

Though essentially simplistic, the picture this book presents is one that is being increasingly upheld in both popular and academic venues. For that reason, the book deserves reading and active engagement.

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The Emergence of Judaism: Classical Traditions in Contemporary Perspective, by CHRISTINE HAYES. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011. xvi + 183 pp. \$34.00.

In our era of interreligious understanding and, more often, misunderstanding, useful guides to the religious beliefs, attitudes, and practices of other people are desirable. Hayes's brief introduction, a revision of her 2007 volume on the same topic, with additional material for students, offers such a guide. Though brief, the work traces the main contours of Israelite religion as it developed into rabbinic Judaism, while the final chapter sketches Judaism under medieval Islamic rule and in modernity. The book's useful mix of historical data (in timelines as well as the main text) with discussions of key ideas at different periods gives students much to discuss. The study questions at the end of each chapter provide starting points for student research, though a good teacher will need to supplement them in significant ways. Moreover, the presentation of different primary texts in sometimes large quotation boxes enriches the book by illustrating the claims made about those texts in Hayes's main discussion.

Anyone who has taught survey courses in Judaism knows that finding appropriate textbooks presents serious challenges. Most available volumes either assume too much or too little, and some unhelpfully reflect the idiosyncratic views of their authors rather than the state of Jewish studies. Hayes manages to account for the most current scholarship on both the Bible and rabbinic texts (a welcome corrective to the caricatures that Christian students often learn about ancient Judaism). However, this volume is so brief that any teacher will have to augment it with many other texts, both primary and secondary. A religion class in high school or early stages of university, or perhaps an advanced church Bible study, would be the ideal audience. Another liability may be the appearance of the book: many younger readers will find its bichrome graphic design old-fashioned and uninviting, a point on which the publisher has not served the author well. In short, then, the book will not teach itself, but a skilled teacher could use it profitably. In particular, students in Christian universities, who desperately need skillful introductions to other major religions, would profitably use Hayes's book as a starting point for a lifelong exploration of the richness of Jewish thought and practice.

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