

P R E F A C E

This book is the result of an idea. That idea is that there is a positive relationship between the Maccabees and the Zealots. Josephus comes into the picture because he asserts the contrary, i.e., the Zealots began *de novo*, having no connection with the Maccabees.

How was the idea first conceived in the mind of the author and how did he come to write a book about it? It all began in one of Professor C. H. Dodd's New Testament seminars on the Fourth Gospel in Cambridge in 1949. The passage under discussion was the triumphal entry. Someone raised the question why John's account included a reference to palm branches. There flashed before my mind's eye the image of an oriental monarch seated in majestic splendor, being cooled by slaves waving huge fan-shaped palm branches. One train of thought led to another and I wondered whether the palm branches could have been symbols of royalty.

Later, as I was in the process of checking this possibility, I stumbled upon another. For in the course of looking up information on the use of palm branches in the ancient world, I noted that they were used in the triumphal processions into the temple by Judas and Simon Maccabeus. The parallels between these triumphal processions and the triumphal entry of Jesus seemed worthy of further attention, and so I read on. I was struck with the Maccabees' concern

for cleansing the temple as a loose but significant parallel to Jesus cleansing the temple. When I found that these parallels were not cited in the New Testament commentaries, I was stimulated to dig deeper. I pored over I and II Maccabees to see what else I could learn. Finally, some one put me on to Josephus to find out what had happened between the time of the Maccabees and the New Testament period.

It was while I was reading Josephus that the light began to dawn and that the idea which has inspired this book was born. As I was reading his description of the events leading up to the outbreak of war between the Jews and the Romans, I found myself following the activities of Josephus' Fourth Philosophical Sect, his brigands, his seditious, his Sicarii, and his Zealots and thinking that these people were doing and saying the same kind of things that the Maccabees had done and said. Then I noticed how frequently the leaders of seditious activity against Rome bore the same names as the early Maccabees—Mattathias, Judas, John, Eleazar, Jonathan, and Simon. The inference was irresistible. There must have been some kind of positive connection between these patriots of the Roman period and the earlier Maccabees.

This thrilling first venture into the realm of biblical research culminated in a paper which was read before Professor Dodd's seminar and which after significant revision was subsequently published as a note in the April, 1952, issue of the *Journal of Theological Studies*.

For the next three years this one idea was to dominate my life, and those who knew me during that period must have often wondered whether I would ever recover from a severe case of what my wife affectionately termed "Macca-bitis." In 1952 I submitted a doctoral dissertation on this subject to the Faculty of Union Theological Seminary. The substance of that piece of research is contained in this book,

though the whole has been revised, some material having been added, some condensed, and some omitted.

Since 1952 the Dead Sea Scrolls have come to dominate the scene of biblical studies and have focused the attention of scholars upon the same period of Jewish history covered in this book. For this reason alone it seems timely to publish the results of my research. Moreover, there seems to be a growing willingness on the part of New Testament scholars to take a fresh look at the historical Jesus. I have been particularly impressed with the way in which scholars like Oscar Cullmann and Amos Wilder in recent works have shown a readiness to see Jesus against a realistic religious-political background.¹ If this marks a new trend in New Testament scholarship, then this book should prove very timely indeed. For in determining the relationship between Jesus and the Jewish patriots (or Zealots) of his day, it is a matter of the greatest importance to know whether those patriots were secularly motivated, as Josephus portrays them, or religiously motivated, like the Maccabees before them.

If the reader desires to taste some of the fruit of this study before he plows through the main sections of the book, let him turn directly to Chapter VIII, where he will find certain suggestions which have occurred to me concerning the implications of this work for New Testament studies. It must be emphasized that the views expressed in this chapter are in no sense final. They are intended to do no more than indicate the kind of new insight into old problems which may come once one begins to look at the Gospel records from the point of view that Jewish nationalism in the New Testament period was deeply motivated by Jewish piety. It should be added that the importance of this book does not depend upon the persuasiveness of the sug-

¹ Oscar Cullmann, *The State in the New Testament*; Amos Wilder, *Otherworldliness and the New Testament*.

gestions made in Chapter VIII (others may be prepared to make better suggestions) but upon the persuasiveness of Chapters IV, V, and VI.

Chapters I, II, and III state the case and prepare the reader to hear the evidence. Chapters IV, V, and VI argue the case. Chapter VII deals with the bearing of the Dead Sea Scrolls upon the subject under discussion, and Chapter VIII seeks to open up some of the possible implications of the book for New Testament studies.

While this book has been written with New Testament scholars in mind, I have not been unmindful of the fact that it will be of general interest to Jewish scholars as well, and I sincerely hope that it will be received by them as a labor of love in the Lord's vineyard inspired only by a concern for truth and motivated by no conscious bias other than that which may grow out of a sympathetic identification of the author with the Jewish nation in its struggle for survival against great world empires. One would have to be callous indeed not to respond to the heroic dimensions of this struggle whatever his ultimate judgment upon its meaning might be. I have not sought to make any ultimate judgment in this book. One day I hope to write an account of the struggle in which I may venture to do this from the perspective of my own tradition. Meanwhile, I should be very pleased if my work were to stir interest in a reexamination of the origins, basic causes, and significance of the war with Rome. Such a reexamination could conceivably provide a basis for new conversations between Christians and Jews, since scholars are becoming increasingly aware of the decisive effect which this war had upon both the Church and the Synagogue.

In Cambridge, in addition to Professor C. H. Dodd other members of his seminar to whom I am especially indebted for helpful suggestions are the late Wilfred Knox, the late S. A. Cook, Peter Katz, W. F. Flemington, J. Y. Campbell,

and David Daube. I also remember gratefully a student friend, Ernest Goodrich, who gave freely of his time and talent as a New Testament scholar.

At Union Theological Seminary, during a period of three years, Professors Fredrick C. Grant, John Knox, and James Muilenburg gave generously of their time and learning in helping me to formulate the idea I had brought from Cambridge into a convincing thesis. Each in his own way made an invaluable contribution. Whatever scholarly merit this book may have is in no small part due to their unsparing efforts in my behalf. Certainly, whatever defects it has cannot be laid to any failure of theirs to hold before me at all times the highest standards of critical achievement.

The courteous assistance of the staff of Union Theological Seminary library I gratefully acknowledge.

I especially wish to thank Mr. and Mrs. Carl Cochran, without whose kindly cooperation the publishing of this book would not have been possible.

Also I am deeply grateful to the Administration of Drew University and to my colleagues in the Bible Department of Drew Theological Seminary for the encouragement I have derived from the interest they have shown in the publication of my work.

Above all, the patience, understanding, and helpfulness of my wife has been indispensable to the successful completion of my task.

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