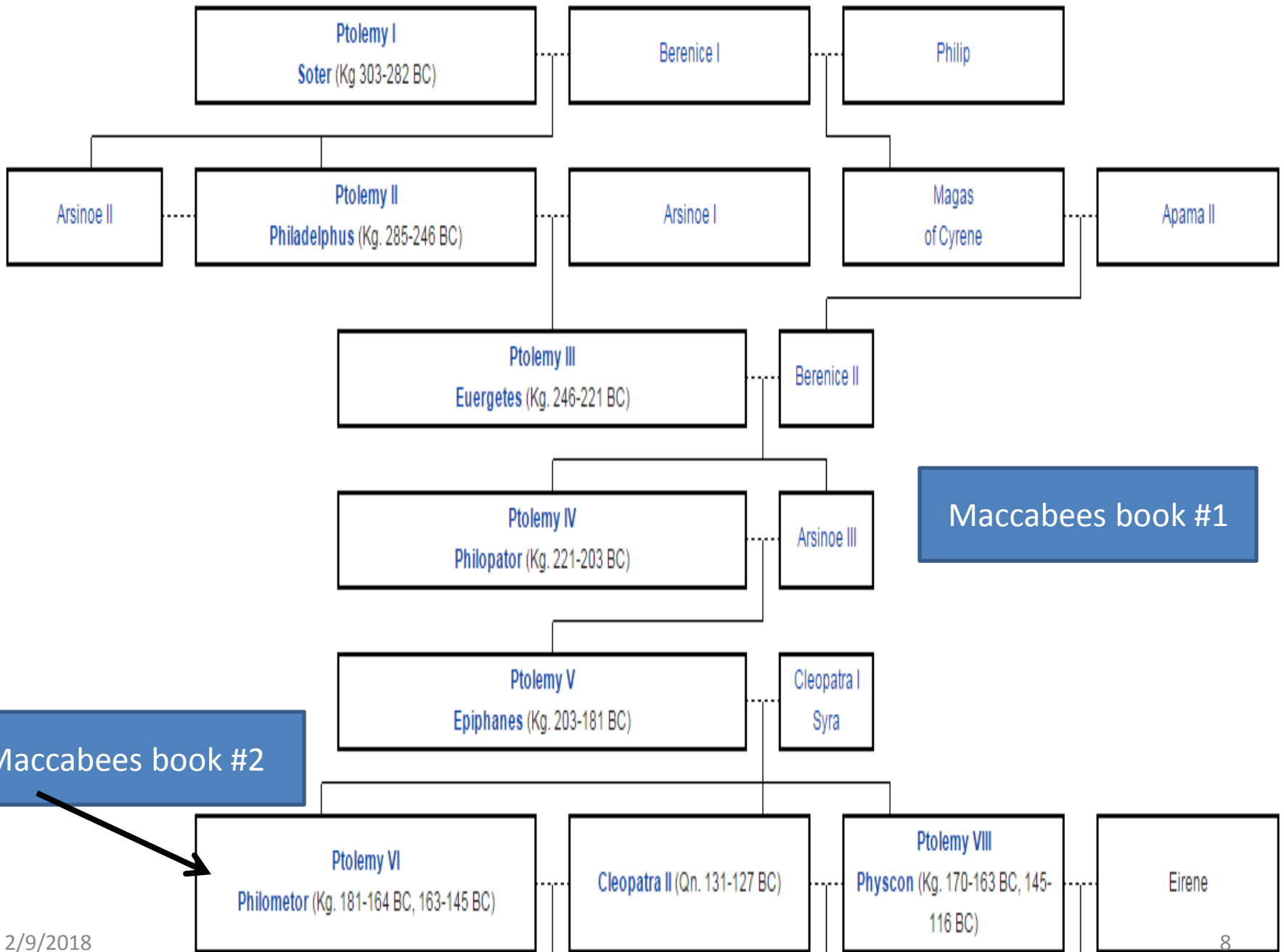


Antiochus IV Epiphanes

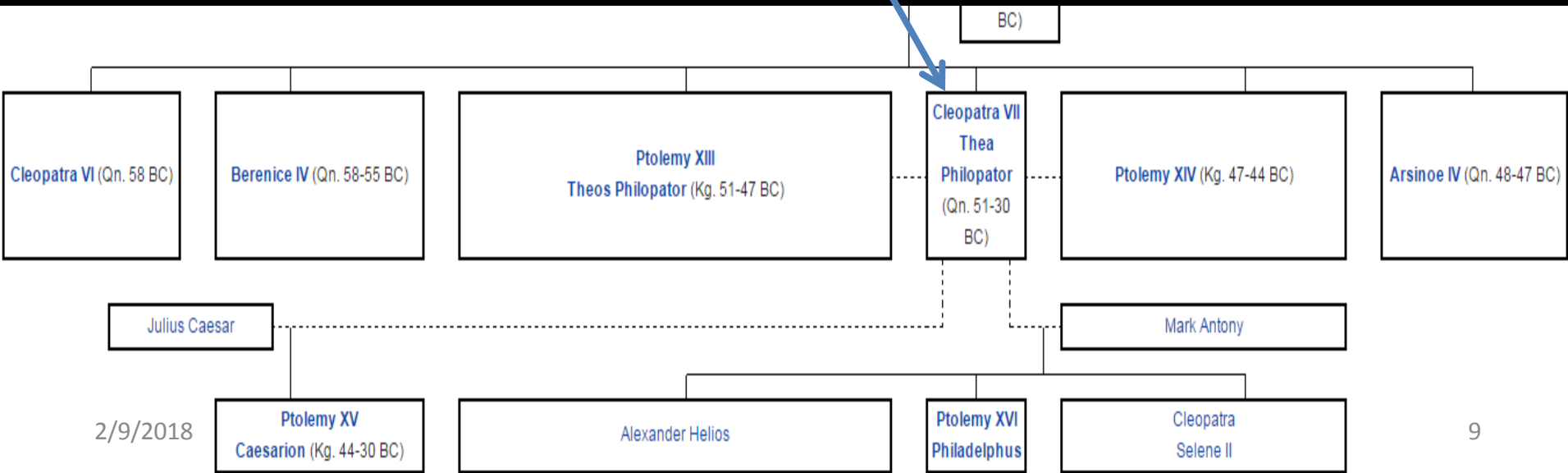
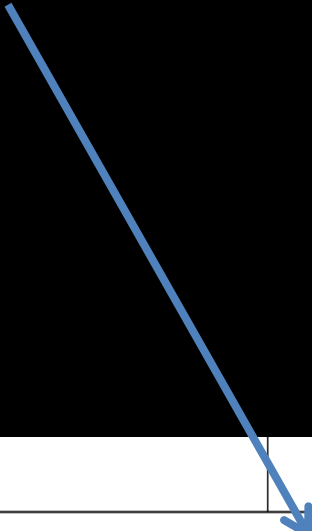


Antiochus IV Epiphanes was a Hellenistic Greek king of the Seleucid Empire from 175 BC until his death in 164 BC. He was a son of King Antiochus III the Great. 7

Ptolemaic family tree

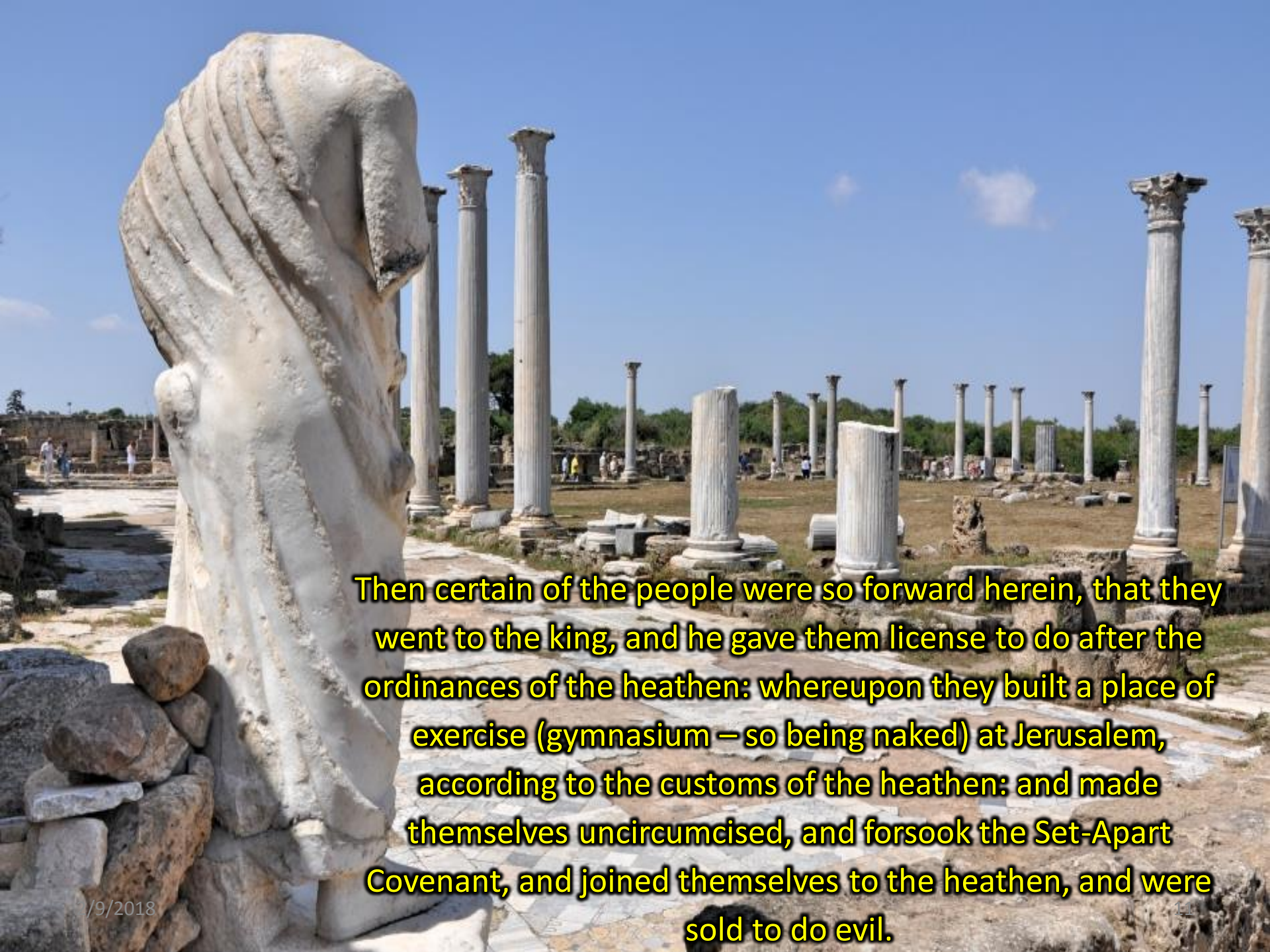


The famous Cleopatra that we all know came out of this line as well - Cleopatra VII Thea Philopator

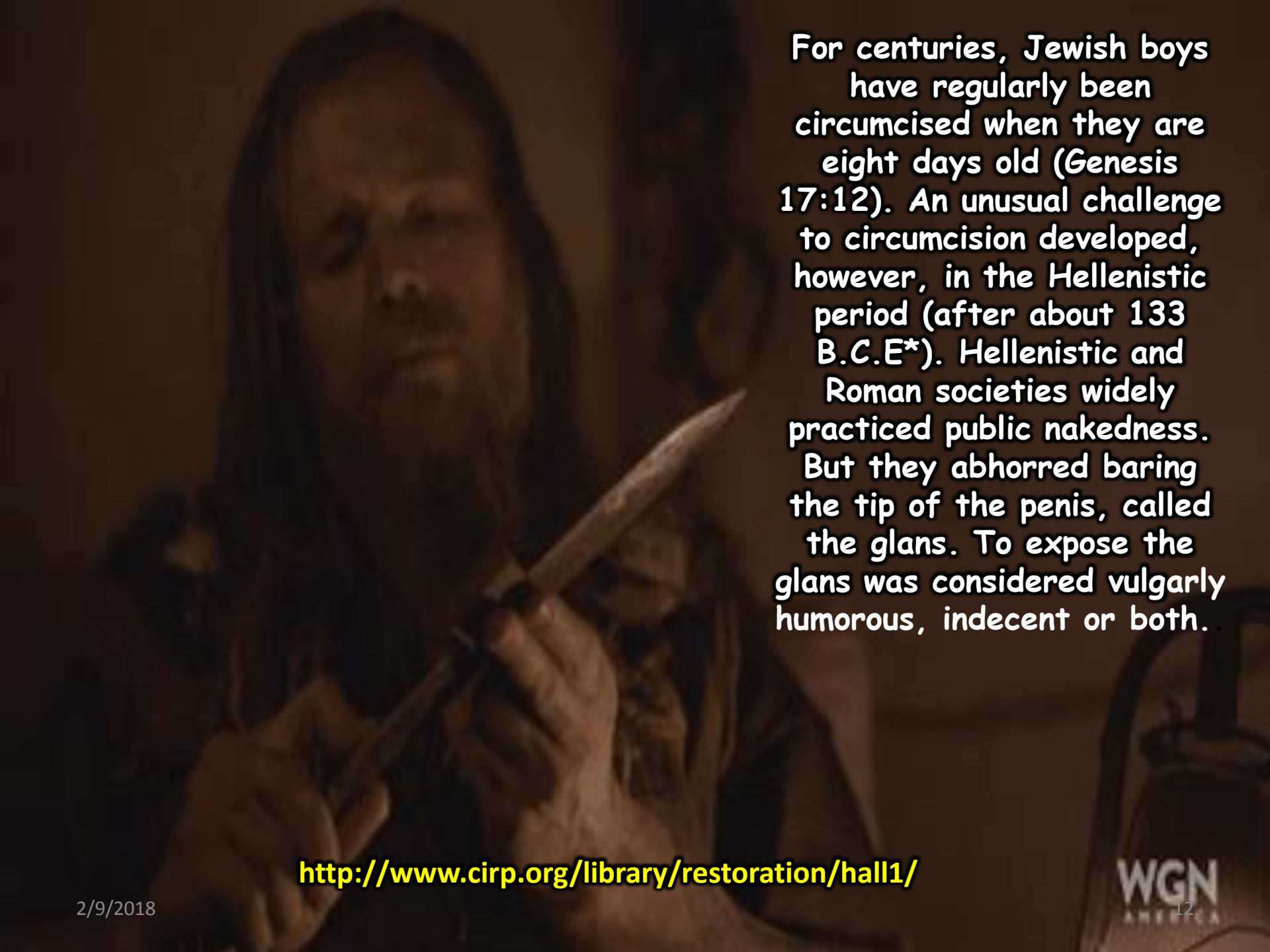


In those days (BC 175) went there out of Israel a wicked men, who persuaded many, saying, let us go, and make a covenant (BC 174) with the heathen who are round about us: for since we departed from them, many evils have befallen us. And the word seemed good in their eyes.





