

W. STEWART MCCULLOUGH is Professor Emeritus of the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of Toronto.

From the time of Cyrus to the time of Herod, except for a brief period of independence in the second and first centuries BC, Judea was subservient to either the Persians, the Hellenistic kingdoms, or the Romans. Only in the area of religion did the Jews maintain their freedom almost without interruption. Their greatest tangible achievement in these centuries was in literature. During this period Israel's Scriptures emerged in their final form, summing up a thousand years of Israel's religious history and becoming the foundation of all subsequent Judaism and of early Christianity. This book examines Jewish history against the background of the successive kingdoms which controlled Judea.

The author discusses the political situation in Judea and the social and economic conditions in so far as we can know them, and the early literary and religious developments. He then moves on to a discussion of the literature of the second and first centuries BC: the scholarly and pietistic traditions, apocalyptic and historical writings, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the completion of the canon. A brief general bibliography is appended.

The author makes excellent use of the sources available, and assesses them with a finely critical eye. He writes not only for students of early Judaism, but also for the general reader.

An extremely concise, well-organized, and succinct account of its subject. *Choice*

W. STEWART McCULLOUGH

THE HISTORY
AND LITERATURE
OF THE
PALESTINIAN
JEWS
FROM CYRUS
TO HEROD

550 BC TO 4 BC

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