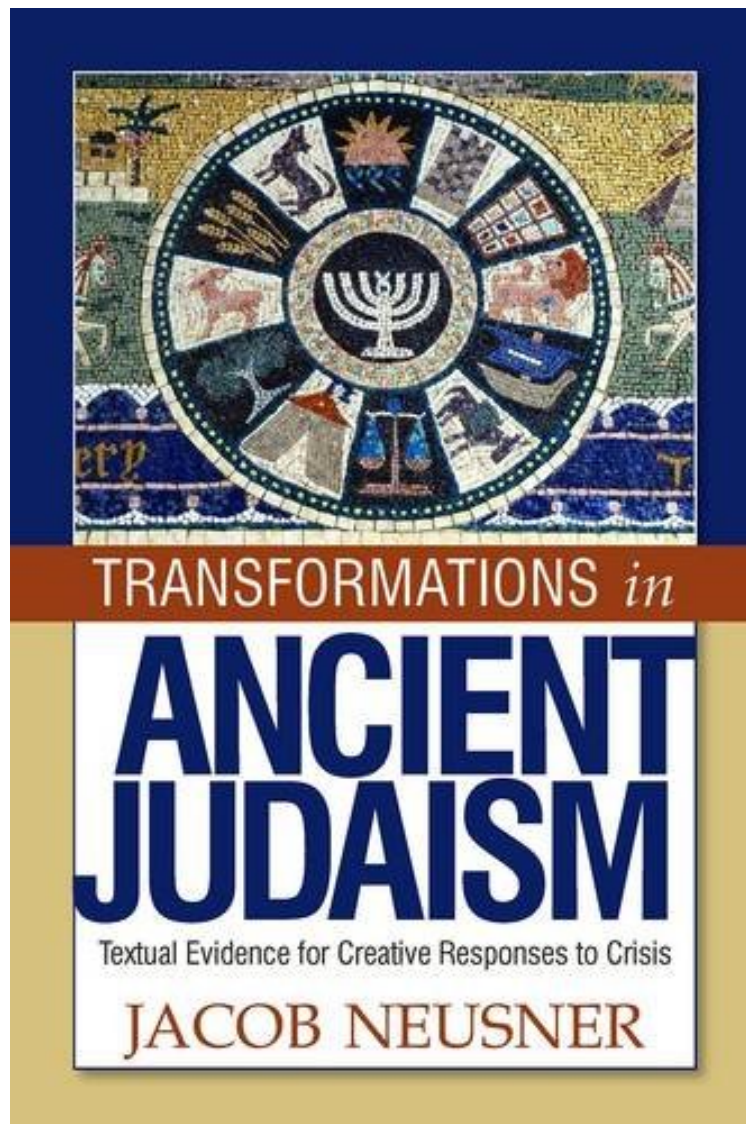


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Transformations in Ancient Judaism: Textual Evidence for Creative Responses to Crisis

Professor of Religion Jacob Neusner PhD
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Professor of Religion Jacob Neusner PhD : Transformations in Ancient Judaism: Textual Evidence for Creative Responses to Crisis before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Transformations in Ancient Judaism: Textual Evidence for Creative Responses to Crisis:

The Jewish people endured three crises during the formation of what would become the Jewish canon, which significantly shaped their religion. The destruction of Solomon's Temple by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C.E., the destruction of Herod's Temple by the Romans in 70 C.E., and the acceptance of Christianity as the state religion of Rome in 363 C.E. each signaled the apparent end of Jewish religion. Instead of succumbing to defeat and despair, Judaism arose from each crisis as a result of its religious leaders' reinterpretation of its sacred texts. In "Transformations," Jacob Neusner reasons that the Jewish canonical writings—the Hebrew Bible, Mishnah, Talmuds, and the Midrash—illustrate Judaism's response to those three social, cultural, and political crises. Faced with these catastrophic events, the rabbinic sages explored anew the paradigms of piety and practice that they had received from previous generations. The result was that they discovered a truth both continuous with the past and responsive to the unanticipated crisis—a truth that carved out a path for the future. This process, represented in the Jewish canon, continues to define modern Judaism."

Jacob Neusner's "Transformations in Ancient Judaism" is a masterful presentation of the conclusions of his studies, over the course of more than twenty years, of the documents of ancient Judaism in their historical settings. Building on the recognition that religion is a public phenomenon—an act of shared culture—Neusner recounts the development of subsequent Judaic systems as they respond to the major challenges of ancient Jewish history. This is not a dry history of religious systems preserved in documentary records; it is a dramatic history of religious geniuses overcoming catastrophe—a story of how hope overcomes despair. David Kraemer, Joseph J. and Dora Abbell Librarian, Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics, Jewish Theological Seminary

About the Author: Jacob Neusner is Research Professor of Religion and Theology and Senior Fellow of the Institute of Advanced Theology at Bard College. He has published more than nine hundred books and innumerable articles, and he is editor of "The Dictionary of Judaism in the Biblical Period" and the three-volume "Encyclopaedia of Judaism." In addition to his Rabbinic Midrash, he has translated the Mishnah, Tosefta, and both the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmud into English.