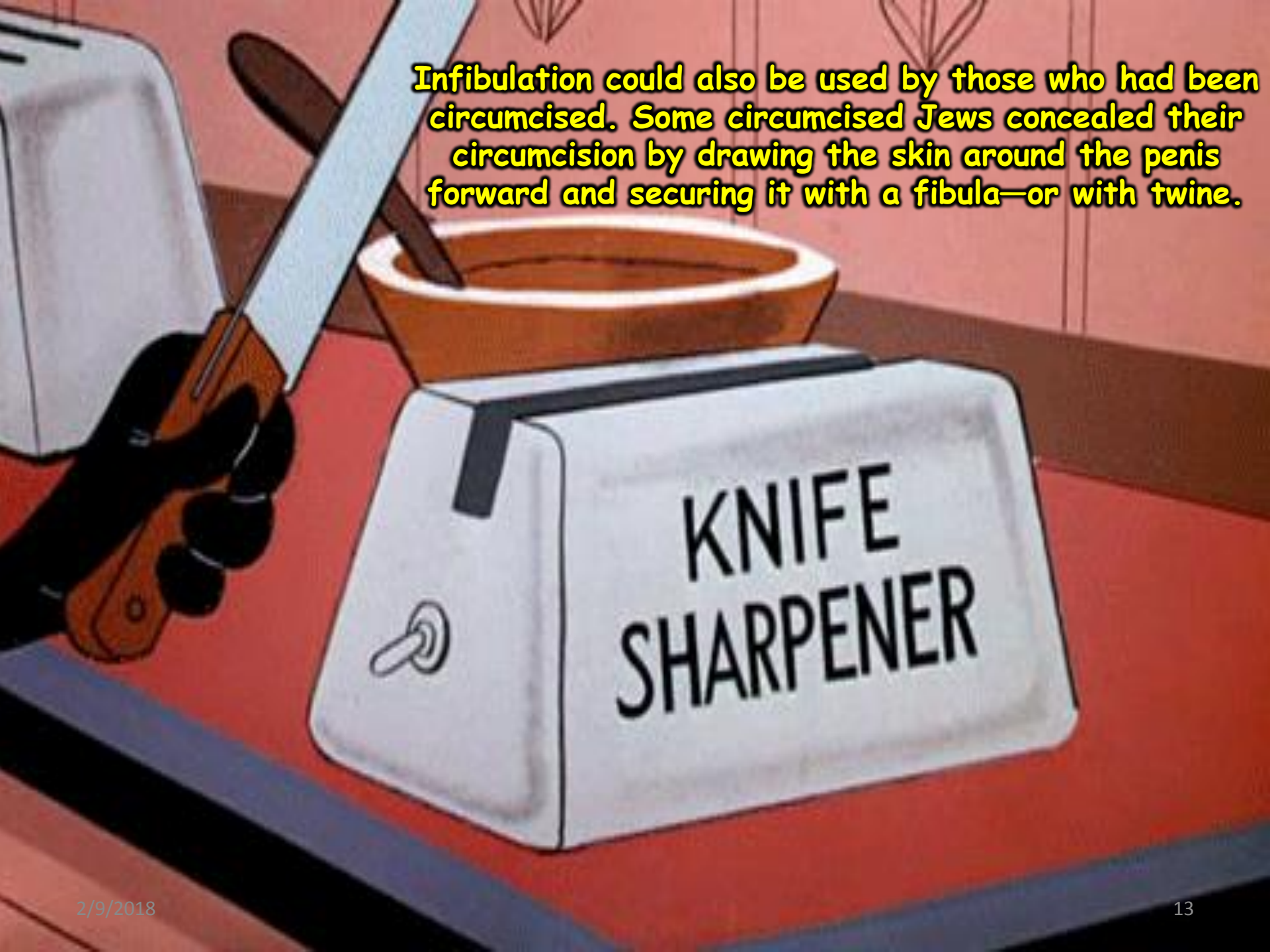
Then certain of the people were so forward herein, that they went to the king, and he gave them license to do after the ordinances of the heathen: whereupon they built a place of exercise (gymnasium – so being naked) at Jerusalem, according to the customs of the heathen: and made themselves uncircumcised, and forsook the Set-Apart Covenant, and joined themselves to the heathen, and were sold to do evil.



For centuries, Jewish boys have regularly been circumcised when they are eight days old (Genesis 17:12). An unusual challenge to circumcision developed, however, in the Hellenistic period (after about 133 B.C.E*). Hellenistic and Roman societies widely practiced public nakedness. But they abhorred baring the tip of the penis, called the glans. To expose the glans was considered vulgarly humorous, indecent or both.

<http://www.cirp.org/library/restoration/hall1/>

Infibulation could also be used by those who had been circumcised. Some circumcised Jews concealed their circumcision by drawing the skin around the penis forward and securing it with a fibula—or with twine.



Epispasm on a circumcised penis required a somewhat more difficult operation: The surgeon would cut around the glans freeing the sheath of skin surrounding the shaft of the penis, pull the skin forward and dress the wound carefully so that the skin would reattach to the glans leaving a foreskin. At a time before effective anesthesia, a man inclined to try this procedure had Celsus' assurance that it was "not so very painful.

2/9/2018



Epispasm was fairly widespread among Jews also seems evident from 1 Maccabees 1:11-15, where we are told that some built a *gymnasium* in Jerusalem and "made themselves uncircumcised."





A. Seleucid Elephant Guard
B. Galatian infantry mercenary

C. Judean thureophoroi mercenary
D. Elephant and crew

Thureophoroi was a type of infantry soldier, common in the 3rd to 1st centuries BC, who carried a large oval shield called a thureos which had a type of metal strip boss and a central spine. They were armed with a long thrusting spear, javelins and a sword. They also usually wore an iron or bronze Macedonian helmet

Now when the kingdom was established before (170 BC) Antiochus, he thought to reign over Egypt, that he might have the dominion of the two realms. Wherefore he entered into Egypt with a great multitude, with chariots, and elephants, and horsemen, and a great navy, and made war against Ptolemy VI Philometer king of Egypt: but Ptolemy was afraid of him, and fled; and many fell down slain. Thus they won the strong cities in the land of Egypt, and he took the spoils of the land of Egypt.

And after Antiochus had smitten Egypt, he returned again in the hundred forty and third year, and went up against Israel and Jerusalem with a great multitude: and entered proudly into the sanctuary, and took away the golden altar, and the candlestick of light, and all the vessels thereof.





And the table of the shew-bread, and the pouring-vessels, and the vials, and the censers of gold, and the vails, and the crowns (crowns for Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah and Hen son of Zepaniah, as a memorial in the temple of Yahua Zechariah 6:14), and the golden ornaments which were on the front of the temple, all which he pulled off. He took also the silver and the gold, and the precious vessels: also he took the hidden treasures which he found. And when he had taken all away, he went into his own land, having made a great massacre, and spoken very proudly.



Therefore there was great mourning in Israel, in every place where they were; so that the princes and elders mourned, the virgins and young men were made feeble, and the beauty of women was changed. Every bridegroom took up lamentation, and she who sat in the marriage-chamber was in heaviness. The land also was moved for the inhabitants thereof, and all the house of Jacob was covered with confusion

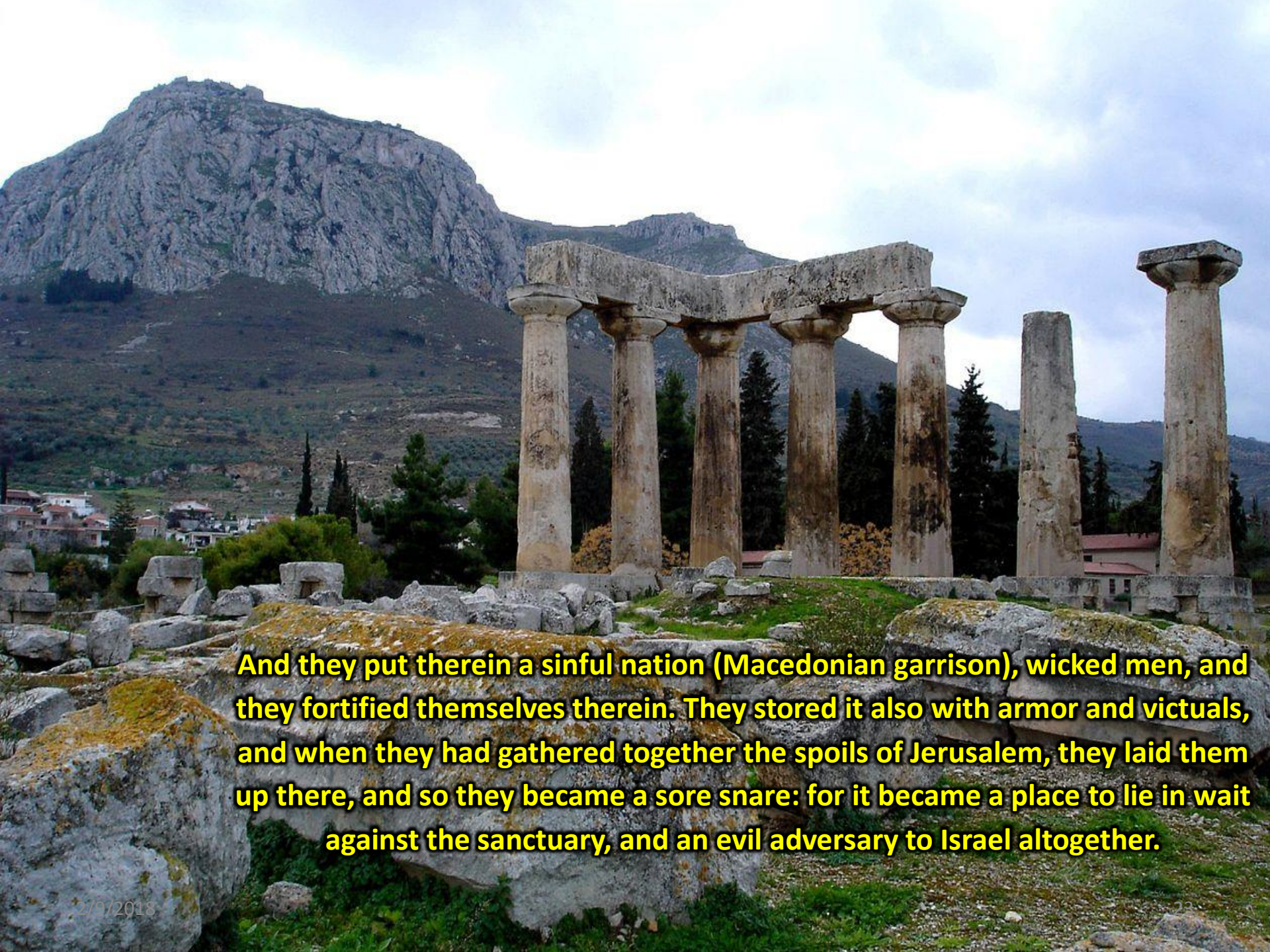
And after two years fully expired, the king sent his chief collector of tribute unto the cities of Judah; and he came unto Jerusalem (BC 168) with a great multitude, and spake peaceable words unto them in deceit: and they believed him, and he fell suddenly upon the city, and smote it very sore, and destroyed much people of Israel

And when he had taken the spoils of the city, he set it on fire, and pulled down the houses and walls thereof on every side. But the women and children took them captive, and possessed themselves of the cattle.



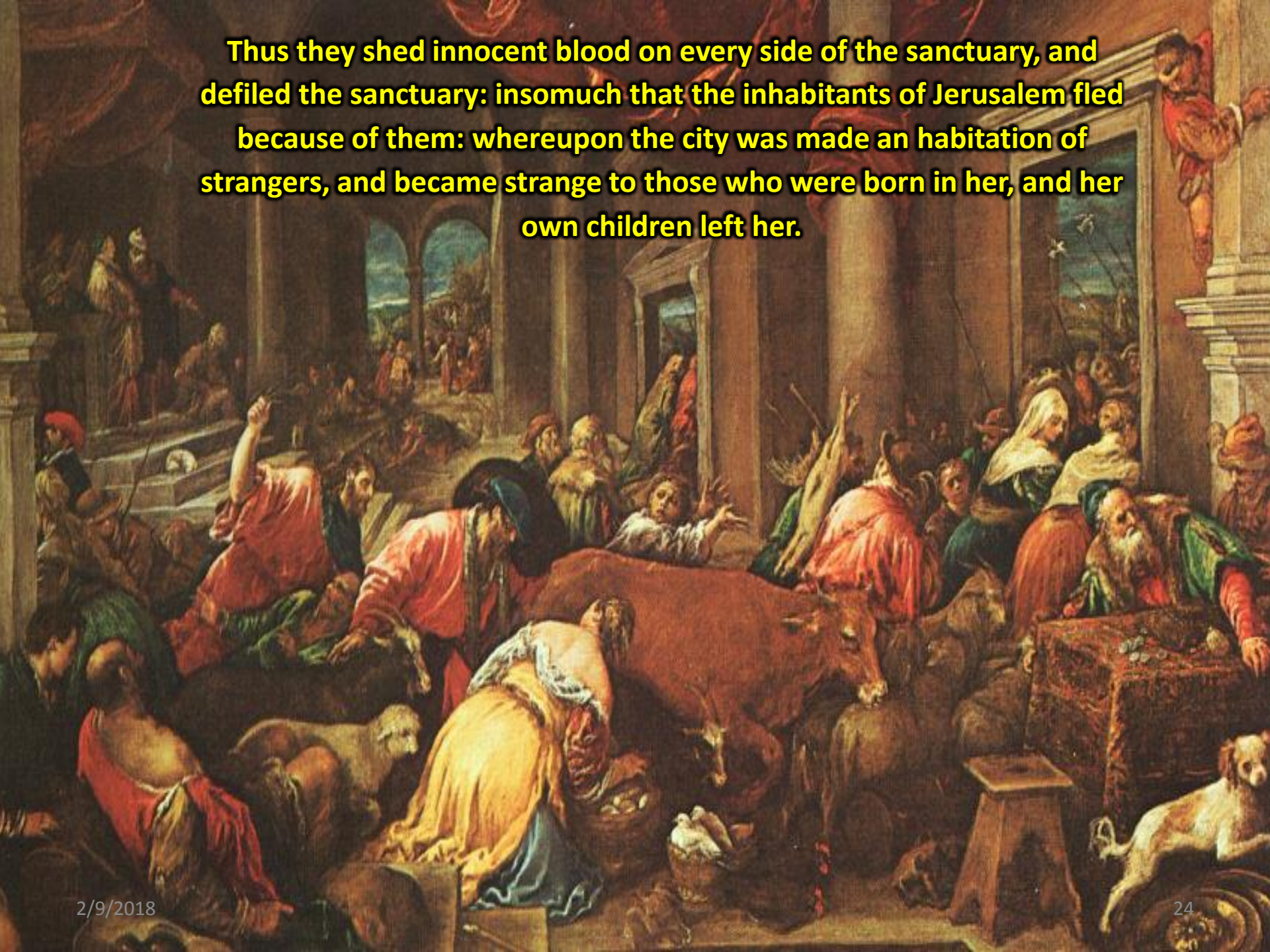


Then built they in the city of David with a great and strong wall and with mighty towers, and it became a stronghold (Arca or “The Tower”) for them.

