

**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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"Can these bones live?"

NEW EDITION

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BY

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PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION.

THE First Edition of "Judas Maccabæus" appeared in 1879, and was well received. During the fourteen years that have followed I had not had occasion to look at its pages, until the present edition was called for; but I am glad to find little to correct, though much might be added. During this interval I have revisited many of the scenes described; have lived in Moab, and have ridden through the oak woods of Gilead. In the resting times, between more active years, I have had occasion to study more completely the subjects touched on in this volume, and further discoveries in Palestine have cast some new light on the period. Our main sources of knowledge, however, remain the same—the First Book of Maccabees, and the Antiquities of Josephus.

In calling the books of the Bible by those names by which they were known to Judas and his contemporaries, I do not wish to express any opinion as to modern criticism regarding their dates or authorship. I speak of them as a Jew in Maccabean times might

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be supposed to have done. I have been unable to understand the force of the argument which would make so large a proportion of the Hebrew Psalms of Maccabean date, and very much doubt whether such Hebrew could then have been written. The Aramaic, which was spoken in the second century B.C., has found its way into the Books of Ezra and Daniel; and the Hebrew of the Mishnah contains a large infusion of Greek and Latin words, just as Esther, at an earlier period, contains Persian terms. On the other hand, the literature which does belong to the first and second centuries B.C., especially Ecclesiasticus, contains much that equals in beauty and nobility of thought even the finest passages of Isaiah and of Job.

No mention has been made of a curious palace, built by the priest Hyrcanus in Gilead before 176 B.C.; but I have fully described it in my Memoir of the Moab Survey, and in my volume on "Heth and Moab." It is remarkable as showing the Greek influence in this remote region. Much of the ornament is classic, and the figures of lions (as described by Josephus and as still existing) were contrary to the Law. The masonry was larger than that of Herod's Temple at Jerusalem, and finished with the sunken draft to the stones, which is of Greek, not of Phœnician origin. The Aramaic text on the rock close by is in the same alphabet used on the Has-

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monean coins of the age. No Greek inscriptions are known in Palestine, or in Syria, which are as early as the time of the Hasmoneans, except on coins such as those of Alexander Jannæus ; but Greek pottery has of late been found by excavation, which may be even earlier. The Greek language was extensively used throughout these regions before the Christian era, and was adopted by the Romans in the East. This is why the later Jewish books, the Gospels, and the works of Josephus, were written in Greek, the *lingua franca* of Western Asia about the time of Christ. The palace of Hyrcanus is, however, the only dated building of the Hasmonean age which remains to illustrate the earlier Greek influence.

In describing the temple at Jerusalem I have relied mainly on the Mishnah ; and the masonry and arrangements of the courts are those which we know to have belonged to the temple in the time of Herod. I doubt if any of the present outer walls of the Haram can be supposed older than his time ; but Herod did not himself build the inner courts, or the Holy House, which were restored and enlarged by the Jewish priests. The masonry of the palace of Hyrcanus shows us that the Greek finish to the stones was already adopted in 176 B.C., so that it may very probably have marked the temple masonry in the time of Judas.

A warning is also needful with respect to the

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"Book Zohar," mentioned in connection with the Kabbala. A book so named was attributed to a Jewish writer of the second century A.D.; but the work usually so called, which is the main source of Kabbalistic lore, has been shown to have been written in the thirteenth century A.D. At the same time Kabbalistic ideas are of very great antiquity. They are traceable even in cuneiform texts, and were common to Jew and Gnostic in the second century of our era. Kabbalistic scrolls of early date have been excavated; and Kabbalistic bowls from Babylon are supposed to be at least as old as the fourth century A.D. The Kabbalistic book *Jetzira*, or "Creation," is supposed to be of the ninth century A.D.

As regards Samaritan literature confusion is often made, even by Hebrew scholars, between the "Samaritan Chronicle" (published by Dr. Neubauer in 1869) and the Samaritan "Book of Joshua" (published by Juynboll in 1848), which also is often called "The Samaritan Chronicle." Both these works I possess and have studied. The former was begun in 1149 A.D., copied and continued by another priest two centuries later, and carried down to 1859 by later hands. It is a very sober work, and contains valuable information as to the Samaritans of the seventh century A.D. The "Book of Joshua" is a wild legendary book, the earlier part of which was written