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# *Exempla* in 1 Maccabees and Josephus' *Bellum Judaicum*: Doing Jewish Exemplarity in the Greco-Roman World

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## Abstract

The study of *exempla* and exemplarity in Mediterranean antiquity touches the methodological borderlines and interest areas of several distinct academic disciplines. Earlier studies focused on semantics and the development from the Greek παράδειγμα to the Roman *exemplum*. More recently, the field of Classics has tended to examine exemplarity as a phenomenon with a distinctively Roman edge. At the same time, scholars in adjacent disciplines like ancient Judaism and early Christianity have engaged Classics scholarship on this topic in their own work. This paper extends this arena by clarifying aspects of exemplarity within two paradigmatic texts of Hellenistic- and Roman-era Judaism. We examine 1 Maccabees 2:49–68 and Josephus' *Jewish War* 6.99–110, both speeches set within “contemporary” histories written by Jewish authors. By examining these ancient Jewish passages, written within the Greco-Roman world, we help add clarity and meaning to what could be “Jewish” about exemplarity in ancient Mediterranean contexts.

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## Keywords

*exempla* – exemplarity – 1Maccabees – Mattathias – Jeconiah/Jehoachin – role models – 1Maccabees – Josephus

### 1 Introduction

In scholarship on the ancient Mediterranean world, most conventionally within the discipline of classics, the study of exemplarity refers to the study of examples (*exempla*)—usually historical or mythical individuals—brought forward briefly within some particular discursive context to make some specific point.<sup>1</sup> This socio-communicative phenomenon presumes upon knowledge shared between a speaker/writer and a reading or listening audience, often using passing reference to a figure or story to imply or signal a culturally-specific value or meaning. While this practice has not always been referred to by the same terms, it is one of the most distinctive and defining features of Greco-Roman—and Judeo-Christian—antiquity.

The study of exemplarity in Mediterranean antiquity has begun to branch out. It is true that the lion's share of scholarship on rhetorical *exempla* continues to be done by classicists who specialize in ancient Rome—the recent monographs of Rebecca Langlands and Matthew Roller are two prominent examples of this trend that stand in front of a long tradition of scholarship that falls mostly within classics.<sup>2</sup> Yet, scholars of ancient Judaism and early Christianity are also beginning to enter the fray,<sup>3</sup> with late antique Christian-

1 This study began as a collaborative conference presentation given by the authors at the CRASIS Annual Meeting on the topic of “Exemplarity” held at University of Groningen in the Netherlands on February 25, 2022. We thank the organizers and chairs of the conference for the opportunity to present this work there, and to Rebecca Langlands and the other participants for their lively engagement.

2 See Langlands, *Exemplary Ethics*, and Roller, *Models from the Past*, both published in 2018 (and note that both authors published substantially on exemplarity before the appearance of these volumes). A foundational study for scholarship of the past half-century is Price, “*Paradeigma*” and “*Exemplum*,” a 1975 Berkeley dissertation. Before that, what has long been considered as perhaps the classical study is Kornhardt, *Exemplum*, a 1936 Göttingen dissertation, following Alewell, *Über das rhetorische Paradeigma* (published 1913). Other important and oft-cited studies have included Bücher, *Verargumentierte Geschichte*; Lumpe, “*Exemplum*”; Litchfield, “*National Exempla Virtutis*.” More recently, see the essays in Bell and Hansen, *Role Models*.

3 Edwards, *In Court of Gentiles*, examines exemplarity within the court scenes of Josephus’ *Jewish Antiquities*, testing and developing theories of exemplarity applied recently by several scholars to Plutarch’s *Parallel Lives*; Bay, *Biblical Heroes*, identifies the reverberations of

ity having received greater attention, due in some part to its self-conscious continuation of aspects of the classical literary tradition. This development is auspicious, for the discipline of classics has often restrained the majority of its inquiry to a small set of canonical texts, while many of the literary, rhetorical, and cultural dynamics it has explored are naturally shared across the texts and societies that made up the ancient Mediterranean world (and beyond). In this essay it is our contention that the literature of Judaism in the Hellenistic and Roman periods has something to contribute to our understanding of exemplarity as type of discourse in the ancient world; conversely, we suggest that exemplarity qua object of study offers valuable new perspectives on our understanding of ancient Judaism.

This emerging interdisciplinarity brings to the forefront several critical questions: should we talk about the exemplarity that ancient Jewish and Christian authors perform or *do* as somehow “Roman” and/or “Hellenistic” in essence? If so, what does that mean? Alternatively, what is distinctively Jewish and/or Christian about certain uses of rhetorical *exempla* and, more to the point, what does this mean for the questions we ask and the frameworks we adopt? This article takes steps toward answering these questions by means of two case studies of the Jewish Greek-language discourse of exemplarity that emerged between the second century BCE and the late first century CE. These case studies come in two speeches attributed to Jews by Jews yet written or transmitted in Greek: the first appears in 1 Macc 2:49–68, the second in Flavius Josephus' *Jewish War* 6.99–110.<sup>4</sup> In this article we argue that these case studies help clarify what work “Jewish” and other adjectives can do—as well as their

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Greco-Roman exemplarity in a Latin text from Christian late antiquity (*De excidio Hierosolymitano*) and its presentation of biblical figures, in conversation with recent scholarship on exemplarity and *exempla* in the writings of Josephus; Ployd, “Augustine, Martyrdom,” suggests that one aspect of Augustine's exemplarity both adopts and subverts classical models; Petitfils, *Mos Christianorum*, shows how notions within ancient Greek discourses of exemplarity inform early Christian conceptions of leadership depicted via *exempla* in 1 Clement and the *Letter of the Churches of Vienne and Lyons* (with a substantial section on Philo and Josephus as well); Goldfarb, *Transformation*. Earlier still see works like Demoen, *Pagan and Biblical Exempla*; Rebenich, “Hieronymus”; Schneiderhan, *Exempla bei Hieronymus*. Also recently, Renard, *Confessional Boundaries*, touches upon ideas concerning *exempla*, though outside of the bounds of the subdiscipline as defined within classics, as they pertain to “exemplary figures” shared by the Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam).

- 4 For our case studies to appear within historiographical speeches is appropriate, as these particular parts of this particular genre constitute one of the most natural and common literary spaces for the deployment of rhetorical *exempla*, on which see Marincola, “Rhetoric of History,” and Chaplin, *Livy's Exemplary History*.

limitations—in the enterprise of understanding exemplarity as an ancient *Jewish*, as well as Greek and Roman, discursive phenomenon.

## 2 *Status Quaestionis* and Methodology

One of the reasons for pursuing a study like the present one is that scholars of different disciplines seem to bring distinctive interests to the study of ancient exemplarity. Classicists have tended to focus on the public-facing political, legal, historiographical, and rhetorical use of *exempla* in Greek and Roman culture.<sup>5</sup> Scholars of ancient Judaism, on the other hand, tend to emphasize the performative and didactic elements of exemplarity that contribute to particular forms of “technologies of the self,” often signaling ancient Jewish wisdom traditions.<sup>6</sup> Early Christianity specialists tend, differently still, to focus on the adaptation of Roman forms of discourse within Christianity’s idiosyncratic internal discourses, with their own culture heroes and moral obsessions.<sup>7</sup> None of these disciplinary proclivities is iron-clad: these interests and methods do cross borders.<sup>8</sup> Nor are these scholarly penchants particularly surprising, nor necessarily problematic. We point them out merely to identify the multivalent well of approaches to exemplarity in antiquity that exist, and to point out the simple but important fact of this diversity within contemporary scholarship.<sup>9</sup>

5 Here Langlands, *Exemplary Ethics*, is a bit of an outlier, as she brings the field in new directions in terms of comparative and social analysis.