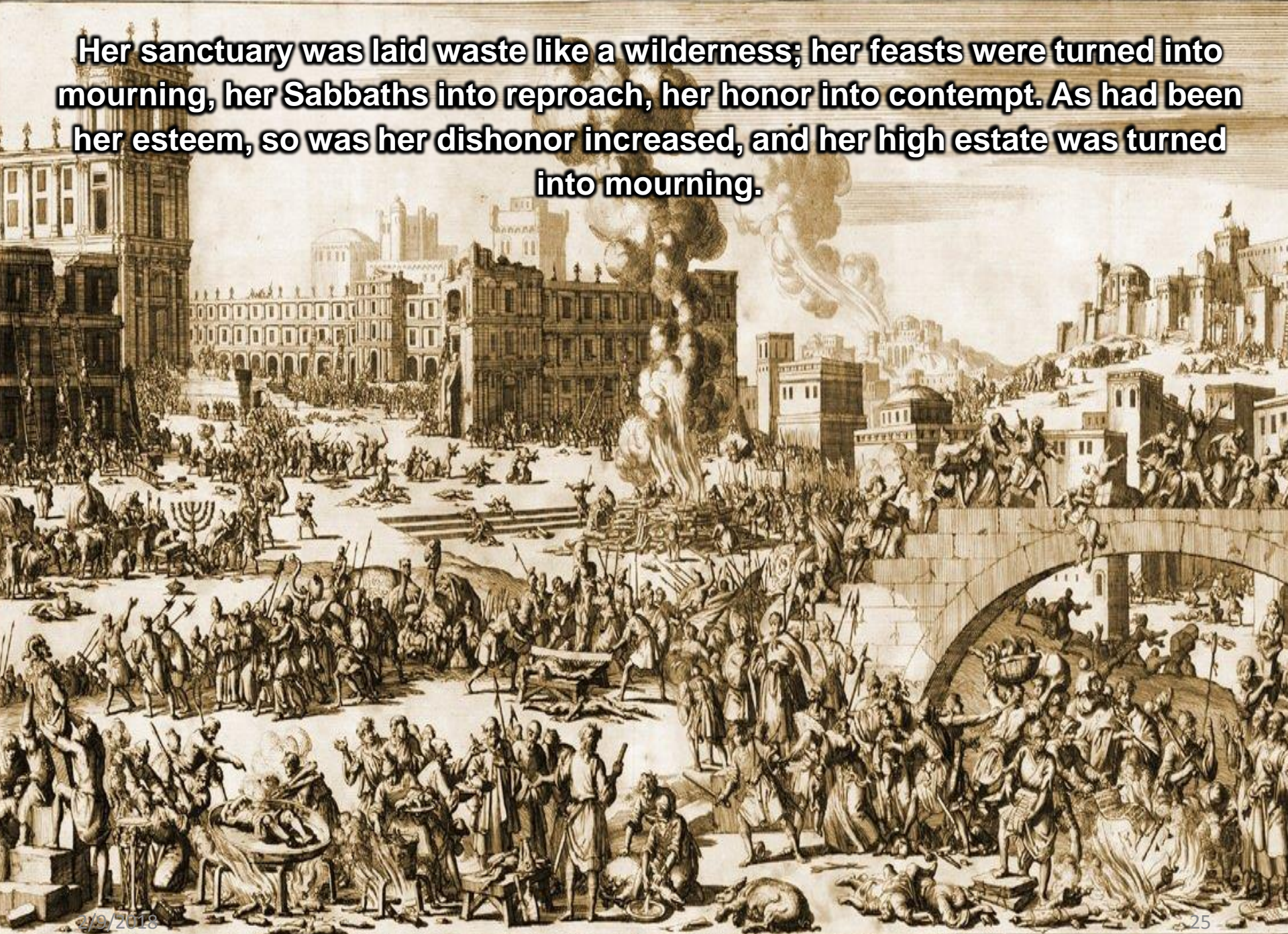


And they put therein a sinful nation (Macedonian garrison), wicked men, and they fortified themselves therein. They stored it also with armor and victuals, and when they had gathered together the spoils of Jerusalem, they laid them up there, and so they became a sore snare: for it became a place to lie in wait against the sanctuary, and an evil adversary to Israel altogether.

Thus they shed innocent blood on every side of the sanctuary, and defiled the sanctuary: insomuch that the inhabitants of Jerusalem fled because of them: whereupon the city was made an habitation of strangers, and became strange to those who were born in her, and her own children left her.



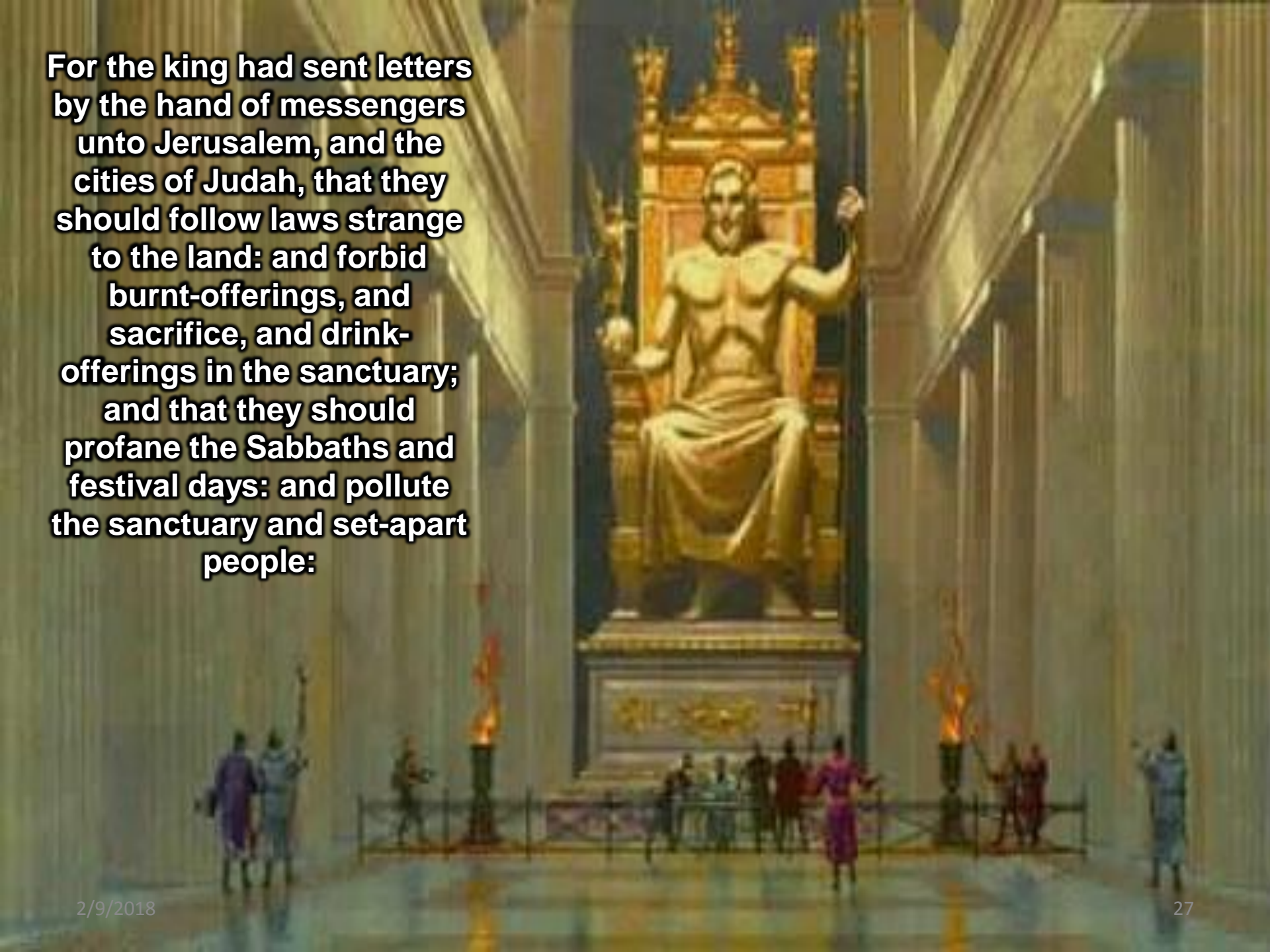
Her sanctuary was laid waste like a wilderness; her feasts were turned into mourning, her Sabbaths into reproach, her honor into contempt. As had been her esteem, so was her dishonor increased, and her high estate was turned into mourning.

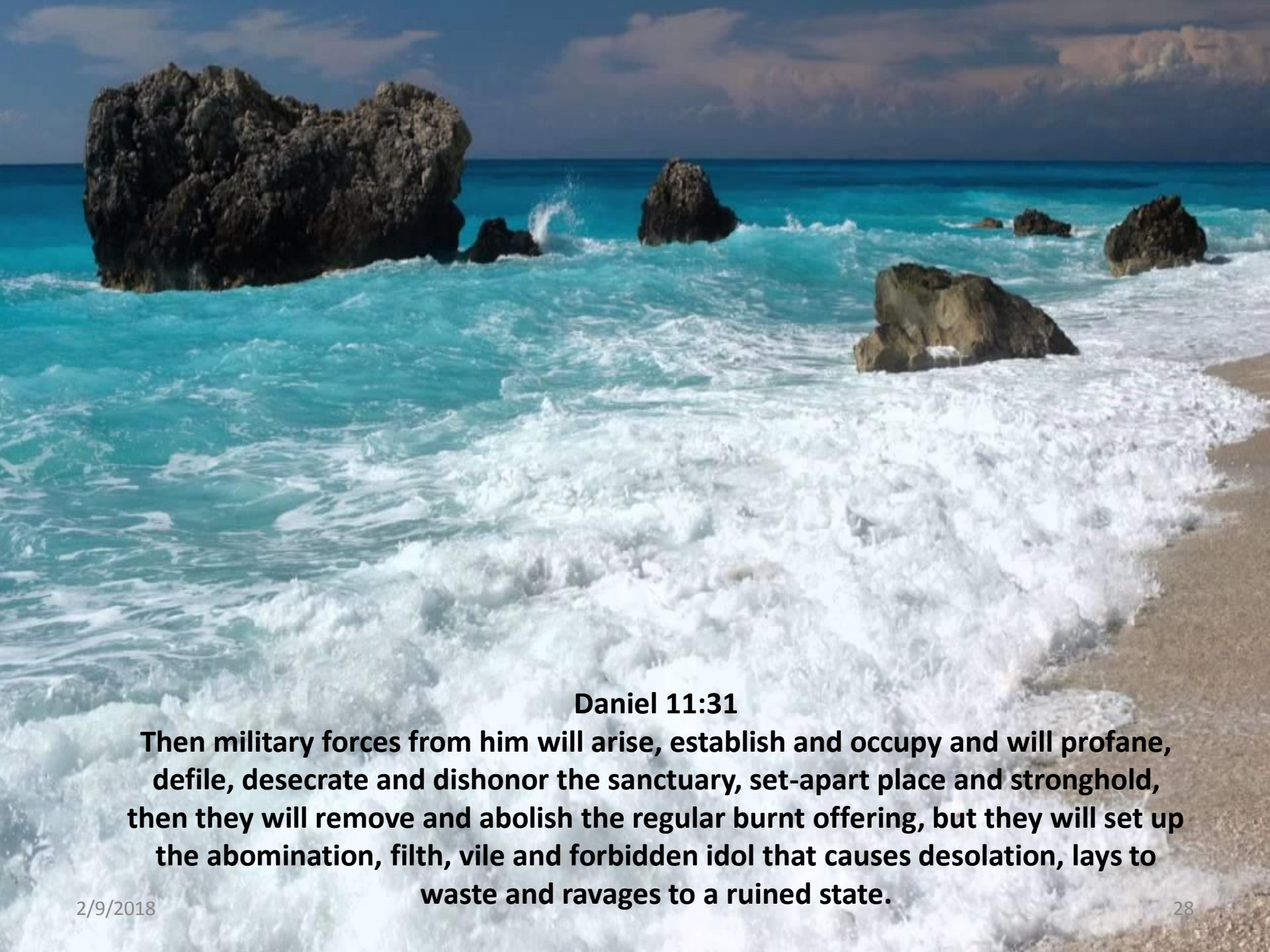


Moreover, King Antiochus wrote to his whole kingdom, that all should be one people, and everyone should leave his own laws: so all the heathen agreed, according to the commandment of the king. **Yea, many also of the Israelites consented to his religion, and sacrificed unto idols, and profaned the Sabbath.**



For the king had sent letters by the hand of messengers unto Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, that they should follow laws strange to the land: and forbid burnt-offerings, and sacrifice, and drink-offerings in the sanctuary; and that they should profane the Sabbaths and festival days: and pollute the sanctuary and set-apart people:

