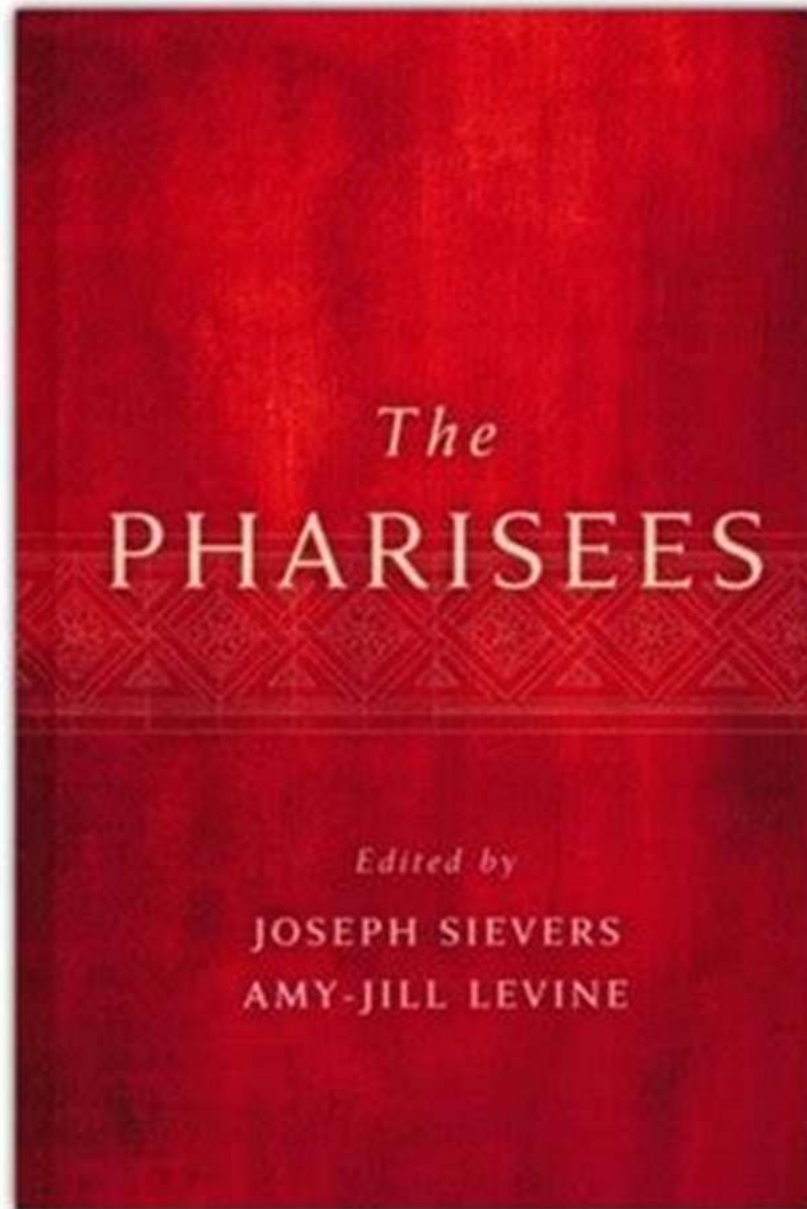


The Pharisees: Revealing the Truth Behind the Legend

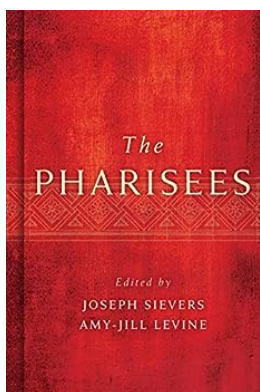


The Pharisees, a Jewish religious group that existed during the time of Jesus, have been a subject of fascination and controversy for centuries. Much of what we know about them comes from ancient texts and historical accounts, but is there more to uncover? In this article, we delve into the world of the Pharisees,

dissecting their practices and beliefs, and shedding light on the groundbreaking research of one expert: Dr. Amy Jill Levine.

The Pharisees: A Historical Journey

The Pharisees were a prominent religious sect in ancient Judaism. They were known for their strict adherence to the Torah and meticulous observance of Jewish law. While often depicted in popular culture as hypocrites or legalistic dogmatists, this portrayal fails to paint a complete picture of this influential group.



The Pharisees by Amy-Jill Levine (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 7940 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 668 pages



The origins of the Pharisees can be traced back to the Second Temple period, around 538 BCE to 70 CE. During this time, Judaism underwent significant changes, and the Pharisees emerged as a distinct movement within the broader Jewish community. Their teachings emphasized the importance of personal piety, religious purity, and ethical conduct.

Challenging Misconceptions: Amy Jill Levine's Research

Dr. Amy Jill Levine, a renowned professor of New Testament Studies at Vanderbilt University, has dedicated her career to studying the Pharisees and their role in

shaping ancient Judaism. Her groundbreaking research challenges the prevailing misconceptions surrounding this group.

According to Dr. Levine, the Pharisees were not merely legalists obsessed with ritual purity. They were deeply committed to social justice, compassion, and inclusive interpretation of Jewish laws. Their teachings encouraged ethical behavior and the pursuit of righteousness, making them a significant force in shaping the moral fabric of society.



The Pharisees: Religion, Politics, and Conflict

The Pharisees often found themselves at odds with other Jewish sects and Roman authorities due to their strong commitment to upholding Jewish traditions. They fiercely resisted the Hellenization of Jewish culture and the influence of Roman rule. This led to tensions and conflicts, with key figures like Jesus frequently engaging in debates and exchanges with Pharisaic leaders.