6 See, e.g., Lambert, “Biblical Narrative.” In the same vein, though without the argot of “exemplarity,” see Mariani, “Inheriting.” On exemplarity vis-à-vis Jewish wisdom and apocalyptic literature, see Uusimäki, *Lived Wisdom*, and Najman, *Past Renewals*, 189–256; cf. Najman, “*Imitatio Dei*.”

7 Bay, *Biblical Heroes*, 62–67, surveys scholarship on exemplarity in ancient Christianity and summarizes it as generally engaging one or more of three trends: (1) the population of a classicizing discourse of exemplarity with early Christian figures (martyrs, saints, monks, bishops, etc.); (2) the citation of classical *exempla* as fuel for anti-pagan polemics; (3) the adaptation of classical/pagan *exempla* and/or values to Christian purposes.

8 Reed, “Construction,” is an early and important study (for the most recent scholarship) in this industry that examines the particular *exemplum* of Abraham across ancient Jewish texts (namely Philo, Josephus, and the *Testament of Abraham*). Cf. Bay, “Exemplarity, Exegesis, Ethnography.”

9 Exemplarity also constitutes a major theme within medieval studies. Because this article is concerned with ancient ideas about and practices of exemplarity, we leave aside this massive bibliography. Still, one should note in recent work like von Contzen’s “Why Medieval Literature” how central exemplarity can be for the way that medievalists approach and frame their field(s) of study.

In the same vein, we feel that it makes sense to signal some areas of research that could use greater attention as scholarship on *exempla* progresses. The social and psychological foundations undergirding exemplarity as an intellectual and communicative phenomenon, represented by the social sciences and perhaps also anthropology and neuroscience, have been noted at times.<sup>10</sup> Humanities scholars should pay special attention to salient advances within these quickly-expanding disciplines, which continue to tell us so much about how human beings operate internally and socially. At the same time, it behooves scholars who study exemplarity at the crossroads of Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian antiquity, as it were, to ground their study deeply in philology, while not necessarily restricting their study to passages that employ terms like παράδειγμα and *exemplum* per se, terms which were themselves used incongruently and inconsistently across the ancient literature.<sup>11</sup>

In seeking both to illustrate how certain Jewish texts may contribute to broader discussions of exemplarity in the ancient Mediterranean and to draw upon that scholarly domain to shed light on two prominent Greek Jewish texts, we approach exemplarity in the more restricted sense generally adopted or implied by the majority of specialists on the ancient Mediterranean that have written on this subject; that is to say, classicists. As outlined in greater detail below, by exemplarity we are referring to a phenomenon of spoken and/or written communication wherein a (historical) example—an individual + a specific episode in which he or she figured—is brought up briefly within an oratorical or narrative context in which that example is *not* an inherent part of the preceding or proceeding material; said example, thus ripped out of context and mentioned briefly (with a minimum of details) for some particular ethical or didactic purpose, appears as a passing mention given and received by authors/speakers and readers/hearers who are assumed to know the figure, deed, and intended point of the example already. This is what most scholarship on exemplarity has meant by “exemplarity.” However, recent work on exemplarity in ancient Judaism, and even in Josephus’ writings, has tended to adopt a more capacious understanding of “exemplarity,” which has the capacity to confuse the issue. For example, David Lambert treats exemplarity among ancient Jewish authors “in the fuller sense, that is, as a technology of the self or a mode of self-formation,” a phenomenon which, he argues, “is taken up as a practice of reading only within a few specific contexts as part of an elite

10 E.g., Bell, “Introduction.”

11 For Greek, see Price, “*Paradeigma*” and “*Exemplum*,” 215; for Latin, see Demoen, *Pagan and Biblical Exempla*, 25.

project linked inextricably to Hellenistic moral philosophy.”<sup>12</sup> In this Lambert joins earlier work such as that of Annette Yoshiko Reed in her landmark 2009 article, and more recent work by scholars like Eelco Glas and David Edwards;<sup>13</sup> for all their disagreements, all of these scholars use the term “exemplarity” to identify passages where the presumed “*exempla*” are or become the primary figures in a given narrative, and/or they generally allow for an expansive meaning of “exemplarity,” whereby most any instance in which a historical figure or event is made an example of, whatever the scope or size, may come to be termed “exemplarity.” In this article we address a more specific aspect of this larger domain.

As noted, the term and idea of “exemplarity” have been used at different, overlapping levels of analysis by contemporary scholars of ancient Judaism, and the tendency toward a broader conception of exemplarity renders many recent studies dealing with “exemplarity in ancient Judaism,” strictly speaking, less immediately clear or natural as conversation partners for the present study than they might be. It may be that what we are referring to as “exemplarity” corresponds to the “few specific contexts” mentioned by Lambert that participate in an “elite project” married to “Hellenistic moral philosophy.” Certainly, our analysis restricts itself to *Greek* texts that are in some conversation with the larger Hellenistic thought-world. But this interaction between the “Hellenistic” and the “Jewish,” and even the definitions of these terms, fall directly within the purview of our inquiry. One inductive point that emerges in this essay is that some Jewish texts can add helpful texture to the study of exemplarity in Greco-Roman antiquity, which is not to say that *all* Jewish texts that make an example of anyone should automatically be included in this discussion. Also, an inductive inference to be gleaned here is that the narrower, more classical understanding of “exemplarity” within the study of the Greco-Roman world can and indeed must be accounted for in reading *some* passages of certain ancient Jewish texts (not *all* ancient Jewish texts in which exemplary figures figure!). The present study, then, uses the narrower understanding of “exemplarity” as defined within the field of classics as a means of putting Hellenistic-Jewish and Greco-Roman texts and ideas into conversation.

Previous scholarship on exemplarity writ large and the Jewish *exempla* within the so-called Maccabean books and the works of Flavius Josephus (and

12 Lambert, “Biblical Narrative,” 54 (discussing Josephus, *Ant.* 1.14–15).

13 Reed, “Construction”; Edwards, *In Court of Gentiles*, 29–56; Glas, *Josephus’ Self-Characterization*, approaches exemplarity as part of the didactic nature of Josephus’ narrative (55–59), a scope which ends up encompassing Josephus’ example-making of any narrative character.

their reception in later literature) provides a number of points that may serve as a foundation for our discussion.<sup>14</sup>

- (1) For early Jewish literature, the etymological implication of the word *exemplum* seems an accurate indication of what can be observed in the texts: the *ex-explum* concerns something that is taken out of (*ex-*) its original context and planted in a new literary context.
- (2) The purpose of the *exemplum* is to illustrate a point, persuade the intended audience of a certain view, or counter opposing views.<sup>15</sup>
- (3) The original context of the *exemplum* is not retold in full but presupposed, briefly summarized, or alluded to, often with a key word or short reference.
- (4) The *exempla* deployed by early Jewish authors often comprised heroes from the Jewish Scriptures, as in the two examples below, but not always.<sup>16</sup>
- (5) The *exempla* used by early Jewish authors tend each to epitomize one particular virtue-in-action, like prudence, justice, bravery, resolution, self-control, clemency, or εὐσέβεια/*pietas*, the latter in this case implying a proper posture towards God.
- (6) These deeds or virtues sometimes overlap with Hellenistic or Roman ones, but are generally interpreted through a Jewish lens focusing on the Jewish law, Jewish practices or social values, Jewish religious or philosophical thought, or some other facet of discernibly *Jewish* culture.
- (7) Like Greek and Roman *exempla*, Jewish exemplary figures often have a patriotic-political significance (in addition to our examples below, cf. Abraham and the Maccabean mother in 4Macc 15:28–29; 17:6). Such *exempla* quintessentially exhibit a willingness to die for the Jewish nation or homeland.
- (8) Jewish *exempla* tend to be clustered, i.e., come in series (as in Damascus Document 2–3, Sir 44–50, or Heb 11), which presupposes a process of canonization.<sup>17</sup>