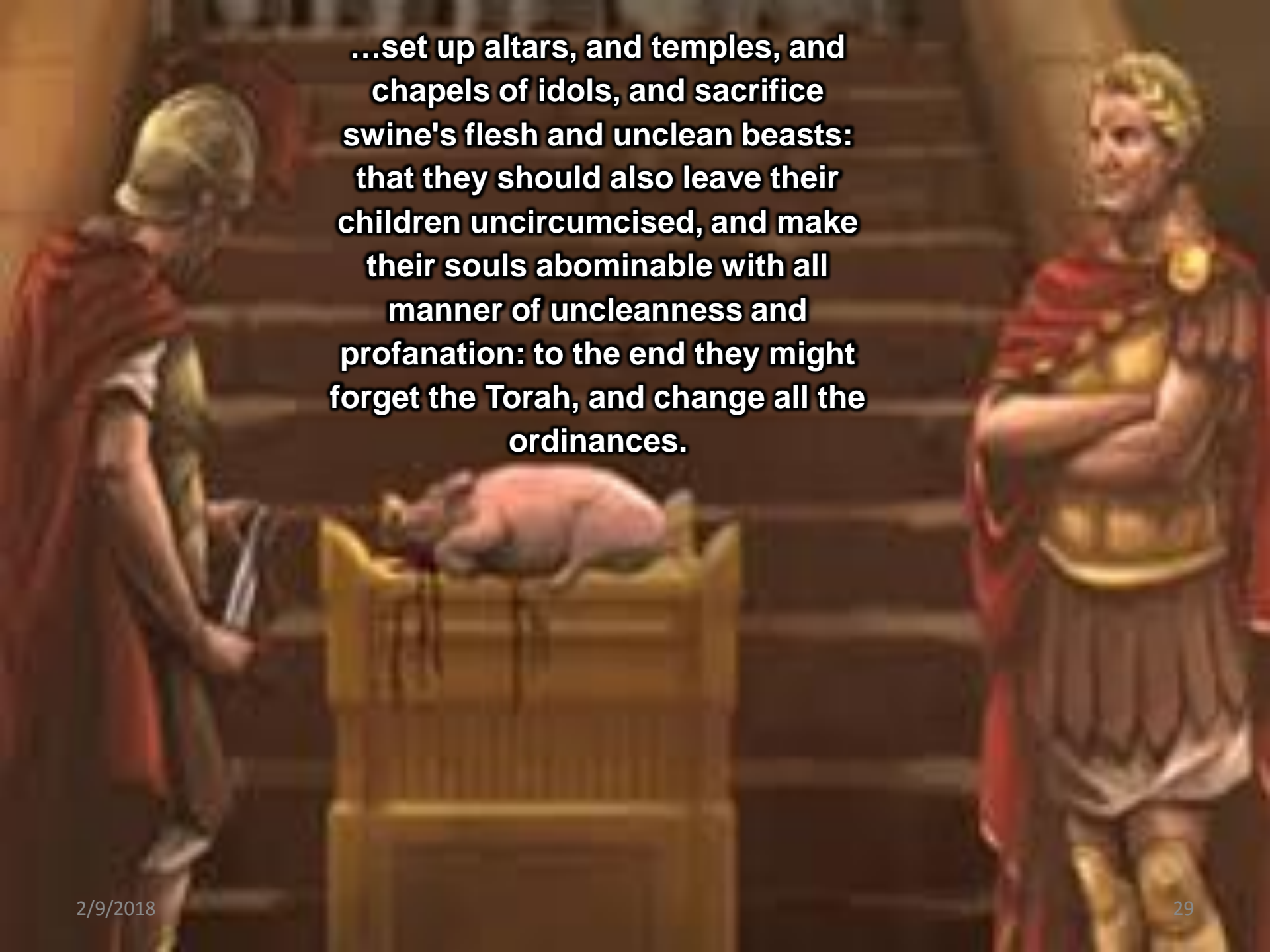




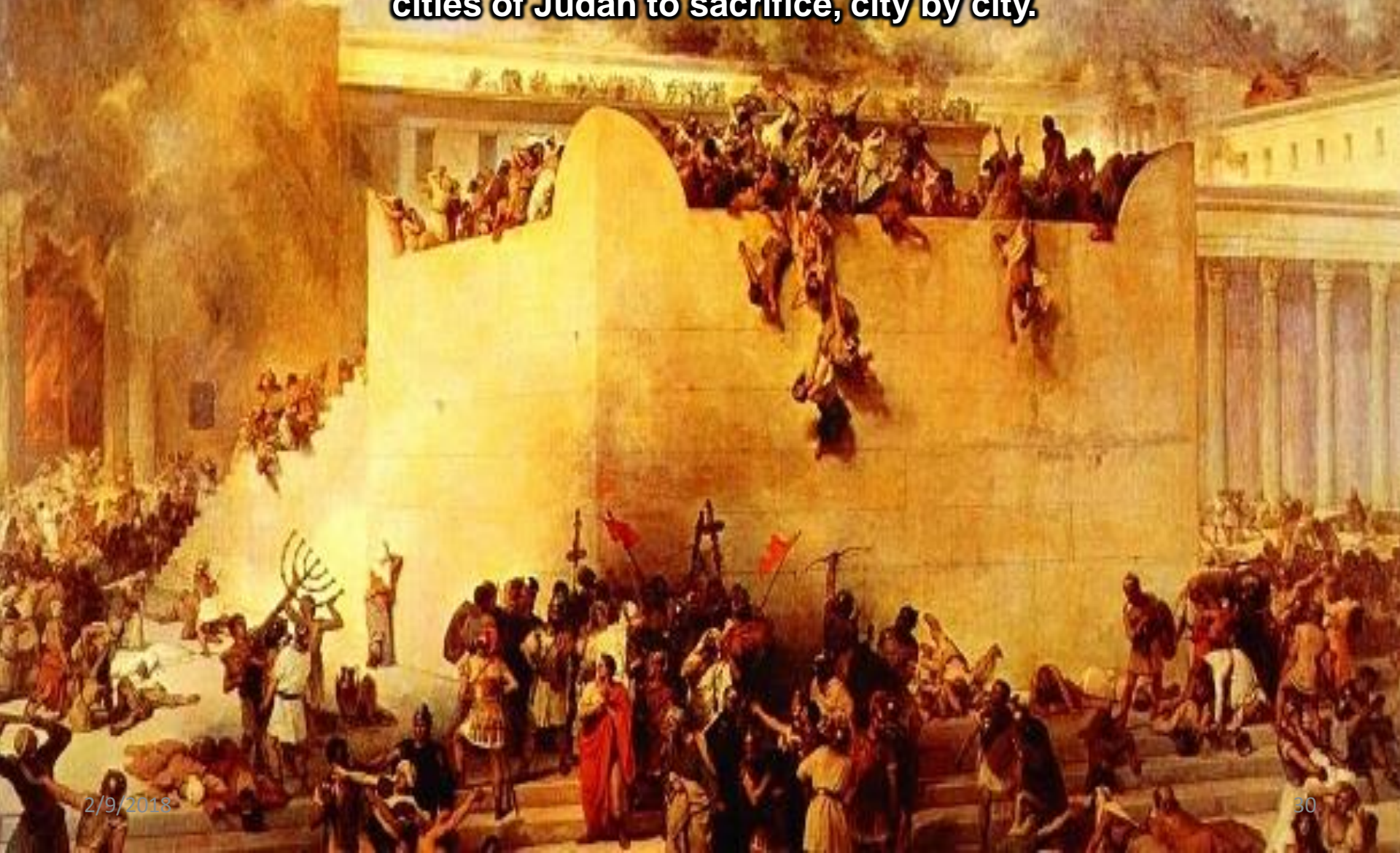
Daniel 11:31

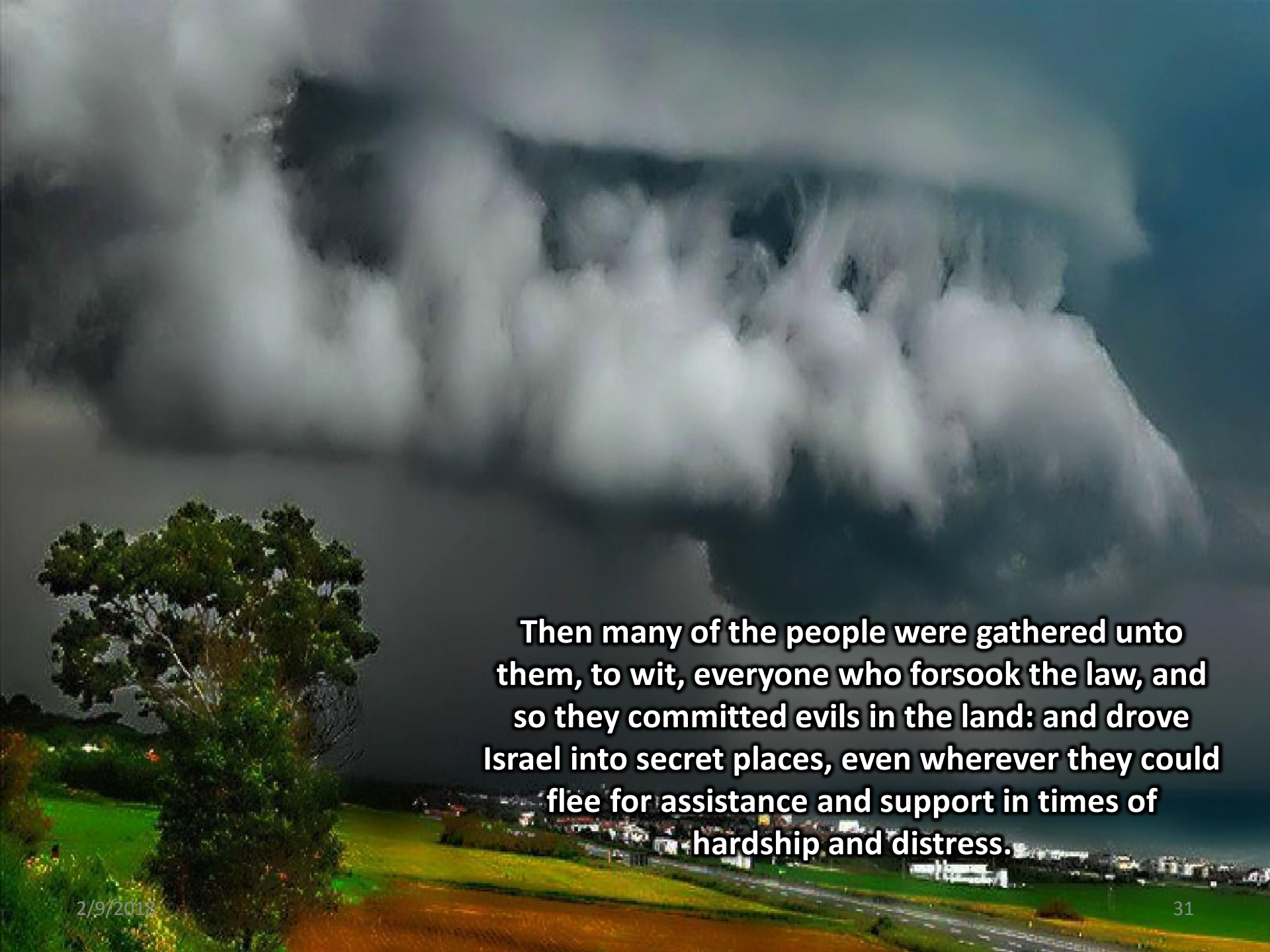
Then military forces from him will arise, establish and occupy and will profane, defile, desecrate and dishonor the sanctuary, set-apart place and stronghold, then they will remove and abolish the regular burnt offering, but they will set up the abomination, filth, vile and forbidden idol that causes desolation, lays to waste and ravages to a ruined state.

...set up altars, and temples, and chapels of idols, and sacrifice swine's flesh and unclean beasts: that they should also leave their children uncircumcised, and make their souls abominable with all manner of uncleanness and profanation: to the end they might forget the Torah, and change all the ordinances.



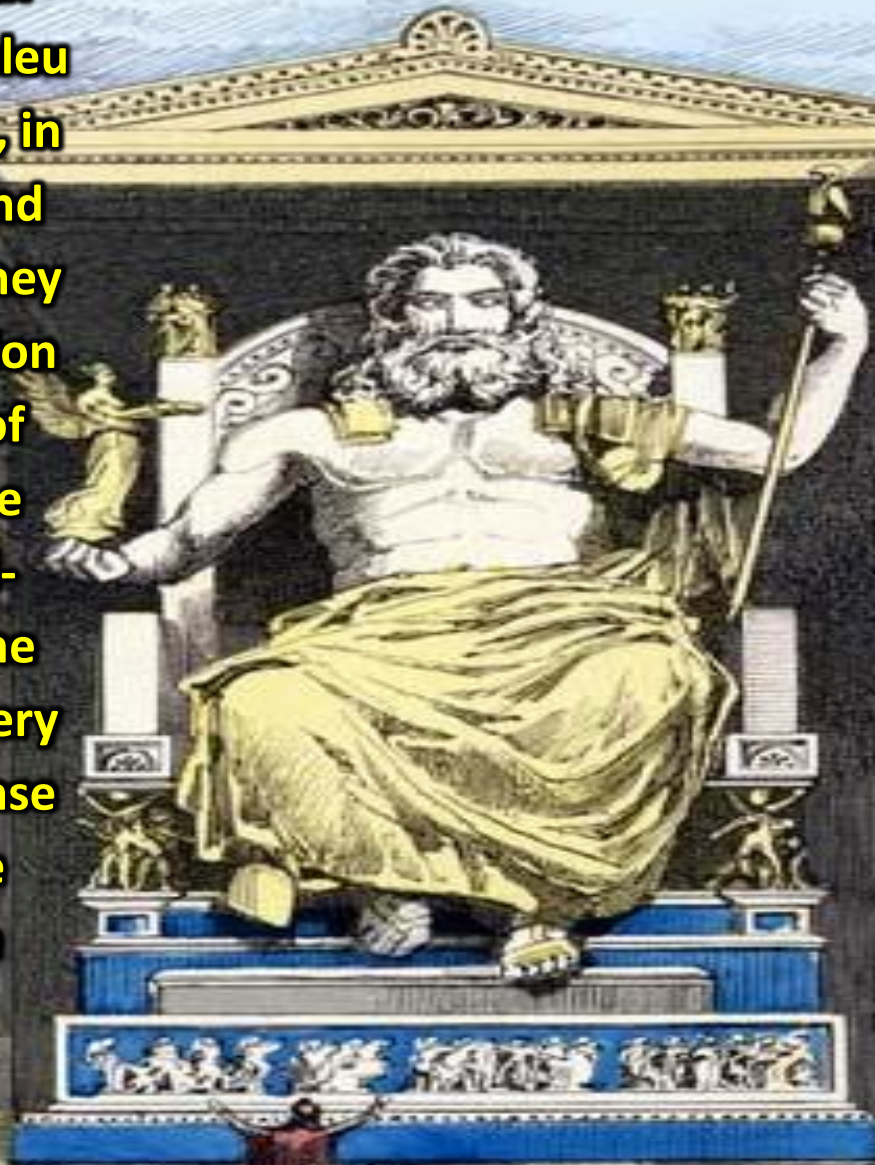
And whosoever would not do according to the commandment of the king, he said, he should die. According to all these words wrote he to his whole kingdom, and appointed overseers over all the people, commanding the cities of Judah to sacrifice, city by city.





Then many of the people were gathered unto them, to wit, everyone who forsook the law, and so they committed evils in the land: and drove Israel into secret places, even wherever they could flee for assistance and support in times of hardship and distress.

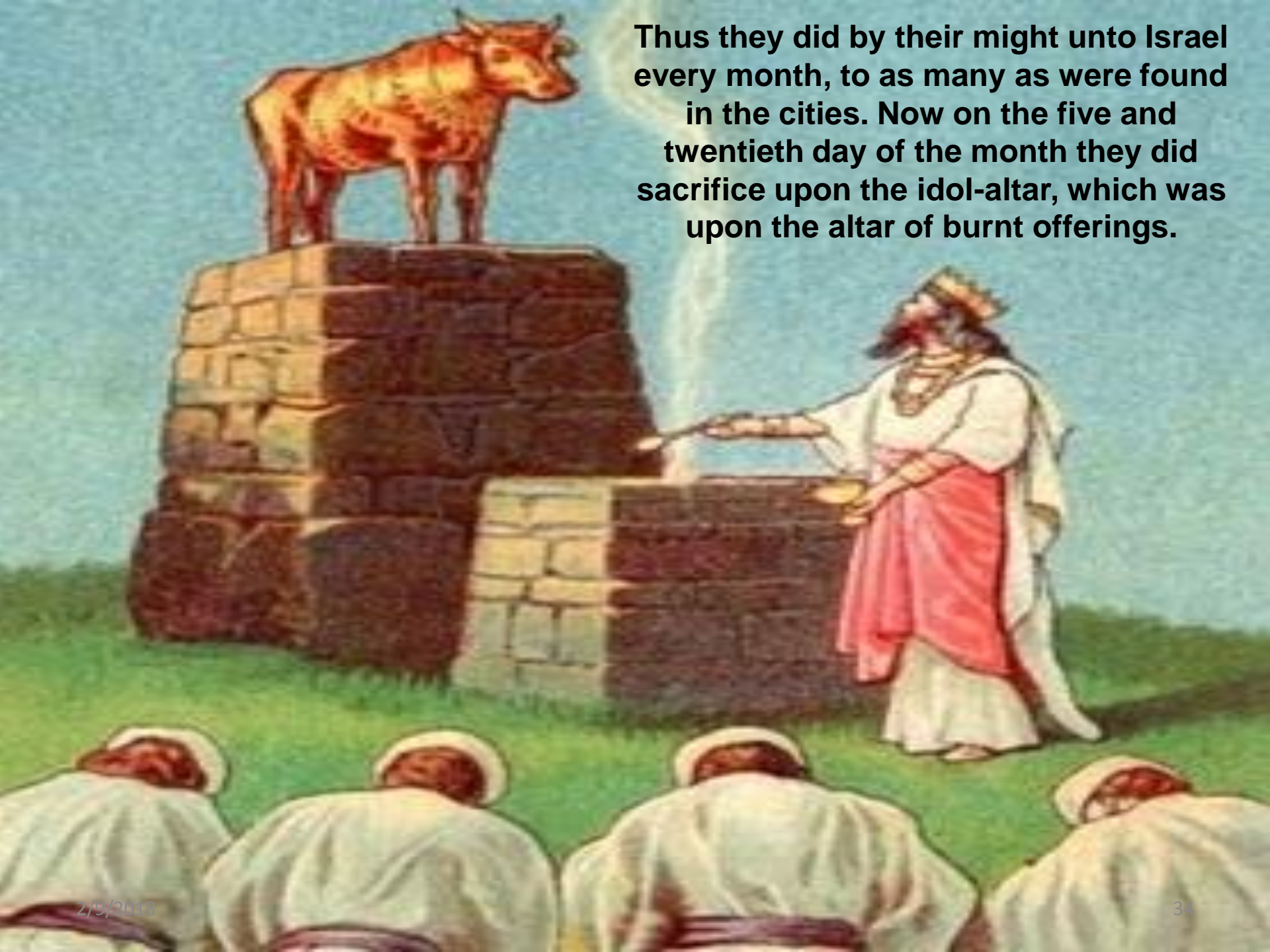
Now on the fifteenth day of the month Casleu (9th month Nov/Dec), in the hundred forty and fifth year (BC 167), they set up the abomination (statue of Jupiter) of desolation upon the altar, and built idol-altars throughout the cities of Judah on every side; and burnt incense at the doors of the houses, and in the streets.





