



Exploring Jewish Literature of the Second Temple Period: A Guide for New Testament Students (Christian Classics Bible Studies)

By Larry R. Helyer

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From the crisis of the Babylonian exile to the rise of rabbinic Judaism--a span of over six hundred years--the Jewish people produced a wealth of literature that lies outside the Hebrew Bible. Today it goes under names such as apocrypha and pseudepigraphy, Josephus and Philo, apocalyptic literature and the Dead Sea Scrolls, Mishnah and targums. But line by line, scroll by scroll, it represents the history and theology, the hopes and prayers of a living and diverse Judaism. It is an engrossing subject in and of itself, but for students of the New Testament it offers an invaluable context for understanding the words and actions of Jesus as well as the conversion and thinking of Paul. *Exploring Jewish Literature of the Second Temple Period* is an introduction to this literature and places it within its historical context. Riding the explosive growth of knowledge of this period, Larry R. Helyer guides students to the heart of the matter. What were the pressures and realities, the questions and dreams that nurtured and provoked these written expressions? And how does this literature throw light on the text of the New Testament and origins of Christianity?

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Editorial Review

Review

"In this comprehensive and well-informed volume, Larry Helyer provides an exemplary introduction to the world of Second Temple Judaism, its history and its literature. What is distinctive about Helyer's work is his deliberate reading of this material with the New Testament in mind. In so doing he is able to show how deeply Jewish the New Testament is and how knowledge of this material can enrich our reading of the New Testament. This book is impressive not only for the high quality of its scholarship but also for its exceptional clarity and judiciousness. Especially commendable are Helyer's positive attitude to things Jewish and his adamant rejection of anti-Semitism. Highly recommended!" (Donald A. Hagner, George Eldon Ladd Professor Emeritus of New Testament, Fuller Theological Seminary)

"There are many useful books on Second Temple Jewish literature, for which reason I nearly passed this book by. But once I began actually examining it, I recognized the thoroughness of Larry Helyer's acquaintance with the sources and how carefully he has prepared this book with New Testament students in mind. I believe it will provide an excellent resource for those who want access to the most important materials for New Testament study." (Craig S. Keener, Professor of New Testament, Palmer Seminary)

"The literature of Second Temple Judaism is so vast that few college or seminary students ever receive a decent introduction to it at all. Here, in one volume, are references to judicious samplings from every major corpus, complete with introduction and background, and detailed explanation of relevance for New Testament studies. A wonderful gift for students and professors alike. Perhaps many will now actually teach, and teach substantially, on the topic!" (Craig L. Blomberg, Distinguished Professor of New Testament, Denver Seminary)

About the Author

For twenty nine years Larry R. Helyer was professor of biblical studies at Taylor University in Upland, Indiana. Now retired, he continues to write on theological topics and serve as an adjunct professor in the United States and abroad. He is the author of *Exploring Jewish Literature of the Second Temple Period*.

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