14 Bay, “ὑπόδειγμα το παράδειγμα”; van Henten, *Maccabean Martyrs*, 210–243; “Abraham as *Exemplum*.”

15 Cf. Kornhardt, *Exemplum*; 1; Bücher, “Verargumentierte Geschichte,” 154.

16 E.g., in *Jewish War*, in addition to “domestic” or “native” *exempla* from the Jewish Scriptures—Hebrews, Israelites, Jews/Judeans—Josephus also deploys (a) non-Jewish *exempla* from the Jewish Scriptures, like Sennacherib (*J.W.* 5:388) and Cyrus (5:389; cf. “the Philistine [nation]” [ἡ Παλαιστίνη] in 5:384) and (b) Jewish and (c) non-Jewish *exempla* from “post-biblical” (i.e., Hasmonean/Maccabean or Herodian) eras like Antiochus IV Epiphanes, Aristobulus, Hyrcanus, Antigonus (5:394–398).

17 Cf. Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus*, 6 and 18. The list of some thousand-odd *exempla* in Valerius Maximus’ *Memorable Deeds and Sayings* constitute a prototype for this listing phenomenon. So also do Cicero’s *Tusculan Disputations*, perhaps the one work reputed



- (9) At least some Jewish *exempla* can be interpreted as prototypes as described in social identity theory, i.e., “the image of an ideal person who embodies [a group’s] character.”<sup>18</sup>

With this framework in place, we turn to our two case studies, which allow us both to illustrate and to problematize this schematic outline.

### 3 First Maccabees 2

The priest Mattathias, who started the rebellion against the Seleucid King Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 BCE), described in detail in 1Macc 2, gave a farewell speech to his five sons, recorded in Greek in 1Macc 2:49–69.<sup>19</sup> Several scholars have rightly argued that this speech contributes greatly to legitimating the rise to power of Mattathias’ family, especially his son Simon with his descendants, who is highlighted in this passage as “being wise in counsel and a father to his brothers,” even though Judas and not Simon was the oldest (1Macc 2:65).<sup>20</sup> Mattathias’ final words to his sons point to a motive for the struggle for liberation to be fought, a struggle then narrated in chapters 3 to 13.<sup>21</sup> Mattathias emphasizes that his sons should be ready to sacrifice their lives in this struggle, to protect the Jewish law and covenant with God: “Now my children, show zeal for the law (ζηλώσατε τῷ νόμῳ),<sup>22</sup> and give your lives for the covenant of our ancestors (δοτε τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν ὑπὲρ διαθήκης πατέρων ἡμῶν)” (1Macc 2:50; cf. 2:64). Mattathias underpins this charge with a list of famous heroes from the Jewish Scriptures:<sup>23</sup>

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to contain a longer list of *exempla* all told than in Valerius Maximus. For foundational work on example lists in Hellenistic Jewish literature vis-à-vis Heb 11, see Cosby, *Rhetorical Composition*; Eisenbaum, *Jewish Heroes*; “Heroes and History.” Also, Bay, *Biblical Heroes*, primarily concerns itself with long lists of Jewish (“Old Testament”) *exempla* in late ancient Christian literature.

- 18 To be distinguished from an actual person who may “embody the identity of a group as an ‘exemplar,’” according to Esler, *Conflict and Identity*, 172. See also Esler, “Prototypes”; Haslam, *Psychology*, 46–50.
- 19 1Maccabees was originally composed in Hebrew; see Evron, “Two Cases” and Schwartz, *1Maccabees*, 36–39.
- 20 See, among others, Schwartz, *1Maccabees*, 4–6; Scolnic, *Thy Brother’s Blood*, 148–149; and Wilker, “Aufstandsführern,” with references.
- 21 For the composition of 1Maccabees, see Martola, *Capture*; Williams, *Structure*; and Borchardt, *Torah in 1Maccabees*.
- 22 Hieke, “Role of Scripture,” 64–65; Schwartz, “Moses’ Song”; Schwemer, “Eiferer.”
- 23 Detailed discussions in: Keel, “1 Makk 2”; Egger-Wenzel, “Testament”; Hieke, “Role of Scripture”; Reiterer, “Vergangenheit”; Schwemer, “Eiferer”; Choi, *Use and Function*, 111–115.

- 51 “Remember the deeds of the ancestors, which they did in their generations; and you will receive great honor and an everlasting name.
- 52 Was not Abraham found faithful when tested, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness?
- 53 Joseph in the time of his distress kept the commandment, and became lord of Egypt.
- 54 Phinehas our ancestor, because he was deeply zealous, received<sup>24</sup> the covenant of everlasting priesthood.
- 55 Joshua, because he fulfilled the command, became a judge in Israel.
- 56 Caleb, because he testified in the assembly, received an inheritance in the land.
- 57 David, because he was merciful, inherited the throne of the kingdom forever.
- 58 Elijah, because of great zeal for the law, was taken up into heaven.
- 59 Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael were faithful<sup>25</sup> and were saved from the flame.
- 60 Daniel, because of his innocence, was delivered from the mouth of the lions. (NRSV)

- 51 καὶ μνήσθητε τὰ ἔργα τῶν πατέρων ἃ ἐποίησαν ἐν ταῖς γενεαῖς αὐτῶν καὶ δέξα-  
σθε δόξαν μεγάλην καὶ ὄνομα αἰώνιον
- 52 Ἀβρααμ οὐχὶ ἐν πειρασμῷ εὐρέθη πιστός καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην
- 53 Ἰωσηφ ἐν καιρῷ στενοχωρίας αὐτοῦ ἐφύλαξεν ἐντολήν καὶ ἐγένετο κύριος Αἰγύ-  
πτου
- 54 Φινεες ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ ζηλώσει ζῆλον ἔλαβεν διαθήκην ἱερωσύνης αἰωνίας
- 55 Ἰησοῦς ἐν τῷ πληρῶσαι λόγον ἐγένετο κριτῆς ἐν Ἰσραηλ
- 56 Χαλεβ ἐν τῷ μαρτύρασθαι ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἔλαβεν γῆς κληρονομίαν
- 57 Δαυιδ ἐν τῷ ἐλέει αὐτοῦ ἐκληρονόμησεν θρόνον βασιλείας εἰς αἰῶνας
- 58 Ἡλιας ἐν τῷ ζηλώσει ζῆλον νόμου ἀνελήμφθη εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν
- 59 Ἀνανίας Ἀζαρίας Μισαηλ πιστεύσαντες ἐσώθησαν ἐκ φλογός
- 60 Δανιηλ ἐν τῇ ἀπλότῃ αὐτοῦ ἐρρύσθη ἐκ στόματος λεόντων. (Rahlfs)

1Macc 2:51–60

Abraham, Joseph, Phinehas, Joshua, Caleb, David, Elisha, Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael, Daniel—Mattathias introduces these eleven exemplary figures as ancestors (πατέρες), identifying the list as one being presented through an