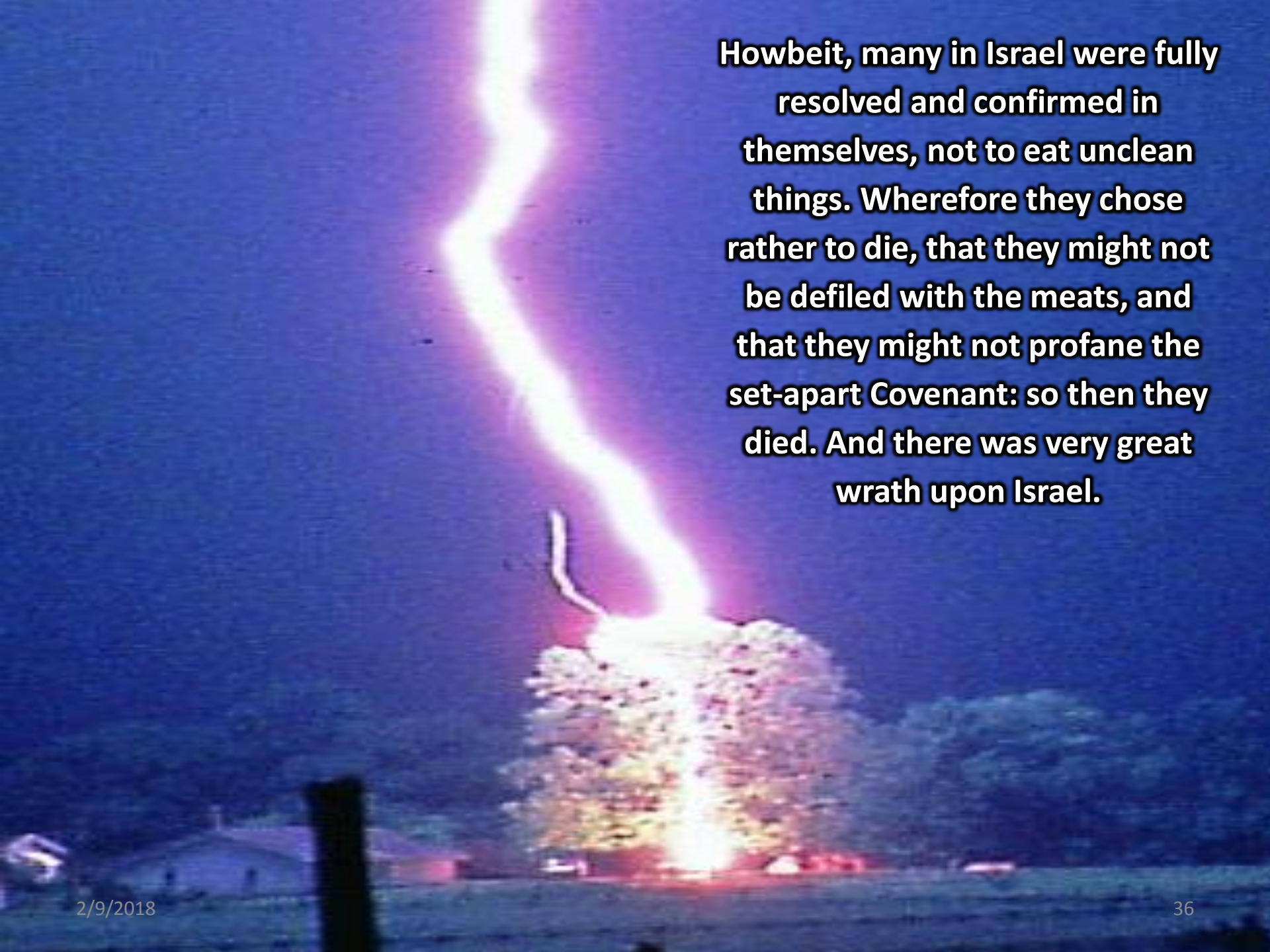
And when they had rent in pieces the books of the Torah which they found, they burnt them with fire. And whoever was found with the book of the Torah, or if any consented to the Torah, the king's commandment was, that they should put him to death.

Thus they did by their might unto Israel every month, to as many as were found in the cities. Now on the five and twentieth day of the month they did sacrifice upon the idol-altar, which was upon the altar of burnt offerings.




**At which time,
according to the
commandment, they
put to death the
women who had
caused their children
to be circumcised. And
they hanged the
infants about their
necks, and rifled their
houses, and slew them
which had circumcised
them.**



A large, bright lightning bolt strikes a tree at night, illuminating the surrounding area. The lightning bolt is a thick, jagged column of white and yellow light, extending from the top of the frame down to the tree. The tree is a large, leafy tree, and the lightning bolt strikes its top, creating a massive, glowing fireball. The surrounding area is dark, with some faint lights visible in the distance. The sky is a deep blue, and the overall scene is dramatic and powerful.

Howbeit, many in Israel were fully resolved and confirmed in themselves, not to eat unclean things. Wherefore they chose rather to die, that they might not be defiled with the meats, and that they might not profane the set-apart Covenant: so then they died. And there was very great wrath upon Israel.

ENTER THE MACCABEES



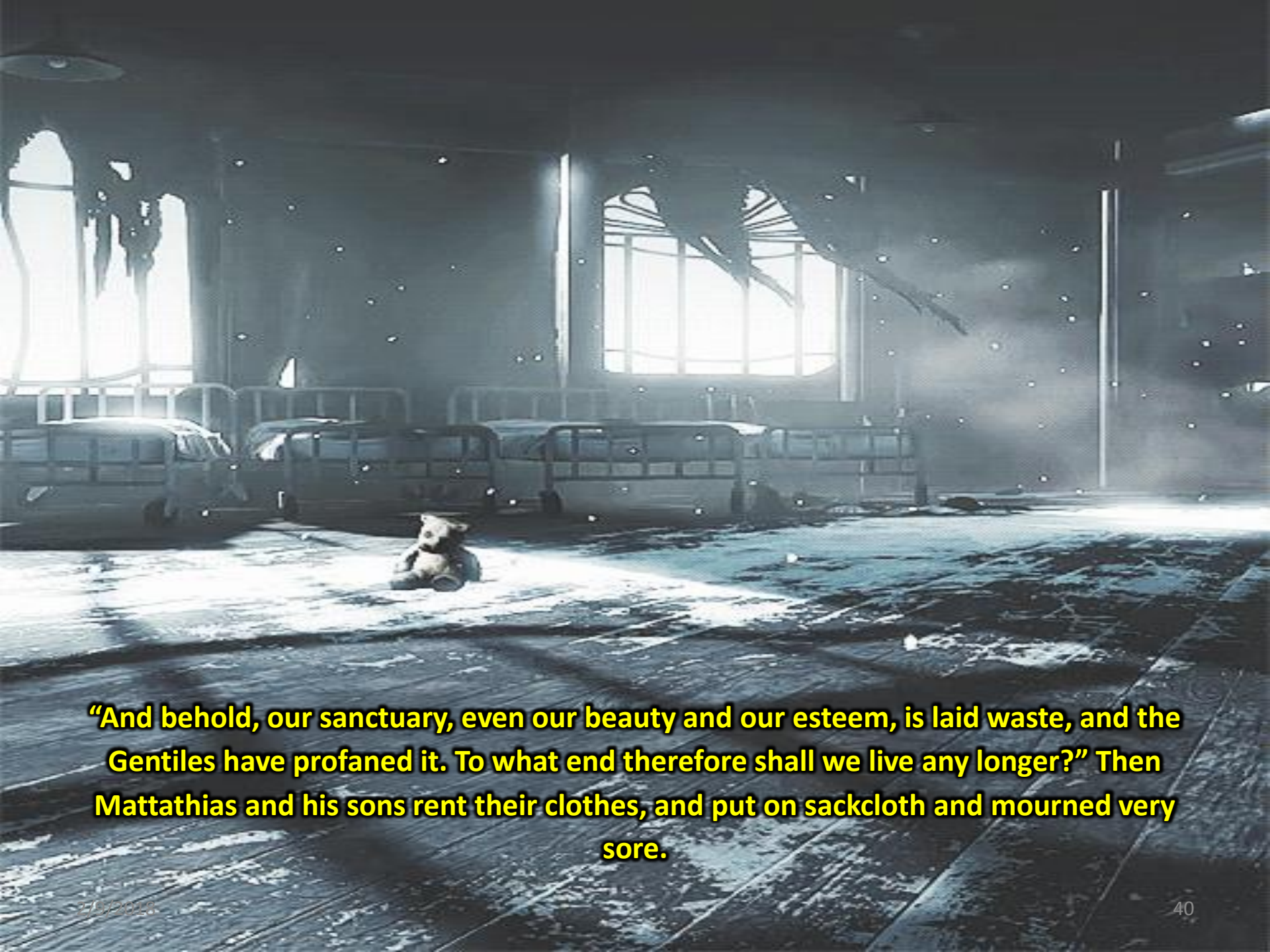
In those days arose Mattathias the son of John, the son of Simeon, a priest of the sons of Joarib, from Jerusalem, and dwelt in Modin. And he had five sons, Joannan, who was called Caddis: Simon, who was called Thassi: Judas, who was called Maccabaeus: Eleazar, who was called Avaran, and Jonathan, who was called Apphus. And when he saw the blasphemies which were committed in Judah and Jerusalem, he said; “Woe is me! Wherefore was I born to see this overthrow of my people, and of the set-apart city, and to dwell there when it was delivered into the hand of the enemies, and the sanctuary into the hand of strangers?”

“Her temple is become as a man without esteem. Her glorious vessels are carried away into captivity; her infants are slain in the streets, her young men with the sword of the enemy. What nation has not had a part in her kingdom and gotten of her spoils? All her ornaments are taken away, of a free-woman she is become bond-slave.”

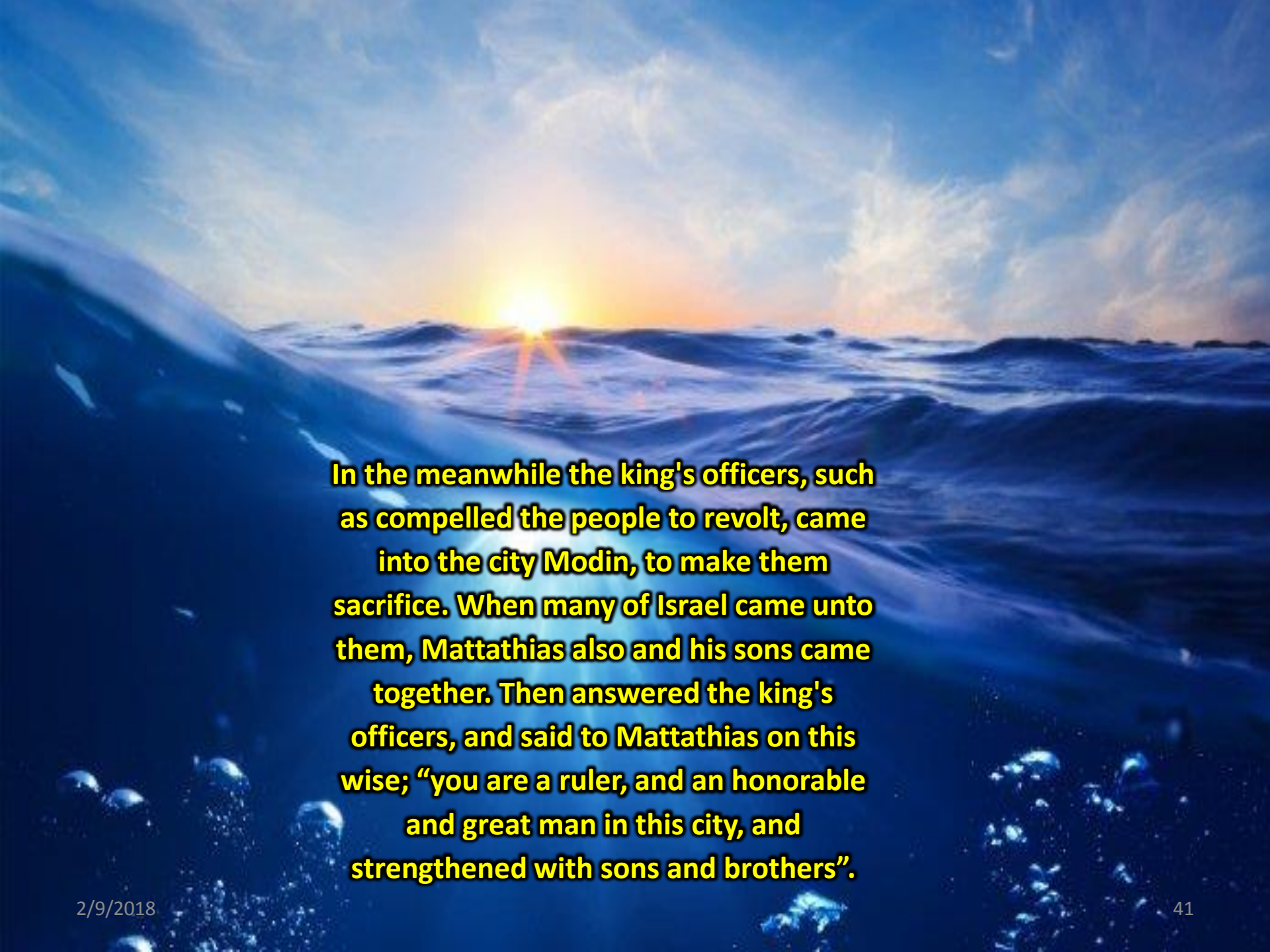
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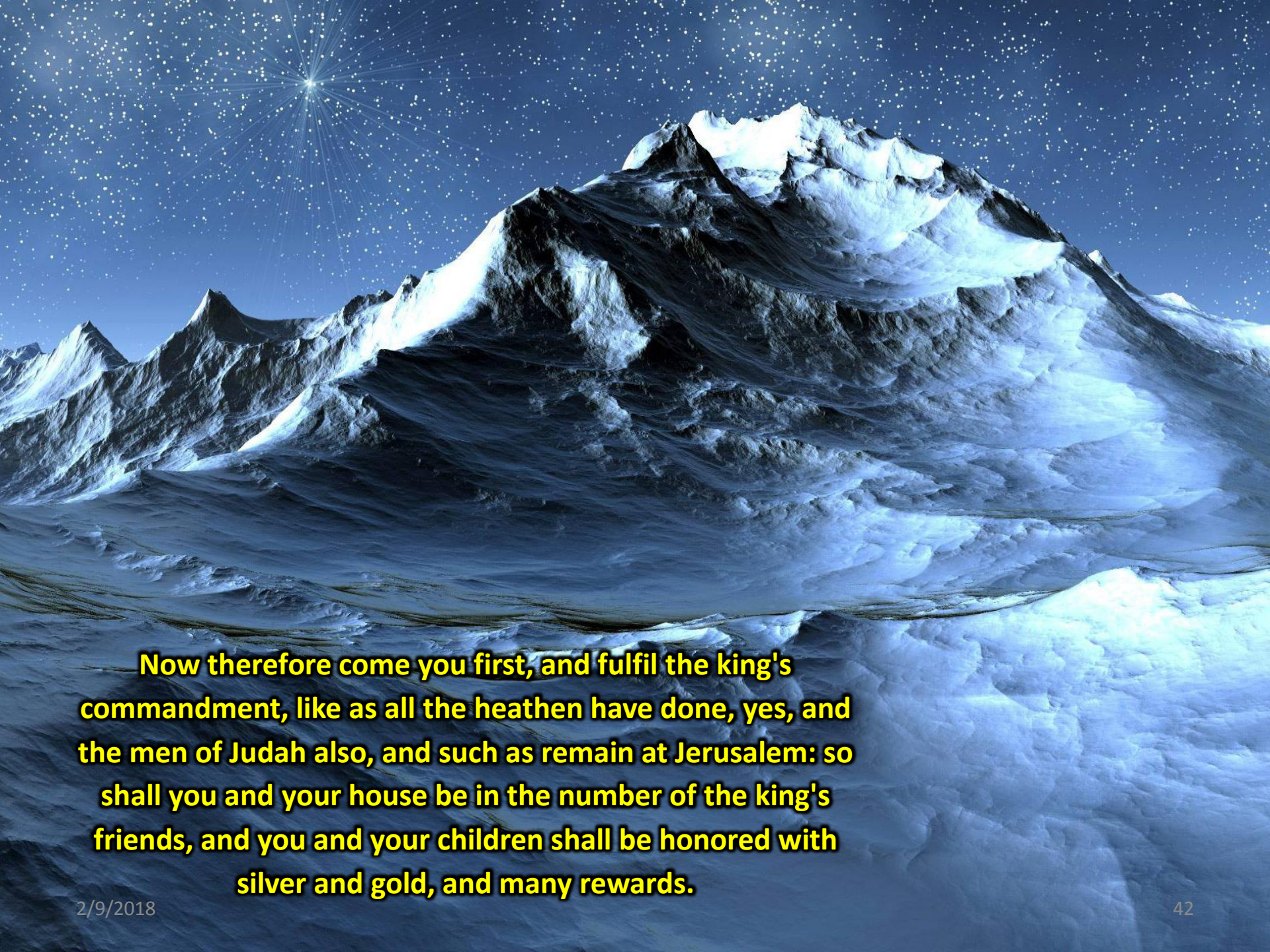
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“And behold, our sanctuary, even our beauty and our esteem, is laid waste, and the Gentiles have profaned it. To what end therefore shall we live any longer?” Then Mattathias and his sons rent their clothes, and put on sackcloth and mourned very sore.

