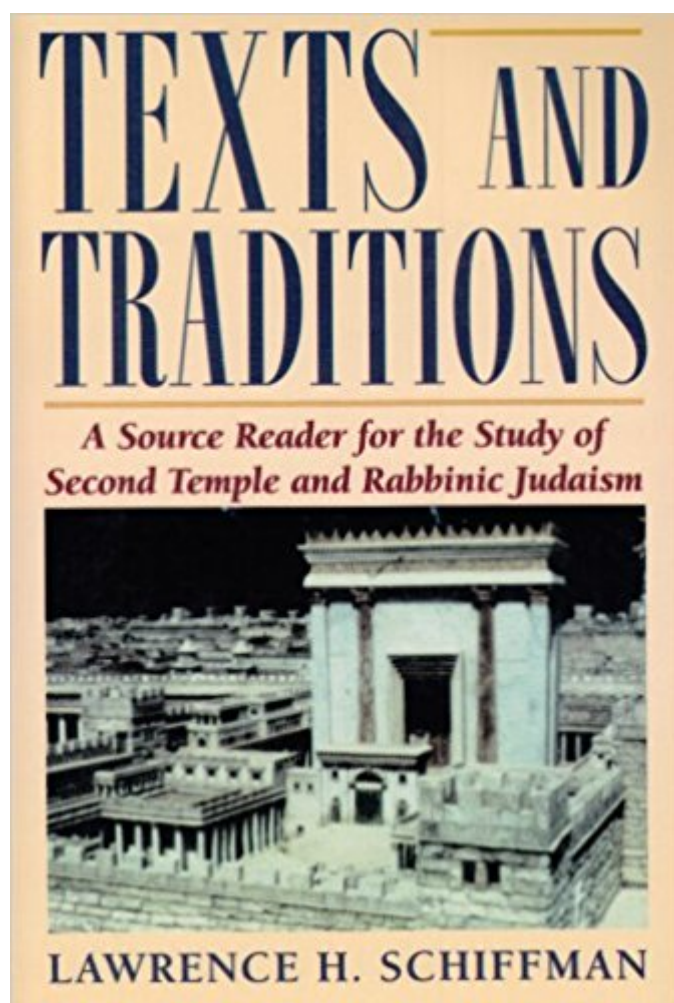


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Texts And Traditions: A Source Reader For The Study Of Second Temple And Rabbinic Judaism



Synopsis

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Book Information

Paperback: 777 pages

Publisher: Ktav Pub Inc; First Edition edition (November 1997)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 088125455X

ISBN-13: 978-0881254556

Product Dimensions: 1.8 x 6.2 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.4 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 7 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #71,858 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #18 in [Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Religious Studies > Judaism](#) #48 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > History](#) #57 in [Books > History > World > Religious > Judaism](#)

Customer Reviews

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I have been teaching Jewish Studies at the college and high school level for ten years, and this is the most helpful primary source anthology for the 2nd Temple Period. As a primary text anthology, there is little instruction as to what the texts mean, as that is intended to be covered in Schiffman's companion book. But as a teacher, there is no book I use more to prepare lessons, and this makes a perfect (and affordable) textbook for a college level 2nd Temple Period course. We have extended excerpts from all parts of the Hebrew and Christian Bibles alongside of contemporaneous materials from Josephus, Apocraphya, wisdom literature, and sects. In addition, the excerpts from the Talmud and Mishna are invaluable: included are all of the more famous passages, such as the Hillel-Shammai debates, Achnai's Oven, and the 13 Midrashic principles, as well as more obscure and fascinating material, for example debates over canonization of Song of Songs, or the imperative that it is forbidden to write down Oral Torah (which is nevertheless written down as Mishnah and Gemara). The only drawback of the anthology is that all of the texts are in English, with no bilingual passages. But the translations are very good. This book makes an outstanding gift for Hebrew School teachers and Jewish education professionals. It is, as well, an excellent textbook for a Jewish Studies course, as long as the teacher supplements the texts with explanatory materials. I

am amazed at how few rabbis and teachers are aware of this book, and treasure the copies I give them.

This book is a great book if you find source on how Judaism is formed in ancient antiquity.

Everything has been handled well. Now for the book. This is an exceptional book to add to my research material.

This was purchased as a required textbook. The readings are from primary sources so, enough said. If you aren't particularly interested in the subject then you should definitely go to class so aid in your understand of the placement of these documents.

This book is a must have for your library if you are interested in Second Temple Judaism. Nothing else comes close for in depth scholarship, or for magnificent organization. Here's one small example: looking up how the oral and written laws were regarded by Jews. From Josephus: (Antiquities) "What I would now explain is this, that the Pharisees have passed on to the people a great many observances handed down by their fathers, which are not written down in the law of Moses. For this reason the Sadducees reject them and say that we are to consider to be obligatory only those observances which are in the written word, but need not observe those which are derived from the tradition of our forefathers." (297) From Philo: (The Special Laws) "Another most admirable injunction is that nothing should be added or taken away, but all the laws originally ordained should be kept unaltered just as they were... For customs are unwritten laws, the decisions approved of men of old, not inscribed on monuments nor on leaves of paper which moth destroys, but on the souls... Praise cannot be duly given to one who obeys the written laws, since he acts under the admonition of restraint... But who faithfully observes the unwritten deserves commendation, since the virtue which he displays is freely willed" iv 143-150. Also included, selections from Mark, the Megillat Ta'anit, the Babylonian Talmud and the Sifre Deuteronomy. And this is only on the subject of the written and unwritten laws. Absolutely the best on the market.

I am using this book for a class on the History of the Second Temple Period in Israel. It is a required text, so I had no choice. The book presents a good selection of texts, although it does not include some that I would have included. It also jumps around in a strange order that I can't completely figure out. You can't use it without a good instructor or another text to set the texts in context and

give the historical framework. I also have Schiffman's From Text to Tradition which is supposed to do this but I don't find it very readable. There are better treatments of the material.

I had prof. Schiffman as my teacher for this text. While it is fairly comprehensive, it seems to have excess and be mostly useful if Schiffman is teaching you. I would not recommend it unless it is being used in a college level course.

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