

Judean Independence

1 Maccabees 10:51 – 15:41

by Don Falkos

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The charlatan Alexander ruled Syria for only a few years before he was killed. Even an alliance with the Ptolemies of Egypt didn't help sustain his kingship. In fact, they were the ultimate cause of his downfall. Demetrius II Nicator became the next leader in the Seleucid dynasty. For years to come, the power in Syria shifted back and forth between his descendants and those of Alexander Epiphanies.

In the meantime, Jonathan rose in power and esteem. He was constantly engaged in battle for the protection of Judea. When Jonathan died, his only remaining brother, Simon, became the next ruler in the Hasmonean dynasty.

Demetrius Nicator recognized Judea as a sovereign nation and Simon as its rightful ruler. After so many years of strife, Judea was finally at peace.

Simon was a brilliant leader who was engaged in a constant struggle for the betterment of the nation. He had high hopes and worked hard to realize them. He removed idols from the land, performed cleansing rituals on its behalf, and encouraged the people to obey the Law of God. He stood up for the poor, the needy, the outcast, and the marginalized. He fought against corruption and lawlessness. He made alliances with Rome and Sparta. He was a trustworthy man, and the people were pleased to have him as their high priest, the commander of their armies, and the ruler of their nation.

With Simon in charge Judea was at peace, and for the first time in many years its people experienced great joy.