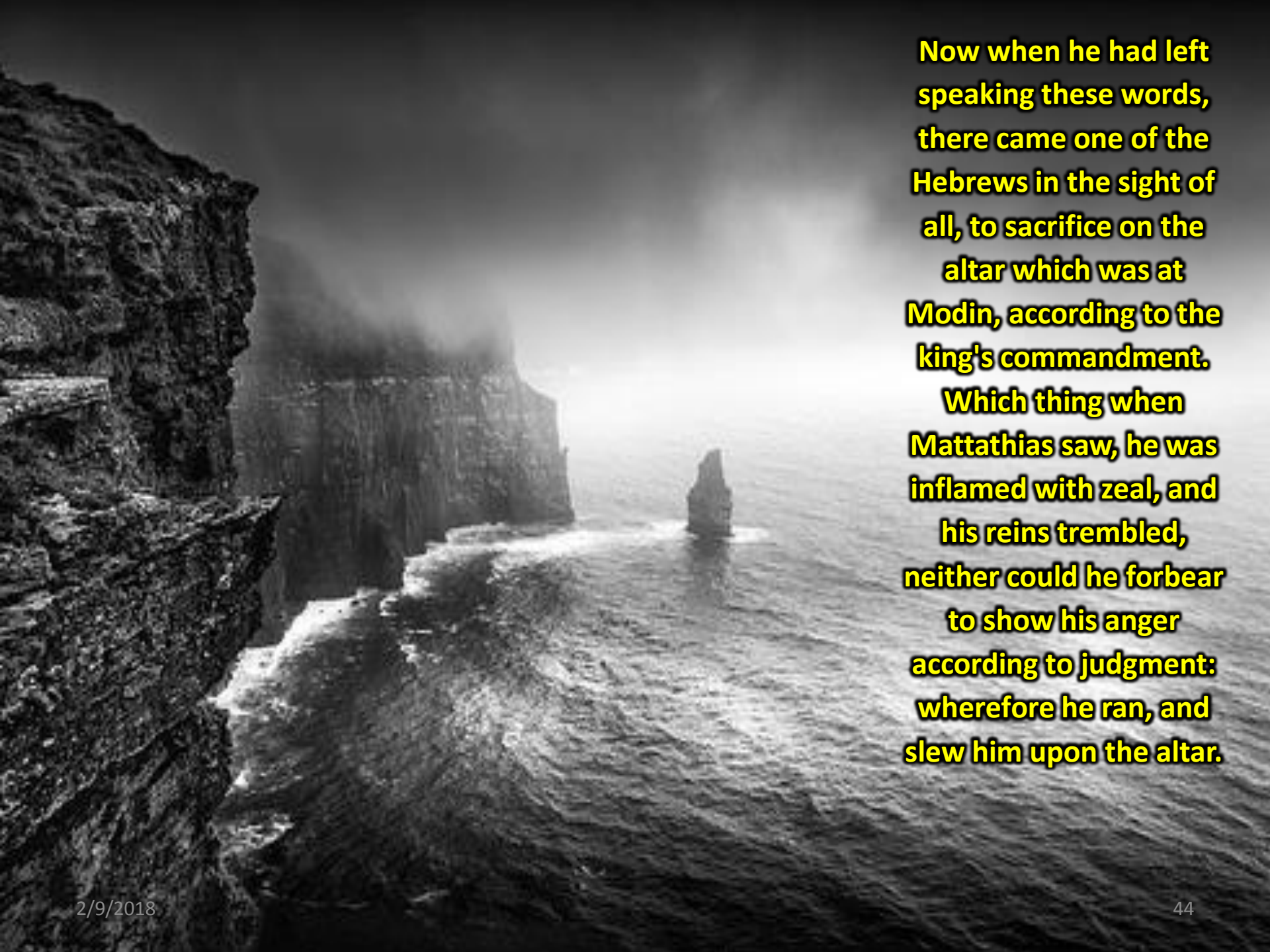


In the meanwhile the king's officers, such as compelled the people to revolt, came into the city Modin, to make them sacrifice. When many of Israel came unto them, Mattathias also and his sons came together. Then answered the king's officers, and said to Mattathias on this wise; “you are a ruler, and an honorable and great man in this city, and strengthened with sons and brothers”.



Now therefore come you first, and fulfil the king's commandment, like as all the heathen have done, yes, and the men of Judah also, and such as remain at Jerusalem: so shall you and your house be in the number of the king's friends, and you and your children shall be honored with silver and gold, and many rewards.

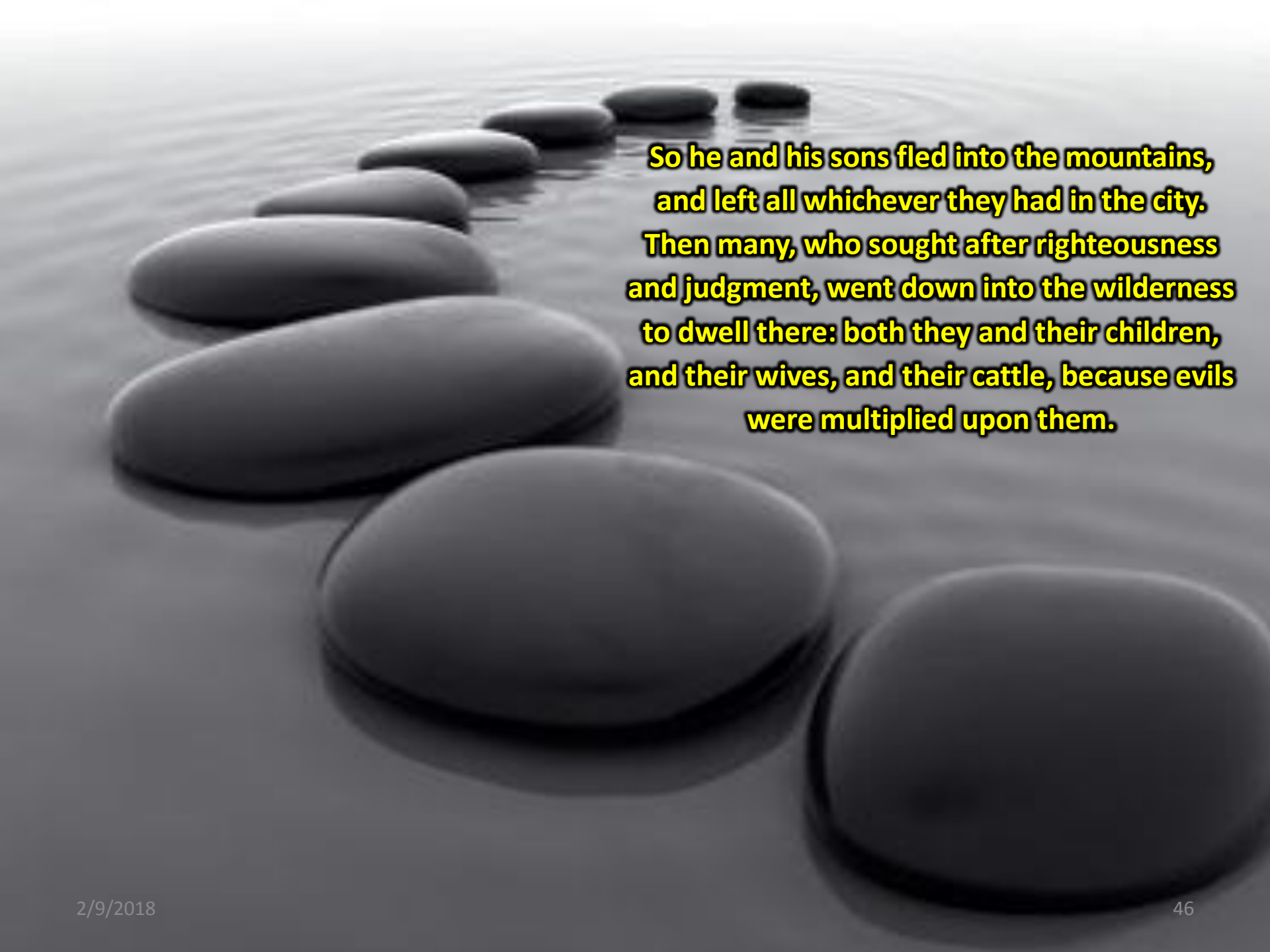
Then Mattathias answered and spoke with a loud voice, "Though all the nations which are under the king's dominion obey him, to fall away everyone from the religions of their fathers, and give consent to his commandments: yet will I and my sons and my brothers' walk in the covenant of our fathers. Yahuah forbid that we should forsake the instructions and the ordinances. We will not hearken to the king's words, to go aside from our covenant, either on the right hand, or the left."



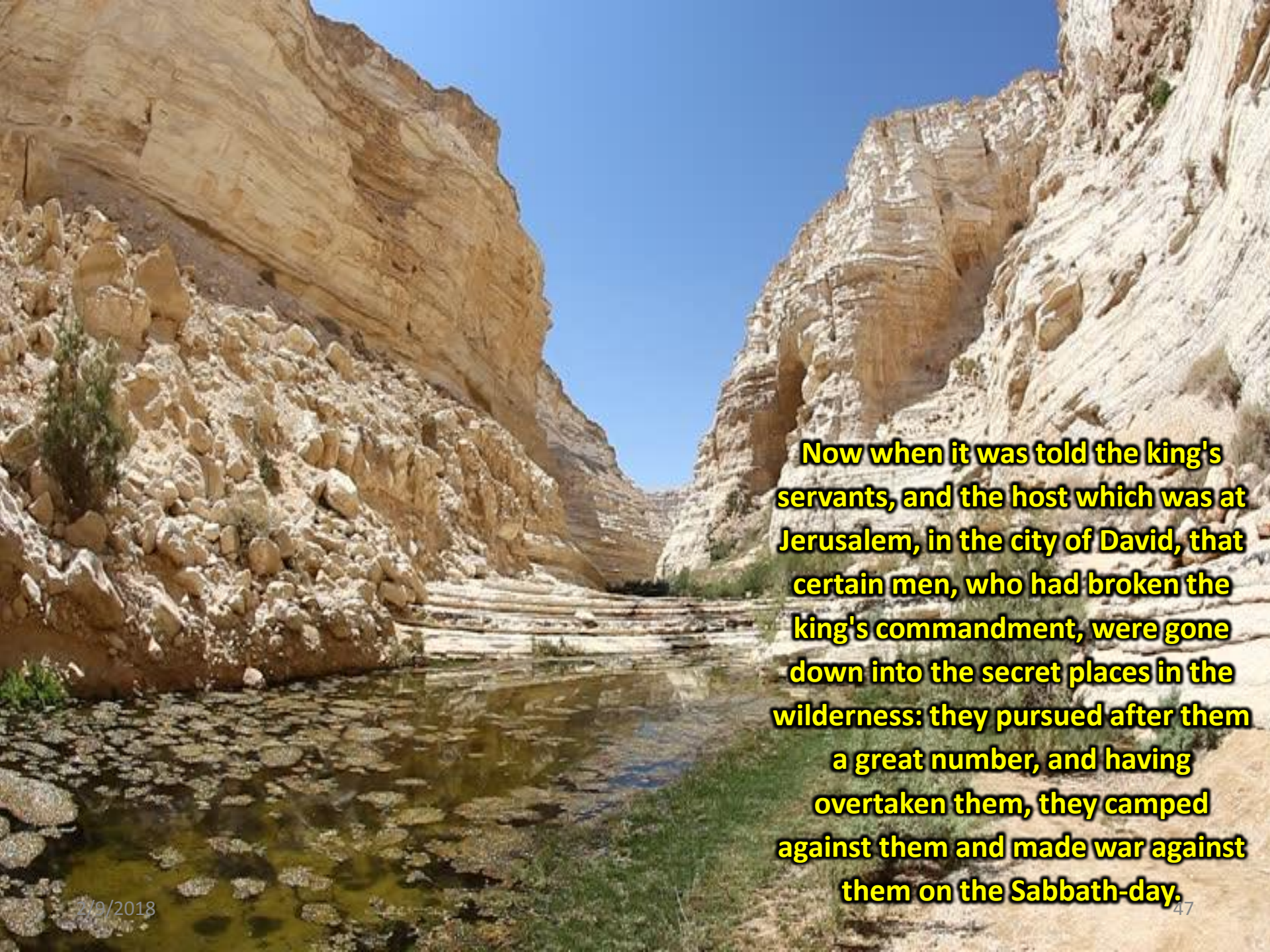
Now when he had left speaking these words, there came one of the Hebrews in the sight of all, to sacrifice on the altar which was at Modin, according to the king's commandment.

Which thing when Mattathias saw, he was inflamed with zeal, and his reins trembled, neither could he forbear to show his anger according to judgment: wherefore he ran, and slew him upon the altar.

