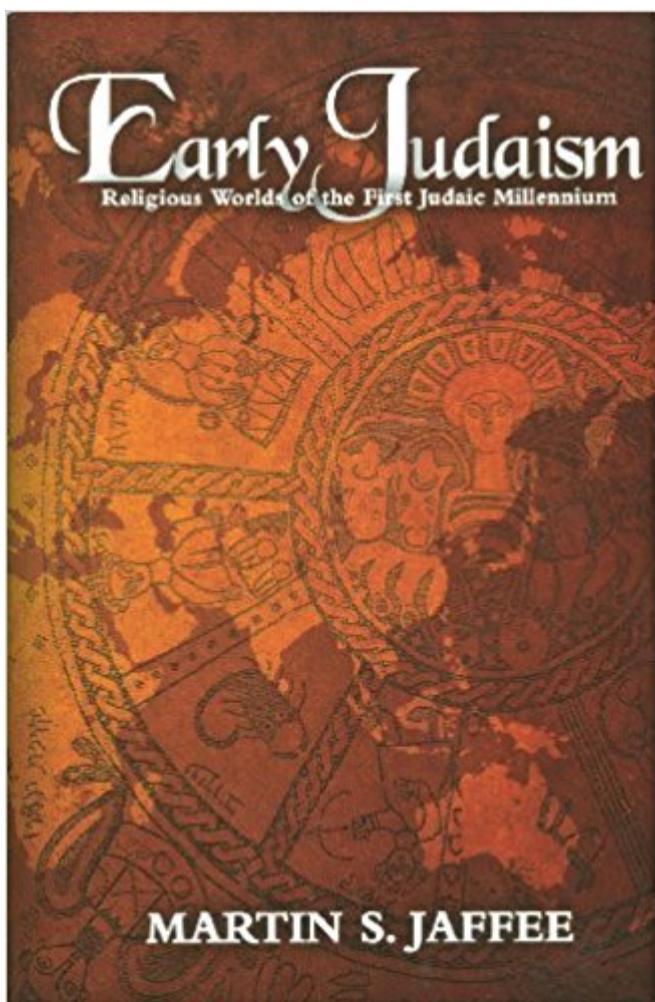


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Early Judaism: Religious Worlds Of The First Judaic Millennium (Studies And Texts In Jewish History And Culture)



Synopsis

This book introduces the complex reality of Judaism in ancient times using an approach grounded in the interdisciplinary framework of the comparative study of religions. The aim of the book is to immerse students in theoretical problems regarding the interpretation of religious life as they master the diverse details of the forms of Judaic religion that thrived in antiquity. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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This book is extremely well-written and covers ancient Judaism from the earliest times up through the beginnings of merkavah mysticism in the Talmudic period. It's not a huge book, and one might think it too slender to effectively cover the topic. But the writing is economical and very readable, and the opinions presented are contemporary and take advantage of the latest scholarship. The first edition is out of print. Be sure to get the second edition of this book -- Early Judaism: Religious Worlds of the First Judaic Millennium (Studies and Texts in Jewish History and Culture).

Still going through it.

I first read this book when I was a rabbinical student, and it taught me two important lessons at once. The first was grounded in the content of the book. Early Judaism is an accessible yet thorough presentation of the issues and ideas that contended for legitimacy against the backdrop of the Roman occupation and eventual destruction of Jerusalem. The second lesson I learned was that it was possible to write about complex religious and historical content in a clear, accessible, even personable voice. This book helped influence my own subsequent writing, as a congregational rabbi, and later, as an author. I can't recommend it highly enough!

After reading Reza Aslan's "The Zealot", the author suggested I read this book. What a terrific idea. "Early Judaism" offers an in depth look at Judaism 500 BC through approximately 500 AD. You get a feeling for what Judaism was like before the destruction of the second Temple, how the Temple functioned, and the roots of modern Judaism. No surprise: what exists now, and the faith/practices of modern Judaism, is vastly different from what existed 2,500 years ago.

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