24 Reiterer (“Vergangenheit,” 91) argues for an active meaning of ἔλαβεν, leading to a translation like “took hold of.”

25 NRSV: “believed.”

ethnic or national lens. These heroes are ancestors of the Jewish nation or ethnos.<sup>26</sup> The formulaic way in which each model is presented strengthens the impression of an exemplary list like those found in CD 2–3, Sir 44–50, or Heb 11. First, the name of an ancestor is given; second comes a brief paraphrase of what that person did (introduced by the preposition ἐν),<sup>27</sup> in line with the introduction (“remember the deeds of the ancestors ... which they did”; 2:51); and thirdly there is a brief indication of each *exemplum*'s appropriate reward.<sup>28</sup> These rewards parallel Mattathias' statement to his sons when he says: “you will receive great honor and an everlasting name” (2:51).<sup>29</sup> This promised reward is quite different from the rewards imputed to the *exempla* themselves: it may suggest a cumulative reward accruing to the great fame to be received if the sons fulfil their father's program, and it is more conceptual and vague than the practical benefits reaped by the heroic ancestors. Moreover, these rewards presuppose God's involvement: though God is never explicitly mentioned, God is referred to by the pronoun αὐτόν in the phrase πάντες οἱ ἐλπίζοντες ἐπ' αὐτόν in one of the concluding clauses: “none of those who put their trust in him will lack strength” (2:61).<sup>30</sup>

All of the examples in this list refer to stories found within the Jewish Scriptures. All but one allude to one specific deed, easily identified in most cases. The example of Abraham, for example, concerns the story of Isaac's sacrifice (Gen 22), where Abraham was put to the test, as the introductory verse to this chapter indicates (Gen 22:1).<sup>31</sup> Abraham's faithfulness or trust in God is “rewarded by righteousness.”<sup>32</sup> Abraham's righteousness implies his faithfulness toward God, which explains why God established a covenant with him and blessed him with innumerable descendants.<sup>33</sup> Joseph's time of distress

26 The three offices of the leadership of the Israelites or Jews are reflected in the list: van Henten, “Selbstverständnis,” 157; cf. Reiterer, “Vergangenheit,” 84.

27 Reiterer, 84.

28 Hieke, “Role of Scripture,” 65.

29 See also 1 Macc 3:7; 6:44; 9:10; 13:29; 14:4–5, 10, 35; 15:9.

30 Hieke, “Role of Scripture,” 71; Tomes, “Heroism,” 178; Blumenthal, “Hauptakteur,” 704–706.

31 See also later interpretations of this episode and references to Abraham having been tested ten times: Sir 44:20; Jdt 8:25–26; Jubilees; *Avot de Rabbi Nathan* 34; *Pirqe Avot* 5:4; Hieke, 65–66; Reiterer, “Vergangenheit,” 86–87; Hanneken, “Ten-Times-Tested.” The binding of Isaac (Akedah) recorded in Gen 22 is among the episodes of biblical exemplarity most commonly cited by later authors.

32 This alludes to Gen 15:6: “Abraham trusted in the Lord, and he counted this to him as a righteous act.” MT: והאמן ביהוה ויחשבה לו צדקה; LXX: καὶ ἐπίστευσεν Ἀβραμ τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.

33 Cf. Sir 44:19–21; Rom 4:1–12, 22–23; Gal 3:6–9; Jas 2:23. Note the “covenant” as a concept was not necessarily as important to ancient writers as it has been to modern interpreters: Bay and Bloch, “Abrahamic Covenant.”

(1Macc 2:53) refers to Mrs. Potiphar's attempts to seduce him and his subsequent imprisonment as punishment for spurning her lusty advances (Gen 39–45). Joseph remained faithful to God in these difficult circumstances.<sup>34</sup> The act of the ancestor Phinehas (1Macc 2:54) is not explicitly mentioned, but alluded to with a reference to his exemplary zeal (ἐν τῷ ζῆλωσάι ζῆλον). This concerns the story of Num 25, already mentioned in 1Maccabees in connection with Mattathias' refusal to perform a pagan sacrifice, an event which constituted ground-zero for the Maccabean rebellion.<sup>35</sup> Phinehas had famously quashed the idolatry and sexual intermingling of the Israelites with Midianite women during Israel's journey through the desert post-Exodus by killing the Israelite Zimri, who brought a Midianite woman to his tent and had sex with her (Num 25:10–18). This execution came to emblemize Phinehas's zeal for God and was interpreted as divine punishment, satisfying God's wrath toward the Israelites on that occasion.

The only example in the list whose biblical context is not immediately clear is David (2:57). The Greek phrase ἐν τῷ ἐλέει αὐτοῦ is ambiguous: the pronoun αὐτοῦ can be interpreted as a subjective genitive (referring to David) or as an objective genitive (referring to God).<sup>36</sup> Scholars have interpreted David's ἔλεος (the Hebrew equivalent is probably דַּוָּד) as a reference to his piety, his mercy, or his clemency.<sup>37</sup> It is striking that the text does not refer to David's exceptional military qualities, alluded to several times in the poem that honors Judas Maccabeus by paralleling him to David at 1Macc 3:3–9.<sup>38</sup> David's mercy becomes apparent in his treatment of Saul and Saul's family out of his love for Jonathan (2 Sam 9). His clemency is mentioned twice in his advice to his son Solomon (1Kgs 2:7–9).<sup>39</sup> And David responded with unrequited mercy to the

34 Hieke, "Role of Scripture," 66; Reiterer, "Vergangenheit," 88–89.

35 1Macc 2:26–28 explicitly alludes to Num 25 in 2:26; 1Macc 2:26: "Thus he [Mattathias] burned with zeal for the law, just as Phinehas did against Zimri son of Salu." Egger-Wenzel, "Testament," 143–145; Hieke, 66–67; Reiterer, 89–91.

36 The objective genitive is supported by certain phrases with דַּוָּד in the Hebrew Bible, but highly improbable in the context of our list, which requires a deed by David; see Bordreuil, "Graces de David"; differently Reiterer, 95–96.

37 Bordreuil, "Graces de David"; Hieke, "Role of Scripture," 67; Reiterer, 95–96; Schwartz, *1Maccabees*, 200–201.

38 Van Henten, "Song of Praise." On the later reception and expansion of this theme in the early-tenth-century history *Sefer Yosippon*, see Bay, "Reinventing the Hammer," 669–672.

39 The other deeds of the ancestors are these: Joshua (Josh 2:55) fulfils God's word, i.e., he fulfils his mission by becoming Moses' successor and leading Israel into the promised land (Josh 1, esp. 1:7); Caleb tells the truth when he reports about his scouting in Canaan in the congregation of the Israelites (Num 13–14, esp. 13:30); Elijah remained faithful to God after King Ahab had killed all of God's prophets (1Kgs 18–19) and his zeal is referred to in 1Kgs 19:10, 14.

attempts of his son Absalom on his life, much to the chagrin of his military commanders (2 Sam 17–19).<sup>40</sup> Any of these episodes could have been in the mind of 1 Maccabees' author (or readers) as epitomizing David's *ἔλεος*.

Using the paradigm presented in the previous section of our paper, one can see that the list of Jewish ancestors in Mattathias's farewell speech reflects each of the nine points discussed in the previous section. The role of Jewish Scriptures as the source for the list should be emphasized, because these *exempla* seem to presuppose a canon,<sup>41</sup> which functions as a kind of actively circulated memory that keeps the past of Israelite and Jewish history present.<sup>42</sup> Ancestral paradigms are chosen from the successive phases of this history, from the patriarchs (Abraham) to the judges (Joshua, Caleb) and the kings and prophets (David, Elijah) to the Judeans in exile (Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael, and Daniel). Mattathias' sons are presented to readers as the obvious continuation of this history. All they need do is live up to the exploits of their forefathers. The *exempla* in this list function, therefore, in an overtly Jewish setting and have a legitimating function for specific Jewish leaders: they present noble roles to assume, and a legacy to continue.