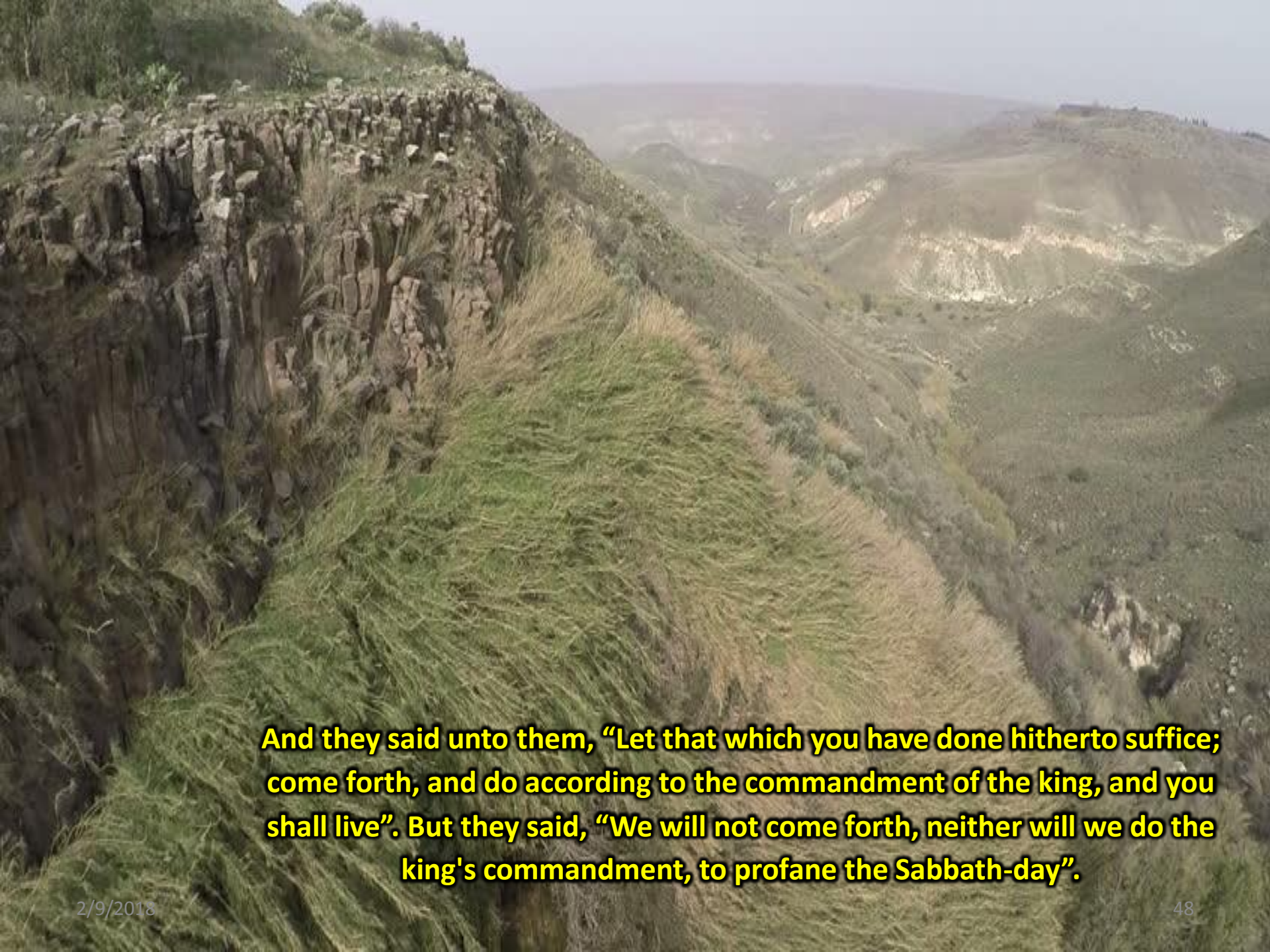
Also the king's commissioner, who compelled men to sacrifice, he killed at that time, and the altar he pulled down. Thus he felt zealously for the Instruction of Yahuah, like as Phinees did unto Zambri the son of Salom. And Mattathias cried throughout the city with a loud voice, saying, "Whosoever is zealous of the Torah, and maintains the covenant, let him follow me."

A path of smooth, dark, rounded stones leads from the foreground across a calm body of water towards the horizon. The stones are arranged in a slightly curved line, and their reflections are visible in the water. The background is a soft, hazy sky meeting the water at the horizon.

**So he and his sons fled into the mountains,
and left all whichever they had in the city.
Then many, who sought after righteousness
and judgment, went down into the wilderness
to dwell there: both they and their children,
and their wives, and their cattle, because evils
were multiplied upon them.**



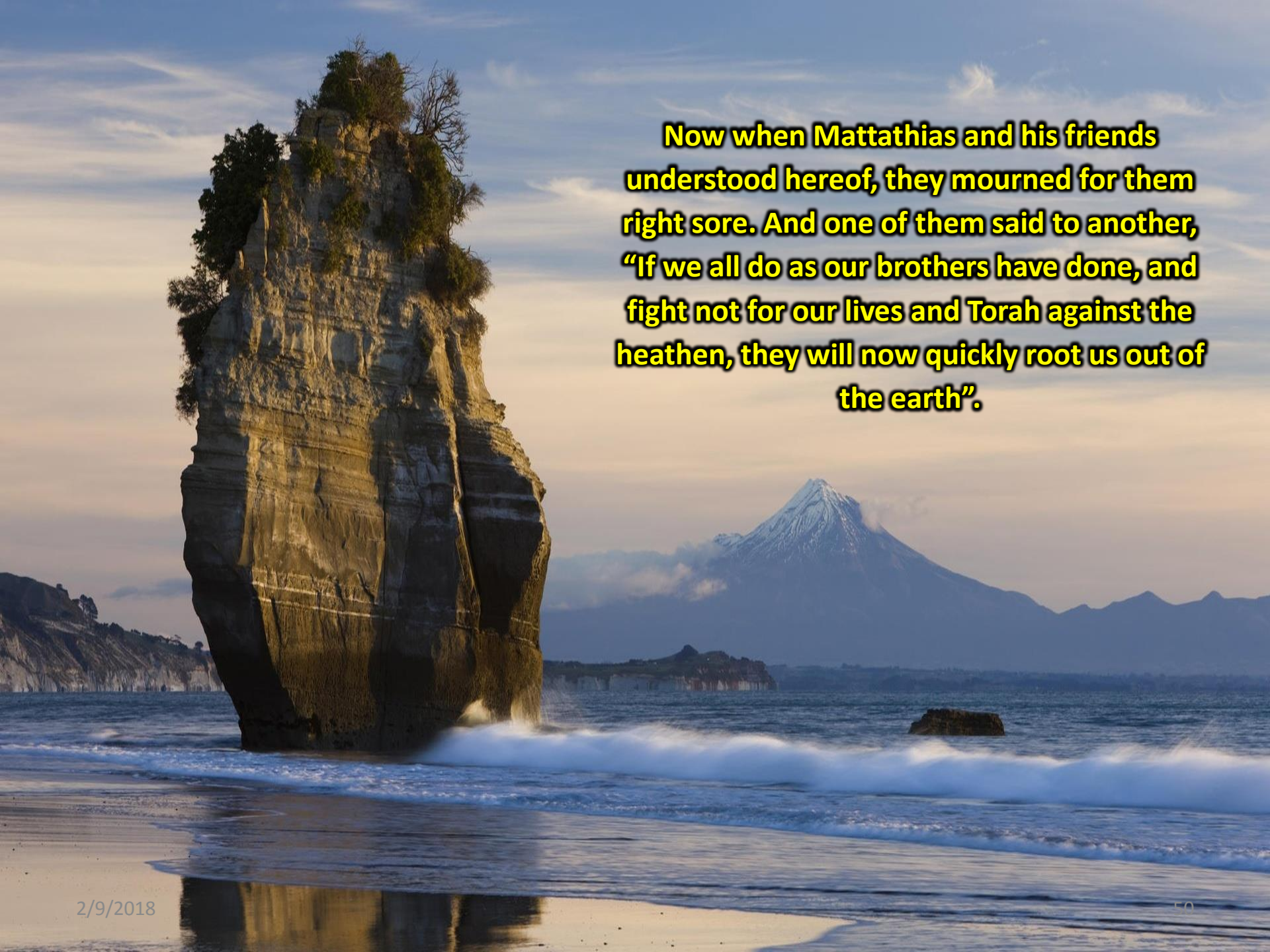
Now when it was told the king's servants, and the host which was at Jerusalem, in the city of David, that certain men, who had broken the king's commandment, were gone down into the secret places in the wilderness: they pursued after them a great number, and having overtaken them, they camped against them and made war against them on the Sabbath-day.



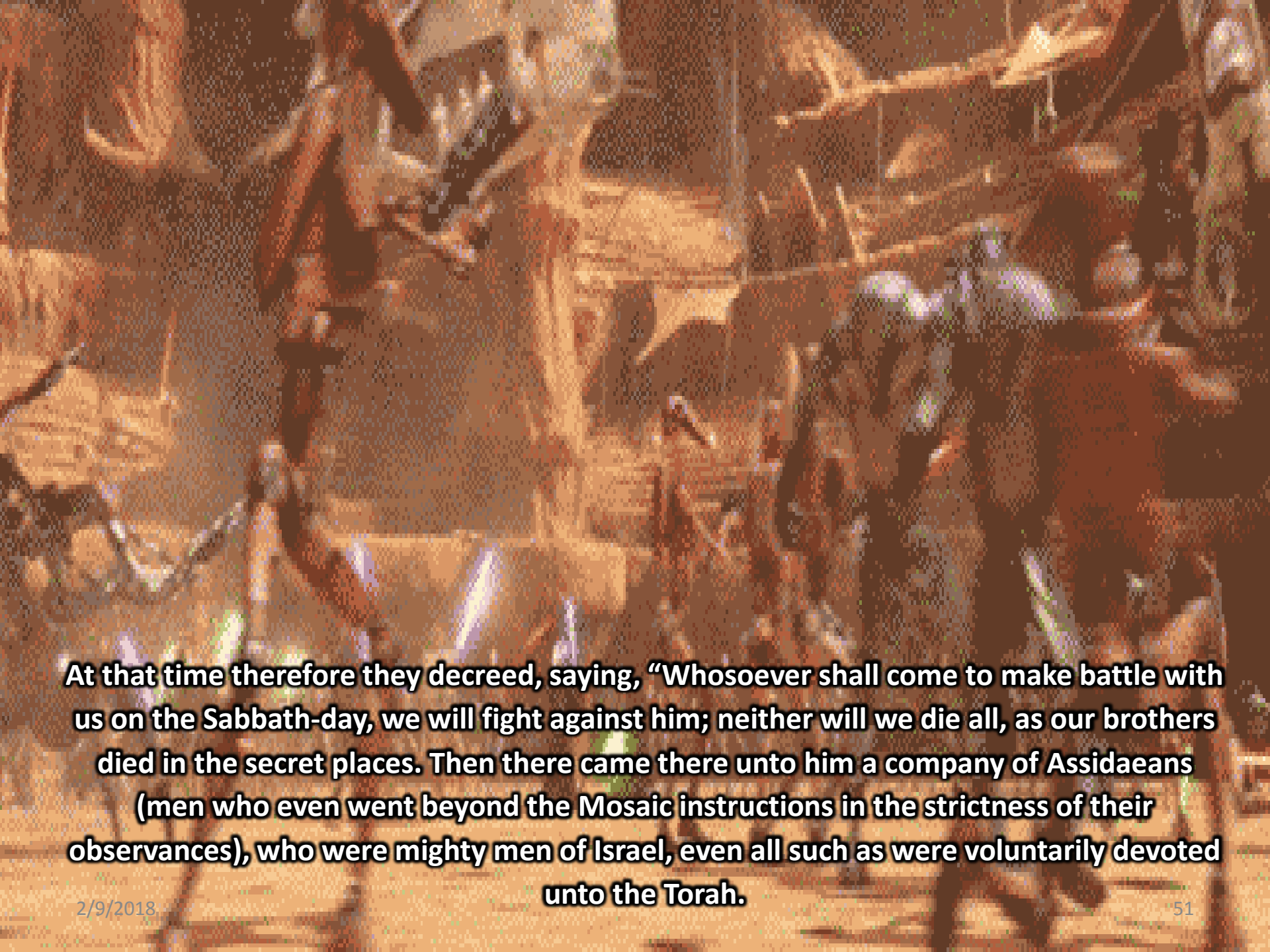
And they said unto them, “Let that which you have done hitherto suffice; come forth, and do according to the commandment of the king, and you shall live”. But they said, “We will not come forth, neither will we do the king's commandment, to profane the Sabbath-day”.

So then they gave them the battle with all speed. Howbeit, they answered them not, neither cast they a stone at them, nor stopped the places where they lay hid; but said, “Let us die all in our innocence: heaven and earth shall testify for us, that you put us to death wrongfully”. So they rose up against them in battle on the Sabbath, and they died with their wives and children, and their cattle, to the number of a thousand souls.





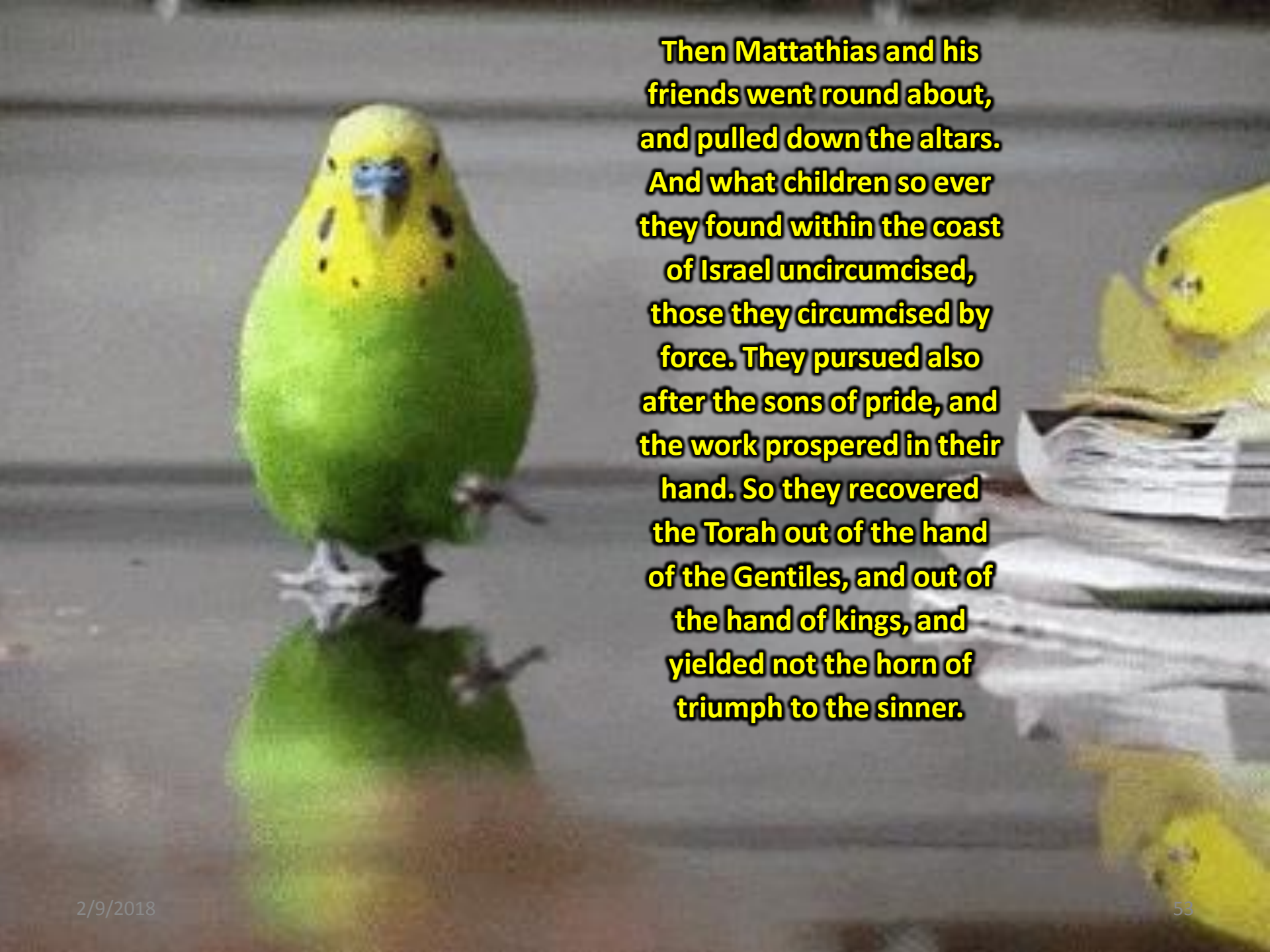
Now when Mattathias and his friends understood hereof, they mourned for them right sore. And one of them said to another, “If we all do as our brothers have done, and fight not for our lives and Torah against the heathen, they will now quickly root us out of the earth”.



