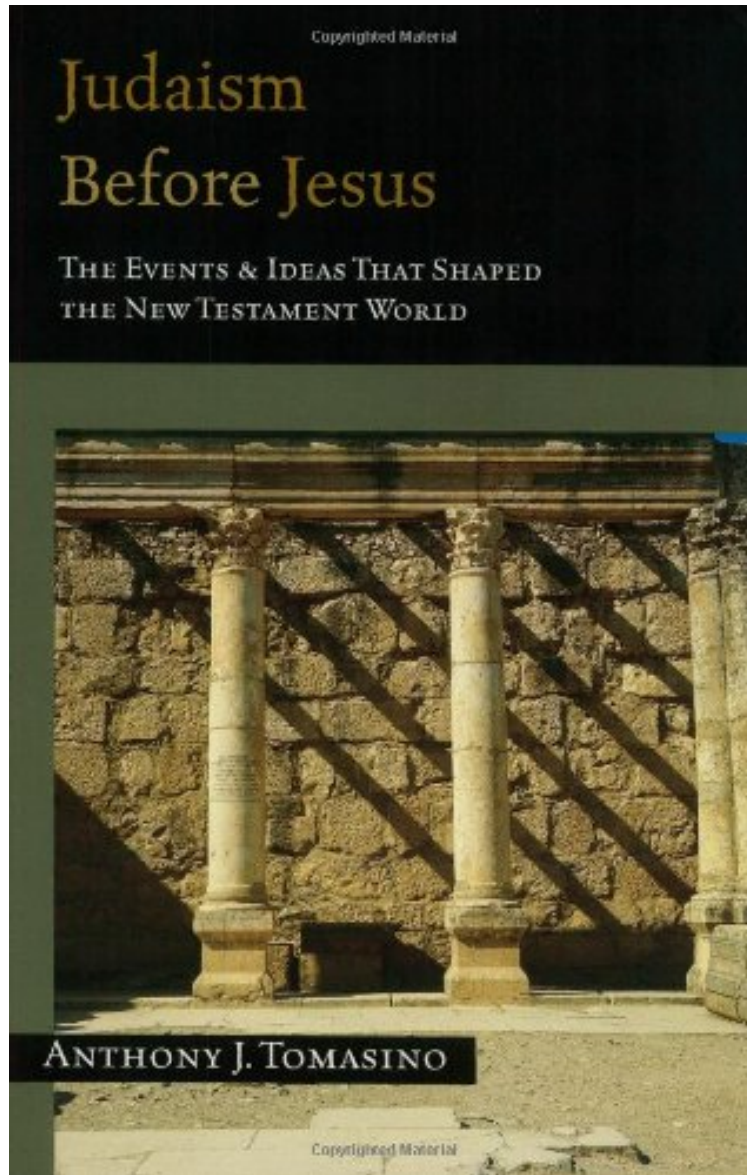


[Free] Judaism Before Jesus: The Events Ideas That Shaped the New Testament World

Judaism Before Jesus: The Events Ideas That Shaped the New Testament World

Anthony J. Tomasino

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Anthony J. Tomasino : Judaism Before Jesus: The Events Ideas That Shaped the New Testament World before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Judaism Before Jesus: The Events Ideas That Shaped the New Testament World:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great summaryBy J. C. ChengExcellent overview of the second