However, we should articulate what the adjective "Jewish" may mean in contexts like 1 Macc 2:51–60. In this passage, we may say that the specific national-historical record from which the *exempla* are pulled would only have been claimed, as it were, in antiquity by those who identified as Jews/Judeans. No non-Jewish Greeks or Romans would have gravitated toward them when scripting in-group discussions; indeed, it would have been surprising for a non-Jew to have known these figures at all (though Abraham was known to some extent). And of course, the exemplary figures of 1 Macc 2:51–60 are (proto-)Jewish figures being spoken about *by* Jews and *to* Jews in a narrative context. Yet, the *ways* in which these figures are deployed in Mattathias' speech—including the *exemplum* format and, to some extent, the virtue concepts to which these figures are attached—would have been recognizable and immediately intelligible to almost any literate ancient reader of Greek, as would the rhetorical packaging of these *exempla* in listed form. Thus, while the example list in 1 Macc 2:51–60 is "Jewish" in irreducible ways, it could also fairly be characterized as "Greek" or "Roman" or even "Greco-Roman" in that its format, terminology, and function are *not* distinctively Jewish features.

40 See, e.g., 2 Sam 18:5 (cf. 18:12), where David asks Joab, Abishai, and Ittai to "deal gently" with Absalom for his sake, and 2 Sam 19:1–8, where Joab rebukes David for his excessive mourning over Absalom's death.

41 With Hieke, "Role of Scripture," 74.

42 Assmann, "Canon and Archive," 98. See also Assmann, *Cultural Memory*, 149.

Finally, it makes sense to ask whether there is an overarching theme that connects all the above-mentioned *exempla*. Faithfulness to God could be the overarching idea, but this becomes explicit only in the examples of Daniel's companions from the court tale of Dan 3 (1 Macc 2:59).<sup>43</sup> It is implied, however, by Daniel's integrity or sincerity, referring to Dan 6, by the pious zeal of Phinehas and Elijah, and by Abraham and Joseph remaining faithful to God during trials.<sup>44</sup> The remaining *exempla* as well—Joshua, Caleb and David—could easily be fit into this “faithfulness” mold. If so, the *exempla* of 1 Macc 2:51–60 all convey a notion that, once again, simultaneously evinces distinctively Jewish and broader Greco-Roman aspects. Piety, faithfulness, and a focus on human-divine relations were tropes so common in the ancient Mediterranean world as to be mundane; yet the application of these commonplaces to the interface with the one Jewish God, and the singular shades of meaning that Jewish tradition imputed to what piety and faithfulness could mean, renders their deployment in passages like 1 Macc 2:51–60 necessarily “Jewish,” yet, again, not such as would be unrecognizable or unintelligible to the non-Jewish reader or hearer.

Moreover, the list of *exempla* in 1 Macc 2:51–60 seems to undergird a certain reasoning by analogy: those who remain faithful to God or the commandments of the Jewish law under difficult circumstances are rewarded by God. Most of these *exempla* come with such an implication in their respective source-texts. And God's support is made explicit in 1 Macc 2:61 (above). If Mattathias' sons follow the lead of their ancestors, they shall receive similar rewards from God. Some of these rewards clearly point to leadership positions (lord of Egypt, judge, eternal priesthood, eternal kingship). On this point, we may note that justifying leadership on the basis of deeds per se was characteristic of *all* known cultures in the ancient Mediterranean (and perhaps all cultures generally); while focused on *Jewish* history and leadership in 1 Macc 2, this *topos* is likewise paradigmatic across ancient Greek and Roman thought.<sup>45</sup> Successful deeds were indicators of legitimate rule. When 1 Maccabees says of Mattathias

43 Cf. MT Dan 3:28: *די התרחצו עלוהי* / Th Dan 3:95: *ὅτι ἐπεποιθείσαν ἐπ' αὐτῶ;* cf. MT Dan 6:24: *די הימן באלהה* / Th Dan 6:24: *ὅτι ἐπίστευσεν ἐν τῷ θεῷ αὐτοῦ.* Also LXX Dan 3:40: *τοῖς πεποιθόσιν ἐπὶ σοί;* Th Dan 3:40: *τοῖς πεποιθόσιν ἐπὶ σοί;* Heb 11:33–34; van Henten, “Reception,” 365–371. Reiterer, “Vergangenheit,” 76 and 83, identifies faith (“Glaube”) as the overarching theme for all *exempla*, which is not supported by the text (cf. the emphasis on *πίστις*, Latin *fides*, in Heb 11, listing many of the same heroes).

44 Daniel's companions remain faithful to God although that implies their death penalty, as narrated in Dan 3, and Daniel's integrity or sincerity (*ἀπλόγη;* cf. 1 Macc 2:37) refers to his decision to keep praying to God three times a day although that was forbidden, as Dan 6 tells us. Hieke, “Role of Scripture,” 67–71; Reiterer, 98–99; Schwemer, “Eiferer.”

45 Lebram, *Legitimität*; van Henten, “Royal Ideology.”

and his friends already in 2:47 that “the work prospered in their hands,”<sup>46</sup> he is applying a general principle to the Jewish past. The hymn of praise for Judah the Maccabee in 3:3–9 operates along similar lines. In highlighting that Judah “embittered many kings, but he made Jacob glad by his deeds and his memory is blessed forever” (3:7),<sup>47</sup> the passage is narrow in its focus on Jewish leadership and history yet broad in its instantiation of a dictum—“help friends and harm enemies”—that “pervades the whole of Greek literature from Homer to Alexander, and was a basic moral principle for determining behavior.”<sup>48</sup> The exemplarity of 1 Maccabees remains *specifically Jewish* in detail while appearing *broadly Greek* (or *Roman*, for that matter) in general.

Similarly polysemic is a final point: 1 Macc 3:7 echoes Mattathias’ statement that his sons will receive an everlasting name if they do what he says (2:51) and emphasizes Judah’s successful deeds. Some of the rewards received by the cited *exempla* provide precedent for the Maccabees’ legitimation as the new political leaders and high priests on the basis of their actions.<sup>49</sup> In Mattathias’ speech, in other words, we find a model for legitimating dynastic legacy couched explicitly in terms of ancestral *exempla*. Yet, while these *exempla* themselves and even the nature of their deeds bear an undeniably Jewish tint—something for which the adjective “Jewish” or an equivalent appears necessary—they rely upon a principle so common to the ancient Mediterranean world (and elsewhere) as to appear truly universal. The *Res gestae* of Augustus, for example, epitomize the commonplace of attaching claim-to-authority with things-done within the Greco-Roman sphere.

In the end, 1 Macc 2:51–60 represents an instance of exemplarity that (1) *must* be identified as “Jewish” *and* as “Hellenistic” in some way, (2) *cannot* be adequately described by one of these adjectives alone, and therefore (3) *must* be understood as both “Jewish” and “Hellenistic,” with appropriate aspects of nuance attached to each of those descriptors. Next, we will see in Josephus’ exemplarity another combination, similar yet different, of Jewish particularities with broader ancient Mediterranean generalities.

46 See more fully 1 Macc 2:42–48 and cf. 14:36 about Simon.

47 Also 1 Macc 3:4. Van Henten, “Song of Praise.”

48 Mitchell and Rhodes, “Friends and Enemies,” 11; see already Homer, *Od.* 6.182–185, and especially the dialogues involving Socrates, most quintessentially Plato’s *Republic* (1 332d–3, 334b–c, 335e, 336a, etc.), but see also, e.g., Xenophon, *Mem.* 2.6.35.