At that time therefore they decreed, saying, “Whosoever shall come to make battle with us on the Sabbath-day, we will fight against him; neither will we die all, as our brothers died in the secret places. Then there came there unto him a company of Assidaean (men who even went beyond the Mosaic instructions in the strictness of their observances), who were mighty men of Israel, even all such as were voluntarily devoted unto the Torah.

Also all they who fled from persecution joined themselves unto them and were a stay unto them. So they joined their forces and smote sinful men in their anger and wicked men in their wrath; but the rest fled to the heathen for succor.



A green and yellow budgie is the central focus, standing on a reflective surface. Its reflection is clearly visible below it. To the right, another budgie is partially visible, perched on a stack of white papers. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Then Mattathias and his friends went round about, and pulled down the altars. And what children so ever they found within the coast of Israel uncircumcised, those they circumcised by force. They pursued also after the sons of pride, and the work prospered in their hand. So they recovered the Torah out of the hand of the Gentiles, and out of the hand of kings, and yielded not the horn of triumph to the sinner.

As the time drew near that Mattathias (MatisYahu) should die (BC 166) he said unto his sons; "Now have pride and rebuke gotten strength, and the time of destruction, and the wrath of indignation. Therefore, my sons, be you zealous for the Torah, and give your lives for the covenant of our fathers. Call to remembrance what acts our fathers did in their generations, so shall you receive great honor, and an everlasting name".



Grave of Judah Maccabee's father, Matisyahu

“Was not Abraham found faithful in temptation, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness? Joseph in the time of his distress, kept the Torah, and was made lord of Egypt. Phinees our father, in being zealous and fervent, obtained the covenant of an everlasting priesthood.”

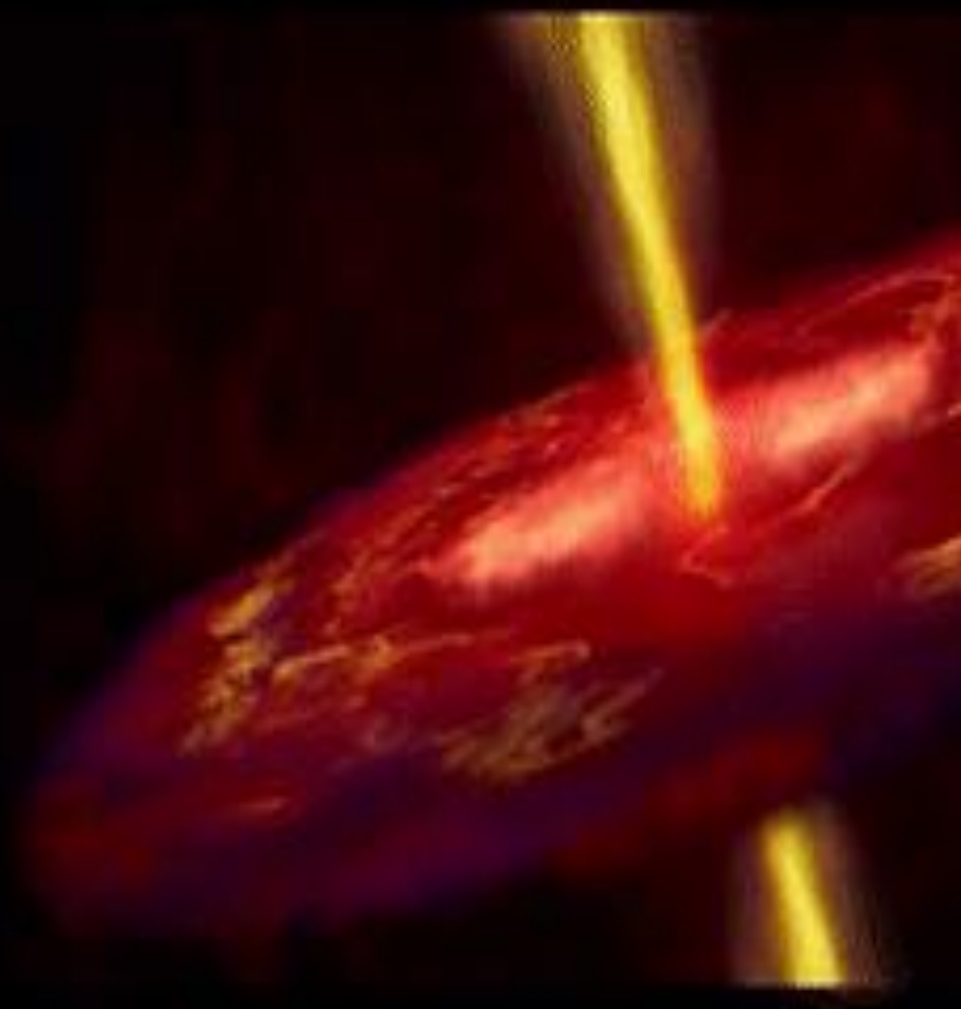


Joshua, for fulfilling the word, was made a judge in Israel. Caleb, for bearing witness before the congregation, received a heritage of the land. David, for being merciful gained to himself the throne of an everlasting kingdom. Elias, for being zealous and fervent for the Torah, was taken up into heaven.”



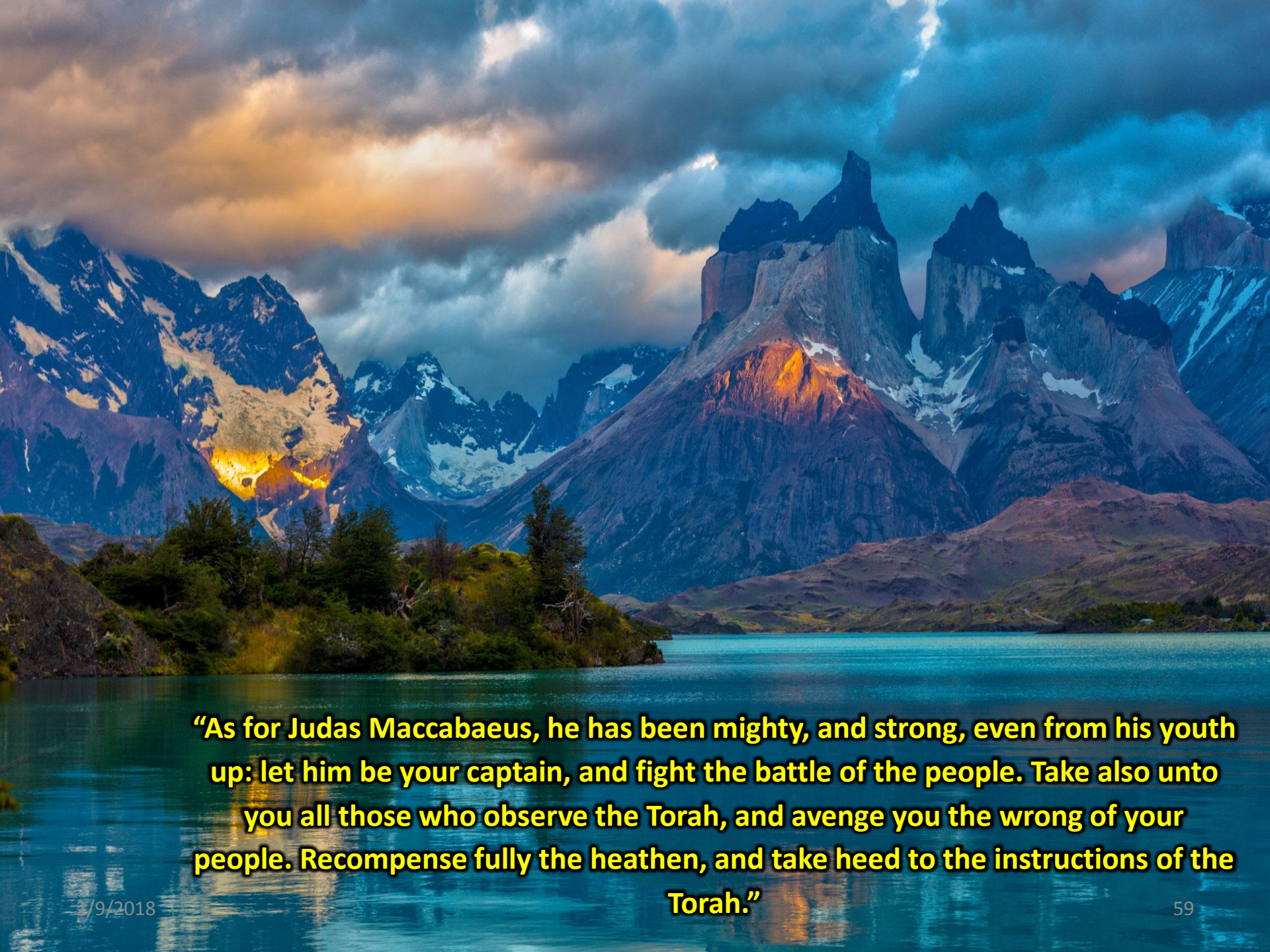


“Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, by believing, were saved out of the flame. Daniel, for his innocence, was delivered from the mouth of lions. And thus consider you throughout all generations, that none who put their trust in Yahuah shall fail. Fear not then the words of a sinful man; for his honor shall be dung and worms.”

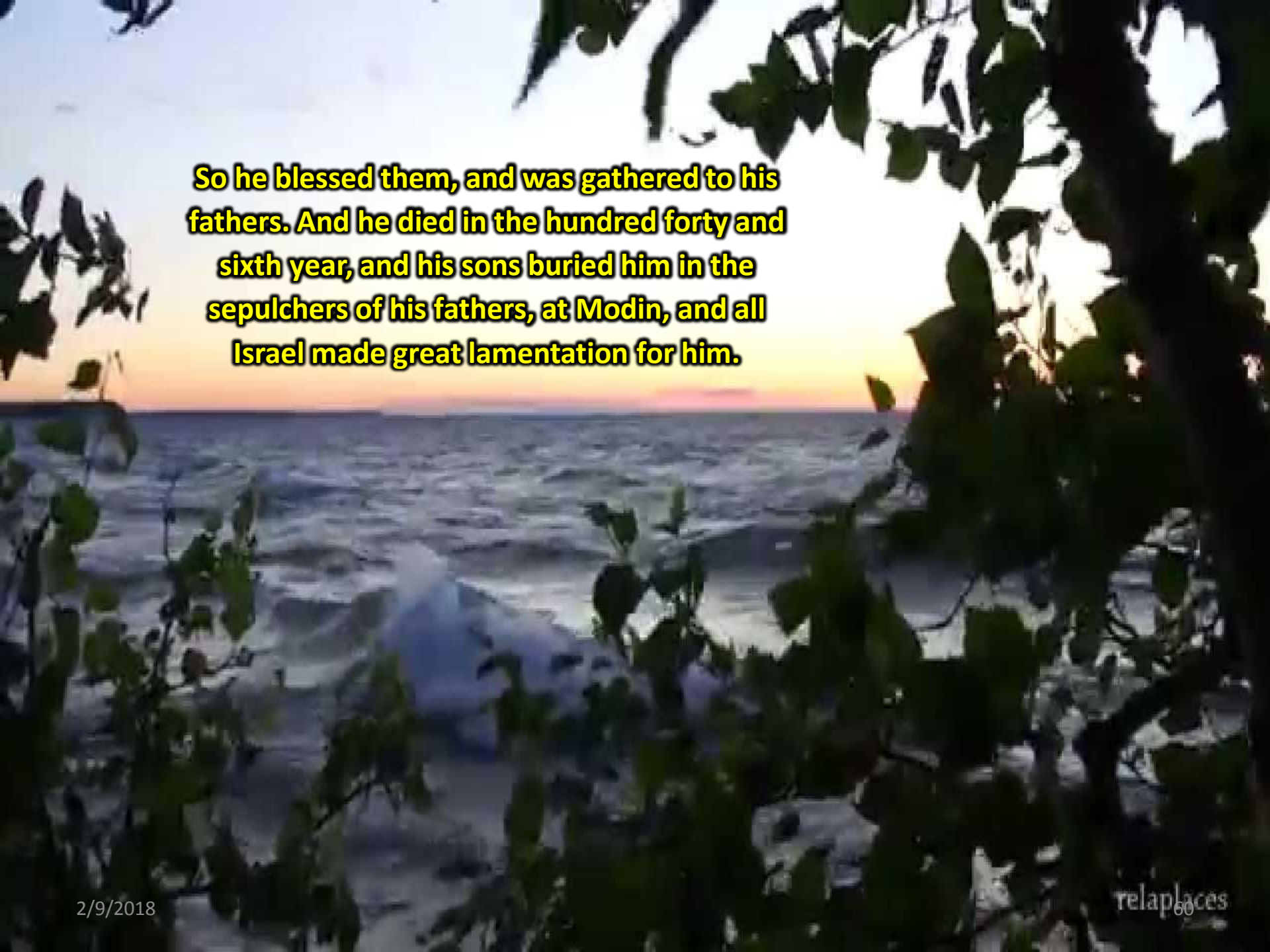


**Today he shall be lifted up,
and tomorrow he shall not be
found, because he is returned
into his dust, and his thought
is come to nothing.**

**Wherefore, you my sons, be
valiant, and show yourselves
men in the behalf of the Torah,
for by it shall you obtain
honor. And behold, I know
that your brother Simon is a
man of counsel, give ear unto
him always: he shall be a
father unto you.”**



“As for Judas Maccabaeus, he has been mighty, and strong, even from his youth up: let him be your captain, and fight the battle of the people. Take also unto you all those who observe the Torah, and avenge you the wrong of your people. Recompense fully the heathen, and take heed to the instructions of the Torah.”



So he blessed them, and was gathered to his fathers. And he died in the hundred forty and sixth year, and his sons buried him in the sepulchers of his fathers, at Modin, and all Israel made great lamentation for him.

**NEXT UP – PART 2 OF THE
2ND BOOK OF THE
MACCABEES**



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