temple period. The author goes to introduce many aspects of the Jewish culture and politics and sentiment through its journey from the Persians, Greeks and the Seleucids and Ptolemies, to the Romans. This was great to understand Judaism and the context of the NT. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An excellent guide to understanding Jesus in his own context as his listeners would have understood Him. By Customer This is a well written book and it's in lay terms not professional theological or archeological jargon. I believe I cannot understand what Jesus was saying unless I can hear it with the ears and understanding of first century CE Jews. This book is one of the better I've found. I don't even have the necessary background in Torah to get the allusions and references that his listeners would have recognized and understood so I must rely on scholars who do. I'm grateful to find this book. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An easy read, but only partially satisfying to a Christian reader. By Brett D. McLaughlin Tomasino's book gets a lot of good reviews. I think they're merited, but I also think those reviews are as much a negative rating of most historical works that cover the intertestamental period (from around 400BC to 6 or so AD) as they are of Tomasino's work. That aside, he writes well, and is more engaging than many purely historical writers. He also formats the book well--there's a main line and then lots of sidebars. Additionally, the sidebars stand alone, and are good flip-through material even after reading the main line. Tomasino is probably also going to appeal to many non-Christians who are casual historians, simply because he rarely takes a strong Christian position. He assumes to a large degree the truth of the Bible, but never seems theologically bent. In fact, he often discusses the heavy cultural and mythical influences he sees in both secular and non-secular works of the time, as well as the Bible itself. This lends some degree of credence to his work, and probably argues that he's done his homework and really is trying to appeal to a large audience. Unfortunately, for a Christian--and especially a conservative one who reads the Bible as truth, rather than an amalgamation of stories--this creates some negatives. Tomasino keeps Jesus and Scripture at arm's length, and there are times where his belief in Scripture seems tentative. The Bible is often treated as an important historical source, simply a weightier Antiquities or Against Apion. Finally, Tomasino is so obviously familiar with this period that his writing is sometimes difficult to follow. There are a lot of characters, obviously, and keeping up with them is non-trivial. History is always resplendent with names, but Tomasino could go a little further in making sure the absolute minimum are in view at any one time, making it easier to follow. All that said, this is still a good introduction, and a readable one at that.

Turning the page from Malachi to Matthew, we skip a lot of history. In fact, it is something like missing several key episodes in an ongoing television saga. The setting and main plot line are familiar, but new characters have appeared and more recent events and developments are assumed. Did anyone record the episodes we missed? Fortunately a few did. Their reception wasn't always good, and there are annoying cuts and splices. But Anthony J. Tomasino has put together the missing episodes and skillfully retells the story of Judaism before Jesus, from the time of Ezra and Nehemiah to the Herods, and even up to Masada. The result is an entertaining, informative and enlightening retelling of the story of Judaism and the development of the ideas, subplots and characters that shaped the world of Jesus and the first Christians.

"Judaism Before Jesus is an incisive, well-written introduction to a period crucial to understanding not only the New Testament but the entire Bible, since this is the time of the formation of the Old Testament canon. Tomasino skillfully guides the reader through the maze of sometimes confusing events and literary and material culture of these years, accurately reflecting scholarly consensus while leaving no doubts about his own views. He often shows where scholars have not yet figured things out, a critical requirement of any honest treatment. This is one of the very best overviews of Judaism in the time of Jesus that I know. I plan to use it in my own teaching. But Judaism Before Jesus is not just for students. Tomasino strikes that difficult balance between substance and presentation that all authors explaining their specialties pursue yet few accomplish. This book is just a great read." (Michael O. Wise, Northwestern College)"In Judaism Before Jesus, Anthony Tomasino offers beginning students and general readers a lucid and lively introduction to the Jewish background of the New Testament. In his preface he says, 'This book has been written for readers who wouldn't know an apocalypse from an apostrophe, or a Hyrcanus from a hurricane. It's an introduction for the uninitiated.' In my opinion, he hits a home run. Here is a skillful digest of a huge amount of information presented in engaging prose. Readers will appreciate his anticipation of basic questions and issues that arise in reading the New Testament, a feature often neglected by scholars. A glossary and pronunciation guide enhances the usefulness of this text. Especially commendable is Tomasino's sensitive treatment of the relationship between Christians and Jews. I highly recommend this book." (Larry R. Helyer, Taylor University)"Anthony Tomasino's Judaism Before Jesus delivers what it promises. This book is the introduction to the world of the New Testament that beginning students can read and understand. It will make an excellent textbook for any New Testament course. I recommend it enthusiastically." (Craig A. Evans, Acadia Divinity College)About the Author Tomasino (Ph.D., University of Chicago) is ordained as a minister in the United Methodist church. He currently serves as Director of the Biblical Studies Program and associate professor of Bible, Old Testament and Hebrew studies at Bethel College in Mishawaka, Indiana. A scholar of ancient Judaism, he is also the author of Written Upon the Heart: The Ten Commandments for

Christians Today.