49 For Abraham, see Gen 15:6; for Joseph, see Gen 41:39–45; for Phinehas, see Num 25:11–13 (cf. 1 Macc 2:54; 14:41 and see Martola, *Capture*; Hieke, “Role of Scripture,” 67; Wilker, “Aufstandsführern”); Joshua’s rewards may be inferred from his success, fame, and long life (Josh 24:29–31; Judg 2:8; cf. Deut 34:9); for Caleb, see Num 14:24, 30, 38; Josh 14:6–15; for David, see 2 Sam 7:1–17 (cf. 1 Macc 3:3–4; 4:30; 14:41); for Elijah, see 2 Kgs 2:9–11; for Azariah, Hanaiah, and Mishael, see Dan 3:24–26; and for Daniel, see Dan 6:19–24.

## 4 Josephus' Jewish War 6.99–110

At *J. w.* 6.96, Josephus recounts a scene in which he begins speaking to the Jews in Jerusalem, at Titus' behest, in an effort to avoid the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple because of the Jews' continued resistance to the besieging Roman army. But the Jews within Jerusalem are, Josephus tells us, under the control of the tyrant (ὁ τύραννος) John of Gischala. When Josephus appeals to his people to spare the temple and city, John responds with "invectives and imprecations" (*J. w.* 6.98). Therefore, Josephus continues with an impassioned speech in a further attempt to change John's mind:

Yet, be sure, John, it is no disgrace to repent of misdeeds, even at the last; and, if you desire to save your country, you have a noble example set before you in Jeconiah, king of the Jews. He, when of old his conduct had brought the Babylonian's army upon him, of his own free will left the city before it was taken, and with his family endured voluntary captivity, rather than deliver up these holy places to the enemy and see the house of God in flames. For this reason a sacred story commemorates him for all Jews, and [his] memory, in a stream that runs down the ages ever fresh, passes him on to posterity immortal. A noble example, John, even were it dangerous to follow;

ἀλλά τοι, Ἰωάννη, καὶ μετανοῆσαι μὲν ἐκ κακῶν οὐκ αἰσχρὸν ἐν ἐσχάτοις καὶ καλὸν ὑπόδειγμα βουλομένῳ σώζειν τὴν πατρίδα σοι πρόκειται βασιλεὺς Ἰουδαίων Ἰεχονίας, ὅς ποτε στρατεύσαντι τῷ Βαβυλωνίῳ δι' αὐτὸν ἐκὼν ἐξέστη πρὶν ἀλῶναι τῆς πόλεως καὶ μετὰ γενεᾶς αἰχμαλωσίαν ὑπέμεινεν ἐθελοῦσιον ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ παραδοῦναι ταῦτα πολεμίοις τὰ ἅγια καὶ τὸν οἶκον τοῦ θεοῦ περιδεῖν φλεγόμενον. διὰ τοῦτο λόγος τε αὐτὸν πρὸς ἀπάντων Ἰουδαίων ἱερός ὑμνεῖ καὶ μνήμη ῥέουσα δι' αἰῶνος αἰεὶ νέα τοῖς ἐπιγινόμενοις παραδίδωσιν ἀθάνατον. καλόν, ὦ Ἰωάννη, ὑπόδειγμα, κἂν προσῆ κίνδυνος·

JOSEPHUS, *J.W.* 6.103b–107a (text/translation adapted from Thackeray)

During this speech, Josephus twice mentions a noble example that, he argues, John ought to follow. The referent is Jeconiah (or Jehoachin),<sup>50</sup> the king of

50 Jeconiah appears variously in the Greek manuscripts of *Antiquities* as Ἰωάκειμος (how his father also appears) or ἰωακείμ, ἰωάκιμος, ἰωάχιμος, ἰωαχίμ, ἰεχονία, or ἰεχονίας, an example from *Ant.* 10.98 in Niese, *Flavii Iosephi Opera*, 2.351. However, Niese (7.526) does not record the same variants for Jeconiah's mention in *J. w.* 6.103–107. Jeconiah/Jehoachin is only ever mentioned in *J. w.* 6.103 and *Ant.* 10.97–230 (nine different times; see Schalit, *Namenwörterbuch*, 65).



Judah who was famously captured and exiled from Jerusalem, with his family, by Nebuchadnezzar II, king of the Babylonians, in 597 BCE (2 Kgs 24:10–12).<sup>51</sup> In his first mention of the famous king, Josephus charges, and challenges, John: “if you desire to save your country, you have a noble example (καλὸν ὑπόδειγμα) set before you in Jeconiah, king of the Jews” (*J. W.* 6.103). Just as Jeconiah put people and country before his own safety, sacrificing himself and his family to save Jerusalem and the temple, so should John. John should stop fighting and abandon his cause to save his city and his people. After describing in historical detail Jeconiah’s selfless feat, Josephus sums up by stating that Jeconiah’s feat is held holy and kept in memory by all the Ἰουδαῖοι. Josephus’ argument here is a paradigmatic example of exemplary rhetoric, nestled within the typical literary context (for Greco-Roman antiquity) of a character speech within narrative prose. So: in writing this is Josephus doing a Jewish thing? A Greek thing? A Roman thing? The answer to all of these questions is “yes.”

To begin with, let us align Josephus’ exemplary discourse with our numbered framework laid out above. In this passage from the *Jewish War*, the example of Jeconiah is taken out of context (1), to persuade listener (and reader?) toward a particular course of action, i.e., the utility of surrender as a mechanism for saving people and city (2). The original story is not recounted *in toto* (3) as it appears in the Jewish Scriptures (4). Jeconiah’s example concerns one particular pericope (5). While his heroic deed is not attached to a particular principle like πίστις or εὐσέβεια, we should note that the lauded action itself has considerable overlap with certain Greek and Roman *exempla* but was performed in a distinctively (proto-) Jewish context (6).<sup>52</sup> Jeconiah’s example has overt patriotic significance (7), though it does not here appear in a list (8) nor does it seem to proffer a prototype (9). So, this *exemplum* appears quite typical for Greco-Roman *and/or* Jewish literature; the only facet of this exemplarity that is distinctively *Jewish* is the Scriptural/traditionary source of the historical *exemplum*. It differs from 1 Macc 2:51–60 in that no Greek virtue-terms are used and there is no list of *exempla* given, though the promise of (divine) blessing in exchange for noble action is present.

51 See 2 Kgs 24; 1 Chr 3:16–17; Est 2:6; Jer 24:1; 27:20; 28:4; 29:2.

52 The Roman notion of death on behalf of country is surveyed by Speidel, “Pro patria mori.” The Greek lionization of a patriotic death is famously depicted in the Battle of Thermopylae by Leonidas and the three hundred Spartans who resisted Xerxes (Herodotus 7.201–233). The theme is recurrent across Greek literature and a central aspect of Greek discourses of exemplarity, and is too well-known to belabor the point here. On these Greek notions of “glory in death,” see the older but excellent treatment in Evaristus, *Consolations*, 60–78.

