

## MACCABEES RISE UP

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How do the Maccabees speak into our lives today? I believe they stand as an example for us in these end times. These few brave men stood against the crowd to defy all the ungodliness of their day in defense of the One True God and their faith. In doing so, they rebelled against not only the Syrian-Greek-Hellenistic oppressors; but also against the ungodly, compromising, humanistic government and population of their own people, Israel.



[Wojciech Stattler's "Machabeusze" \("The Maccabees"\)](#), 1844

Now, of course, we understand from scripture that we are to submit to the authorities over us: **“Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.”** (Romans 13:1)

David maintained an attitude of respect towards the authority and position of King Saul, even when Saul, in rebellion and troubled by evil spirits, tried to kill David without cause. Sarah was commended for obeying her husband, even when he asked her to lie for him in order to save his life. We must respect God’s sovereignty in placing people in positions of authority over us and therefore respect these people.

Sometimes, however, the person in authority should not be followed. Sometimes we must ‘obey God rather than men.’ For this we need great discernment to know when respect for God’s law might necessitate our disobedience to the law of the Land.

And so where do we find scriptural justification for the kind of Godly rebellion that the Maccabees demonstrated? The midwives in Egypt revered God and did not obey the Pharaoh’s command to kill all male Hebrew babies at birth. **“But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive.”** (Ex. 1:17)

Instead they lied and said that the Hebrew women were so ‘vigorous’ they gave birth without the help of a midwife. For this act of ‘civil disobedience’ in favor of obedience to the higher, divine law, God blessed them. **“And so it was, because the midwives feared God, that He provided households for them.”** (Exodus 1:21)

We also read in the book of Acts of a man who lied to the Holy Spirit and kept back a portion of the money he received from the sale of his land. (Acts 5:3) When Hananiah heard the words of the apostles in uncovering his sin, he immediately died.

Then his wife, Shapira, entered the room without knowing what had transpired. Peter asked her about the amount of the sale of the land and she followed her husband in his sin of deceit. She also fell down and died. They had 'agreed together' to test the Spirit of God. Obviously Shapira did not please the Lord in going along with her husband in sin, even though the husband is clearly in authority over his wife.

Next, the Cohen Hagadol (Jewish high priest) of the day and the Sadducees laid hands on the apostles and put them in prison, forbidding them from preaching Yeshua. But an angel released them and told them to stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life. (Acts 5:20) The Cohen asked, "**Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name?**" But Peter and the other shlichim (apostles) answered and said: "**We ought to obey God rather than men.**" (Acts 5:29)

There are times when we must not follow those in authority when they are clearly acting in disobedience to the Word of God. How does this relate to us today and to the ancient Maccabees? We see today a growing conspiracy among the leaders of the nations of the earth to force Israel to give away even more of her God-given land in order to create a so-called 'Palestinian State'. What is disguised as an 'oppressed minority struggling for national liberation' is in actuality a Philistine Goliath blaspheming the God of Israel and defying the people of Israel to stop him.

Is it God's will for terrorists descended from Ishmael and Esau (EDOM) to take possession of a portion of the Land of Israel as their own? This is what God's word has to say through the prophet Ezekiel, "**Surely I have spoken in My burning jealousy against the rest of the nations and against all Edom, who gave My land to themselves as a possession, with wholehearted joy and spiteful minds, in order to plunder its open country.**" (Ezekiel 36:5)



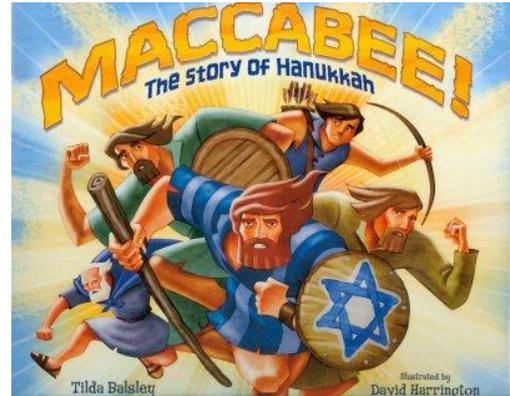
If Israel doesn't give in to the demands of the nations, they will likely use military intervention to force their evil plan to come to pass. Can tiny Israel stand against all the nations of the earth? Could the young David stand against Goliath? Only with God on our side.

**"Do not say, 'A conspiracy concerning all that this people call a conspiracy', nor be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled. The Lord of hosts, Him you shall hallow; Let Him be your fear."** (Isaiah 8:12)

We saw in pre-WWII Germany that most people became highly nationalistic. This led to even the Christian Church, to a large extent, following Hitler, not wanting to believe his motives were actually evil. Today, we see a similar kind of nationalism and patriotism building that could be used by the enemy to cause even Believers to side with their national leaders rather than God.

A few righteous Gentiles defied the authorities to defend the Jewish people. Some, such as Dietrich Boenhoffer, gave his very life. The Nazis executed him just days before the end of the war for his advocacy of the Jewish people and his outspokenness against the government, the people, and the Church of Germany.

Am I advocating some kind of Maccabean type revolution against our governments? No, I only want to remind us that our highest allegiance is to our God and we may have an obligation to resist authority, whether that be foreign rule or our own national leadership should that authority demand that we disobey God. Can we, as Bible Believers, stand with a President or Prime Minister who calls for a Palestinian State within Israel?



The answer is clear. Most people will agree with this plan for 'peace in the Middle East'. But the majority has often been proven wrong. May we have the courage to follow in the path of the Maccabees and the Boenhoffers of this world who were willing to take a vocal, active stand for the sake of their God, their faith, and for righteousness, even if it cost them their lives. Surely they have found their reward.

God bless you and may the Light of the World shine in your life!

