

**JUDAS MACCABÆUS,  
AND THE JEWISH WAR  
OF INDEPENDENCE**

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Judas Maccabæus, and the Jewish War of Independence by Claude Reignier Conder

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**CLAUDE REIGNIER CONDER**

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# JUDAS MACCABÆUS

AND THE  
JEWISH WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

BY

CLAUDE REIGNIER CONDER, R.E.

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"Can these bones live?"

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NEW YORK  
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS  
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1883

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## P R E F A C E .

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THE story of the life of Judas Maccabæus forms one of the most important episodes in Jewish history, if only because it explains how the nation first developed that peculiar phase of character which marked it at the time when Christianity was given to the world.

The sources of historic information upon which I have mainly relied in the following pages are the First Book of Maccabees and the Antiquities of Josephus. The Second Book of Maccabees being generally considered to be far inferior in value to the first, and its statements being sometimes in direct contradiction to the more ancient accounts, has contributed only some of the picturesque details with which it abounds.

These authorities, however, furnish little beyond the dry bones of history. Some attempt has, therefore, been made in this volume to render the story more vivid by aid of description of the scenes in which it was laid, and of the contemporary social

Reed. Jan. 9 '28 B.F.

and religious life of the Jews. The Talmudic information is mainly derived from the well-known edition of the Mishna by Surenhusius; and the account of the country is due to the advantages I enjoyed during the survey of Palestine, when I was able to visit more than once each of the battlefields of Judas.

Finally, I have attempted to give a slight sketch of those results of the great struggle which appear most important in relation to general history, and especially as connected with the origin and growth of Christianity.

C. R. C.

GUILDFORD, 17th May, 1879.

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COIN OF ANTIÖCHUS EPIPHANES.

## JUDAS MACCABÆUS.

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### INTRODUCTION.

#### FROM EZRA TO JUDAS.

**J**UDAS MACCABÆUS is the central figure of one of the most important periods of Jewish history—a time when the nation struggled successfully to attain independence, and during which the germs of the later Jewish religious development first appeared, and the foundation was laid of that condition of Jewish society which existed in the time of Christ.

The public career of Judas extends only over eight years, and the work he commenced was left to his brothers and their descendants to carry out; yet the name of Judas stands out more distinctly than that of any other leader of the age, and Jewish historians of later times have ever loved to magnify his doings, even at the expense of the later Hasmoneans, whose actual achievements were more important.

It cannot, however, be said that this high estimate of Judas is unjust. The later conquests may have been more extensive, and the position of the later native Jewish princes may have been more independent and politically stronger. But it was Judas who first dared to withstand the foreign tyranny which threatened to annihilate the Jewish faith, and it was the genius of Judas which first pointed out the measures, military and political, by which independence might be best preserved. The later Hasmoneans merely carried out the designs of which Judas was the original author, and he may, therefore, be justly regarded as the father of Jewish freedom.

In the following pages, I have attempted not only to narrate the bare facts of the short career of Judas, but also to give a sketch of the gradual development of the nation during the period of independence, from Ezra to the Herodian age, with some account of their habits of life, their manners, and their religious contests and tendencies, and with an estimate of the true value of the achievements of Judas, as influencing the later history of the Jews. From a study of the condition and habits of the nation, we obtain a clear view of the immediate causes of the revolt, and the real importance of the struggle will be seen to lie in the development of the national character and religion, which was the result of the freedom obtained by the efforts of Judas.