The above *exemplum* could be rightly called “Hellenistic,” or “Roman,” or “Jewish,” within particular frames. But determining what these monikers can mean in this case is the point of the exercise. To begin with the obvious: Jeconiah was a “Jewish” monarch, a king belonging to Judean antiquity and therefore a specifically native *exemplum* (to borrow some language used by James Petitfils).<sup>53</sup> His legacy belongs to the Jewish Scriptures and his memory to Jewish culture, and his historical presence and action within Jerusalem locates his cultural and geographical valence as an example precisely within the context of Josephus’ speech: a conversation among Jews (in Hebrew/Aramaic, we are told at *J.W.* 6.97: διήγγελλεν ἐβραϊζῶν) right at the walls of Jerusalem, the very walls that the Babylonians had been besieging when Jeconiah made his salvific decision. Josephus nods to Jeconiah’s cultural specificity when he says that “sacred story” remembers—literally “hymns”—Jeconiah “for all Jews.” Josephus goes further with a metaphor when he says that “memory” (μνήμη), having flowed through the ages ever fresh, passes on Jeconiah’s legacy as an immortal heritage to posterity. Jeconiah epitomized the ideal of a patriot, dying so that Jerusalem might live.

Yet, as much as Josephus is clearly presenting an in-group or emic example to John and the Jews at this point in his narrative, the process of collective memory he describes resonates with broader ancient Mediterranean norms, and with contemporary scholarly understandings of them. Matthew Roller has recently described Roman exemplarity as a process of (1) action, (2) evaluation, (3) commemoration, and (4) norm setting.<sup>54</sup> Rebecca Langlands has categorized the same process in terms of (1) admiration/wonder, (2) comparison, (3) *aemulatio*, (4) modeling, (5) cognition, (6) discernment.<sup>55</sup> Whether one prefers the fourfold or the sixfold formula here (and we should note that these schemata do rather different things), one can see traces of these modern descriptions of a broader ancient practice—Greco-Roman, as it were—quintessentially outlined in Josephus’ use of Jeconiah. While some of the steps in the process are hidden from modern scholarly views—e.g., the move from action to evaluation and commemoration in Roller’s schema—Josephus is exhibiting a process of exemplarity that scholars like Roller and Langlands have identified in ancient Roman authors like of Livy, Cicero, Valerius Maximus, and others. Moreover, while no specific virtue-noun is linked to Jeconiah here, the theme under discussion—self-abnegation in an effort “to save the fatherland” (σώζειν

53 See Petitfils, *Mos Christianorum*.

54 Roller, *Models from Past*, 4; also applied to Hellenistic Jewish literature by Reed, “Construction,” 198–199.

55 Langlands, *Exemplary Ethics*, 88–89.

τὴν πατρίδα)—would have been as familiar and intelligible to the (Hellenistic or) Roman reader as to any Jewish listener. Indeed, the motif of substitutionary sacrifice was endemic to Roman exemplarity, as Langlands has shown regarding the legacy of Valerius Corvinus, whom Livy describes as undertaking single combat with a Gaul to spare the rest of his army.<sup>56</sup> Not coincidentally, Langlands dubs the Corvinus story “the Roman exemplum at its simplest and most archetypal.”<sup>57</sup> In his discussion of Jeconiah, then, Josephus was doing a *Roman* thing, but what we have seen in our case studies of Hellenistic-Jewish exemplarity is that what is “Roman” can also be “Greek” or “Hellenistic” and “Jewish” (or “Christian”) at the same time, but in slightly different regards.

Our Josephus case also complicates number (3) in our framework above for interpreting exemplarity. While the Jeconiah story is not *fully* retold by Josephus, he does retell a good portion of it to John of Gischala. But wait—John of Gischala was also a Jew, raised on the same stock of scriptural stories from the Hebrew Bible as Josephus had been. Why would he have needed Josephus to repeat the story? Presumably he would not have. When Josephus takes time in his speech to recall how the Babylonian army came upon Jeconiah in Jerusalem, and how he left the city volitionally, and how he underwent captivity with his family, he may well be writing to his non-Jewish Roman reading audience even as his character speaks to John within the narrative.<sup>58</sup> For the Roman reader will not have known who Jeconiah was, what he had done, and why that applied to the situation at hand. In the situation described at this point in the *Jewish War*, i.e., a conversation between two Jewish leaders, Josephus and John, might Josephus “in real life” not simply have told John, “follow Jeconiah’s example!” Would more have needed to be said? Of course, there is another way of interpreting Josephus’ recounting here, and it does not exclude the suggestion we have just made: that is, perhaps Josephus explains the story because he is interpreting it, attributing it a particular value, when he says that Jeconiah surrendered *in order to save the temple* and for that reason is *celebrated* in Jewish memory.<sup>59</sup> For the biblical authors do not say these things

56 Langlands, 73. In fact, this cultural motif is found across many societies.

57 Langlands, 17.

58 On Josephus’ audience, see recently Mason, “Josephus as Roman Historian,” standing toward the end of a long line of scholarship on this (still-live) issue.

59 This comports with the laudatory treatment of Jeconiah in *Ant.* 10.97ff., where the king is called “kind and just by nature” in *Ant.* 10.100, in contradistinction to his father, who “turned out to be unjust and wicked by nature, and neither reverent toward kind nor kind toward men” (*Ant.* 10.83) and who, e.g., persecuted the prophet Jeremiah and his scribe Baruch (10.93–95). Jeconiah is portrayed in *Ant.* 10 as a faithful monarch who falls prey to Babylonian treachery (10.99–102), and is sandwiched between two evil and/or foolish

about Jeconiah; at the very best they imply them. Thus, Josephus' seemingly superfluous provision of context for the Jeconiah *exemplum* could be a nod to his Roman readership and writing context, his recognition of the fluidity and contestability of *exempla* (something Langlands has discussed at length), or both.<sup>60</sup> If the latter, this demonstrates the power and contribution of exemplarity as a type of discourse to the reception and interpretation of Scripture or sacred texts among ancient Jewish writers.

We could complicate the picture a bit further by assessing Josephus' use of the Greek term *ὑπόδειγμα* to describe Jeconiah (which he only ever uses in the *Jewish War*), instead of the far more normal term *παράδειγμα* (which he uses exclusively in his *Jewish Antiquities*), but this discussion is best relegated to a more philologically-oriented study.<sup>61</sup> We could also complicate and ultimately enrich our approach to Josephus' particular brand of exemplarity at this juncture, but this discussion would likewise take us too far afield.<sup>62</sup> Better here to stick to discussing that which is and is not *exclusively* Jewish about

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monarchs, his father Joachim before and his uncle Zedekiah after. (Translations adapted from Marcus.)

- 60 It could at the same time signal Josephus' own deep reverence for Jeconiah as a monarch in his people's history who sacrificed himself on behalf of Jerusalem, a city whose latter-day destruction, helped by no such self-sacrifice, Josephus painfully witnessed. That Josephus held Jeconiah in high esteem is illustrated by his positive portrayal of him across *Ant.* 10. Not only does he describe his character in terms of praise, as mentioned above (*Ant.* 10.100), but he also repeats Jeconiah's virtues when recalling the redemption of his plight under Nebuchadnezzar II, whose successor Evil-Merodach freed and dealt generously with Jeconiah. Josephus adds to his re-telling of that biblical moment (2 Kgs 25:27–30) the following epilogue: "For his father had not kept faith with Jechonias when he voluntarily surrendered himself with his wives and children and all his relatives for the sake of his native city, that it might not be taken by siege and razed, as we have said before" (trans. Marcus, who notes the addition). Here Josephus again cites Jeconiah's exemplary deed, though without *-δειγμα* language.
- 61 See Glas, *Josephus' Self-Characterization*, 57; Bay, "ὑπόδειγμα to παράδειγμα"; and, more broadly, Bay, "Vocabulary."
- 62 Above we mentioned that Josephus uses Jewish and non-Jewish *exempla* from inside and outside of the Jewish Scriptures. Nor do all of the individual characters that come to embody some paradigmatic valence within Josephus' writings count as *exempla* according to the typical form of exemplarity discourse that we are assuming (in line with Roller, *Models from Past* and Langlands, *Exemplary Ethics*, and others). A number of interesting figures are singled out to star in what could be considered moralizing or ethically-didactic vignettes in Josephus' writings—one could think here of Maria from *J. w.* 6.201–213, Paulina from *Ant.* 18.65–80, or indeed any of the biblical figures who enjoy short substories within the *Jewish Antiquities*—but such subnarratives are quantitatively and qualitatively different from the *ex-empla* pulled out of context and introduced in brief, summary statements as object lessons or points.

