

A Reading from the Second Book of Maccabees

Judas [the ruler of Israel]

**then took up a collection among all his soldiers,
amounting to two thousand silver drachmas,
which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an
expiatory sacrifice.**

**In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way,
inasmuch as he had the resurrection in mind;
for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again,
it would have been superfluous
and foolish to pray for the dead.**

But if he did this

**with a view to the splendid reward
that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness,
it was a holy and pious thought.**

Thus he made atonement for the dead

that they might be absolved from their sin.

The Word of the Lord