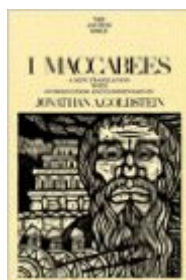


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I Maccabees (The Anchor Bible, Vol. 41)



Synopsis

"The Apocryphal book of I Maccabees (Volume 41 in the acclaimed Anchor Bible series) is an inspirational thriller." With the help of God, the aged priest Mattathias and his sons--Judas Maccabaeus, Jonathan, and Simon--dramatically lead the Jews of Judaea first to victory and then to freedom against the formidable successors of Alexander the Great. Their struggles begin in guerilla warfare, responding to the terrible persecutions decreed by King Antiochus IV, and courageously accomplish their first great triumph--still celebrated in the festival of Hanukkah. The Introduction to this volume considers not only I Maccabees, but also the parallel accounts found in II Maccabees and shows that the two authors of I & II Maccabees wrote with passionate conviction to teach two sharply opposed points of view. In some cases their convictions blinded them to the truth, but Professor Goldstein renders their teachings accessible to the modern reader and reconstructs what really happened, making valuable contributions to Greek and Roman as well as to Jewish history. Nineteen maps and diagrams set the scene of the dramatic struggle and the troubled times described in I Maccabees.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The late Jonathan Goldstein was a genius in many ways, though he didn't play by academic rules and to some extent has been ignored by academics. At least they affect to ignore him, but mine his notes privately, and will be doing so for some time to come. They ignored him because he didn't hobnob and incessantly quote others, and largely kept to himself in Iowa, I gather. First let's make

sure we know what we are reading here: These two books (1 and 2 Macc; Anchor 41 and 41A) are for scholars and the scholarly public; it would be wonderful if more Christians and Jews knew the history of the first two centuries BC, a period which 'gave birth' to both religions, but Goldstein is not writing popular history or a popular commentary here. The books are full of daring and fascinating hypotheses concerning the details of the historical reality behind the narratives of 1st and 2nd Maccabees, Josephus, Daniel 7-12, parts of Enoch and parts of the Testament of Moses. He dates the apocalypses of Daniel 7-12 from this time, with critical scholars of all types and against fundamentalists of many types. And he dates the relevant parts of Enoch and TestMoses from this time as well, though this is not universally held. He is not interested, as Martin Hengel or some other scholars were, in stating an overarching thesis about Hellenism and the Jews, though he shares some observations with Hengel. Goldstein, more thoroughly than anyone before or since, elucidated the relations of these texts to one another, and to Livy, Polybius, Diodorus, fragments found in the Church fathers, and many other sources. Many of his conclusions are unlikely, but he was still a genius.

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