*J.W.* 6.103–107. To do this, we return to a comparative analysis of this article's two case studies.

The *exemplum* employed by Josephus above is like the example from 1 Macc 2 in several ways: its referent is unmistakably Jewish (i.e., unknown in the wider Greco-Roman world), unmistakably patriotic, and an unmistakable application of biblical precedent to current situation. At the same time, Josephus' explanation of his *exemplum*'s scriptural context and the fact that it does not appear in a list distinguishes it from 1 Macc 2:51–60 as a different spin on the same brand of exemplarity, still Jewish yet geared more towards Roman environs (it is not just the explanation that could serve a Roman readership: the fact that Josephus avoids listing a series of ancient heroes that his readers have never heard of could also be regarded as a Roman-directed decision). Like 1 Macc 2:51–60, *J.W.* 6.103–107 *must* be conceived of as both “Jewish” and “Hellenistic” (and, indeed, “Roman”) on various levels; yet the levels on which this obtains are not identical to those that apply to the 1 Maccabees example. Thus, between our two case studies, there is enough variance to allow us to ask from broader interpretive questions, to which we now turn in conclusion.

## 5 Conclusion

The examples used above are apt illustrators of the topics under discussion because they are similar in their instantiations of an exemplarity that is at the same time both highly “classical” (i.e., Greco-Roman) in form and irrevocably Jewish in content. (We return to the form vs. content paradigm further below.) Moreover, our case studies also evince important differences between themselves. Thus, they have the potential to tell us characteristic things about “Hellenistic-Jewish exemplarity” and to demonstrate the diversity within that conceptual sphere.

While the examples of exemplary discourse present in 1 Macc 2:51–60 and Josephus' *Jewish War* 6.107–109 are not the same on every measure, they both expose important aspects of Jewish exemplarity as it manifested in the Hellenistic/Roman world. Both texts use the language of Hellenistic Greek, even as they proffer narratives of native Hebrew/Aramaic speakers ostensibly speaking Hebrew/Aramaic (Josephus said that he was, and Mattathias, famous for resisting the hellenization among his fellow Jews, can hardly be imagined as having uttered his dying words in Greek). Both texts use their *exempla* within oratory to prescribe and direct action in line with the norms of Greco-Roman exemplarity as described by contemporary scholarship (this kind of exemplarity does *not* appear in the Jewish Scriptures proper). Yet the values the two

texts speak to are not the same. The fixations upon monotheistic piety and eternity in 1 Macc 2:51–60 arguably strike a note of dissonance (though not unintelligibility) with the wider gentile culture of the time, whereas Josephus' Jeconiah example—an instance of surrender for the sake of country—will have been quite familiar to ancient non-Jews. And this makes some sense, as the readerships of the two texts are obviously distinct: Josephus claims explicitly to be writing to a non-Jewish readership after having penned something along the same lines to his native countrymen (*J. W.* 1.3), while it is difficult to imagine a non-Jewish reader appreciating or even reading 1 Maccabees at all.

Remembering that both texts survive in Greek, were written within a Hellenistic world coinciding with the late Roman Republic or early Roman Empire, and were written by and about Jews, if not exclusively to them, we can see that monikers like “Greek” and “Roman” and “Jewish” for describing the exemplarity in texts like 1 Maccabees and Josephus' *Jewish War* are both necessary and individually inadequate at the same time. Nor should we think that these texts are doing precisely the same thing just because they are drawing from the same biblical pool of ancestral *exempla*; and yet their genetic continuity within Jewish tradition is impossible to ignore as well. The internal discourse of exemplarity within Hellenistic- and Roman-era Judaism was diverse and variegated just like its Greco-Roman counterparts.<sup>63</sup> Thus, as research continues to examine Jewish (and Christian) exemplarity vis-à-vis Greco-Roman, scholars should be aware of the varying levels of sameness and difference that can obtain among early Jewish texts and/or between these and their non-Jewish counterparts. The scholarly enterprise of description and categorization requires that we recognize features or details of this discourse that are “Roman” or “Greek” or “Jewish,” but these adjectives and categories should not be assumed *ab initio* to carry exclusive connotations or adequate specificity and scope in and of themselves. We need category labels like these to render instances of exemplarity intelligible and approachable as socio-communicative artifacts with borders, edges, and singular features, yet in the context of ancient *Jewish* exemplarity we must beware not to take claims of uniqueness too far.

A reasonable way to conceive of the Hellenistic-Jewish exemplarity at work in 1 Macc 2:51–60 and *J. W.* 6.103–107 is as a kind of exemplarity that is *largely* Hellenistic in form and *basically* Jewish in content. But the form-versus-content paradigm is too neat to do justice to reality, hence the adverbial modifiers in the foregoing sentence. For the form of exemplarity we find in these texts is certainly typical of Hellenistic rhetoric, common to the Hellenistic milieu, and

63 On which see Langlands, *Exemplary Ethics*.

generally associated with the rhetorical-conceptual realities of the Hellenistic Greek/Roman world. Yet many of the component parts of exemplarity as it emerged and developed in Greek antiquity are shared by other cultures, languages, and literatures (e.g., the identification of culture heroes, their recollection vis-à-vis a particular event, and their use in public discourse are all common features of many cultures). By a similar token, the exemplary individuals and episodes cited by Josephus and the author of 1 Maccabees in our case studies were *Jewish*—the ancestors of Jews being talked about by Jews to Jews in imagined dialogical settings scripted by Jewish authors—but some of these figures were known outside of Jewish contexts (e.g., Abraham) and certainly the *types* of figures/deeds/virtues embodied in these *exempla* existed in non-Jewish thought and literature as well. Overall, then, one important takeaway from our case studies is the methodological necessity for us to hold descriptors like “Hellenistic” or “Greek/Roman” and “Jewish” loosely enough to allow for their fluidities, fuzzy borders, and overlaps with other descriptors while still recognizing their capacity to mark that which appears to be distinctive, which is their primary semantic function.

As with so much within Hellenistic- and Roman-period Judaism in particular, the discourses of exemplarity found in texts like 1 Macc 2:51–60 and Josephus’ *Jewish War* 6.103–107 share a striking amount in common with the ideas, texts, and discourses of the wider ancient Mediterranean cultural landscape. These passages are clearly artifacts of Hellenistic antiquity. Yet one cannot but describe them as “Jewish” in some fundamental sense(s), nor adequately describe them without examining them within a *Jewish* traditional framework. The *exempla* plied in our passages exhibit the same flexibility and multivalence as *exempla* as used by other ancient Mediterranean authors, but the distinctive characters, values, and assumptions of the exemplarity exhibited in 1 Macc 2:51–60 and *J.W.* 6.103–107 suggest that these passages represented a subcultural milieu whose inclusion within broader discussions of exemplarity can enhance and complicate the picture. Moving forward, then, scholarship must adopt a self-conscious ethic of nuance, detail-orientation, and care as it seeks to—and it should—integrate Jewish texts and traditions into the larger, multidisciplinary discussion that is the study of exemplarity in Mediterranean antiquity.

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