However, Dr. Amy Jill Levine argues that these conflicts were not as clear-cut as commonly portrayed. She contends that Jesus and the Pharisees had more in common than meets the eye. Both groups shared a commitment to interpreting Jewish law with compassion and promoting social justice. This nuance challenges traditional narratives that pit Jesus against the Pharisees as opposites.

Uncovering Forgotten Narratives

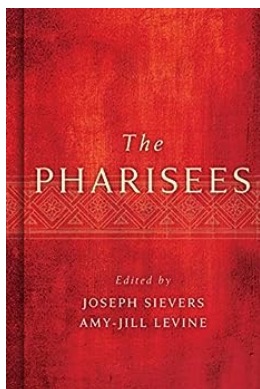
One of Dr. Levine's most significant contributions to Pharisaic studies is her emphasis on inclusivity. She highlights the role of women in the movement, breaking the notion that the Pharisees were exclusively male. Her research sheds light on the participation of women in studying and teaching Jewish law, providing a more accurate portrayal of the Pharisaic community.

Moreover, Dr. Levine explores the diversity of beliefs within the Pharisaic movement. Contrary to the common perception of a monolithic group, she uncovers the existence of different schools of thought and theological perspectives among the Pharisees. This nuanced understanding allows for a richer exploration of their influence on ancient Judaism.

Continuing the Legacy: The Relevance of Pharisaic Studies Today

The study of the Pharisees holds great significance for contemporary society. Their emphasis on compassion, social justice, and inclusive interpretations of religious texts resonates in the modern world. Understanding the Pharisaic movement not only enhances our knowledge of ancient Judaism but also informs and inspires discussions on religious tolerance, ethical behavior, and the pursuit of righteousness in today's diverse societies.

Dr. Amy Jill Levine's contributions to Pharisaic studies have opened up new avenues of exploration, challenging traditional narratives and providing a fresh perspective on this mysterious and influential religious group. Her research paves the way for a more nuanced understanding of the Pharisees, highlighting their positive impact on ancient society and their lasting relevance in our contemporary world.



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A multidisciplinary appraisal of the Pharisees: who they were, what they taught, and how they've been understood and depicted throughout history

For centuries, Pharisees have been well known but little understood—due at least in part to their outsized role in the Christian imagination arising from select

negative stereotypes based in part on the Gospels. Yet historians see Pharisees as respected teachers and forward-thinking innovators who helped make the Jewish tradition more adaptable to changing circumstances and more egalitarian in practice. Seeking to bridge this gap, the contributors to this volume provide a multidisciplinary appraisal of who the Pharisees actually were, what they believed and taught, and how they have been depicted throughout history.

The topics explored within this authoritative resource include:

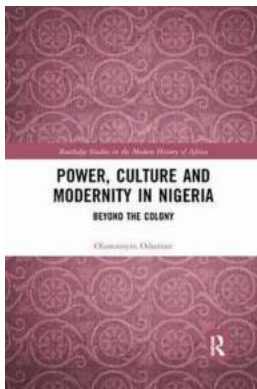
- the origins of the Pharisees
- the meaning of the name “Pharisee”
- Pharisaic leniency, relative to the temple priesthood, in judicial matters
- Pharisaic concerns for the Jewish laity
- Pharisaic purity practices and why they became popular
- the varying depictions of Pharisaic practices and beliefs in the New Testament
- Jesus’s relationship to the Pharisees
- the apostle Paul and his situation within the Pharisaic tradition
- the question of continuity between the Pharisaic tradition and Rabbinic Judaism
- the reception history of the Pharisees, including among the rabbis, the church fathers, Rashi, Maimonides, Luther, and Calvin
- the failures of past scholarship to deal justly with the Pharisees
- the representations, both positive and negative, of the Pharisees in art, film, passion plays, and Christian educational resources

- how Christian leaders can and should address the Pharisees in sermons and in Bible studies

Following the exploration of these and other topics by a team of internationally renowned scholars, this volume concludes with an address by Pope Francis on correcting the negative stereotypes of Pharisees that have led to antisemitic prejudices and finding resources that “will positively contribute to the relationship between Jews and Christians, in view of an ever more profound and fraternal dialogue.”

Contributors:

Luca Angelelli, Harold W. Attridge, Vasile Babota, Shaye J. D. Cohen, Philip A. Cunningham, Deborah Forger, Paula Fredriksen, Yair Furstenburg, Massimo Grilli, Susannah Heschel, Angela La Delfa, Amy-Jill Levine, Hermut Löhr, Steve Mason, Eric M. Meyers, Craig E. Morrison, Vered Noam, Henry Pattarumadathil, Adele Reinhartz, Jens Schröter, Joseph Sievers, Matthias Skeb, Abraham Skorka, Günter Stemberger, Christian Stückl, Adela Yarbro Collins, and Randall Zachman.



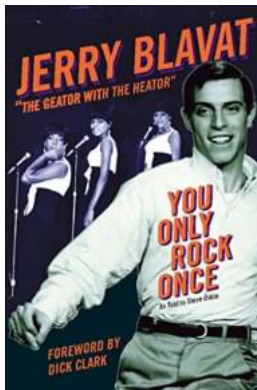
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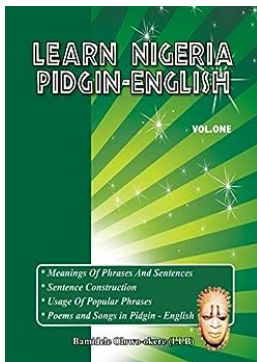
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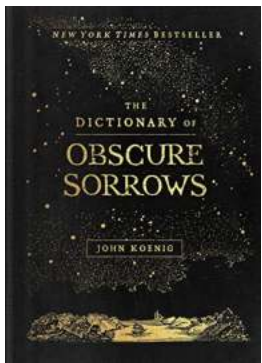
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