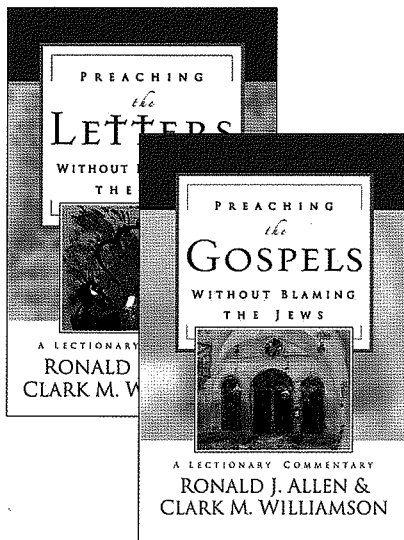


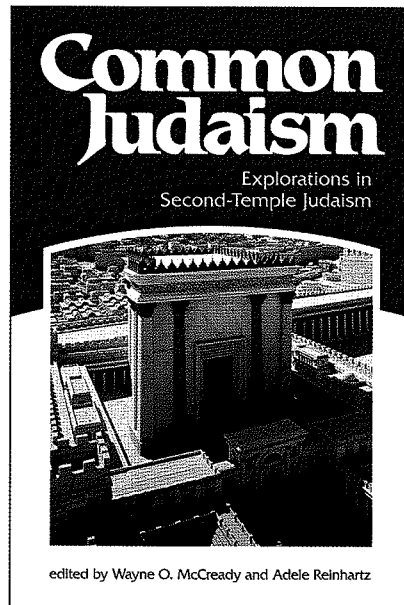
all the main areas of difficulty; the Gospels as Jewish literature, supersessionism, the Pharisees and the Law, the Gospel of John and the Passion narrative. In each area she shows how Christianity does not have to define itself over and against Judaism as so often in the past. As she says, 'The revelation of God's love in Jesus Christ does not depend on... an inadequate grasp of God's love in Judaism'. Extracts from actual sermons illustrate key points, and any preacher who has struggled with interpreting difficult passages is likely to find inspiration here.



Allen and Williamson's two Lectionary Commentaries follow the Gospel and Epistle readings, respectively, for Years A, B and C of the Revised Common Lectionary. For each reading there is a page of notes drawing attention to ways the theme of a passage is continuous with the theology, values and practice of Judaism or showing how it has been used to promote an anti-Jewish message and providing suggestions for handling it more faithfully. Both books will be valuable for the time-pressed preacher who seeks to bear true witness about Judaism.
FHulbert

Book Review: Common Judaism: Explorations in Second-Temple Judaism
Edited by Wayne O. McCready and Adele Reinhartz

Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 2011
HB p 306 £23.99
ISBN: 978-0-8006-9867-6



This fascinating and insightful collection of essays builds upon an earlier volume by E.P. Sanders entitled *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63 BCE – 66 CE* (1992). In that work, Sanders argues that, despite the well-known diversity of first-century Judaism, 'ordinary' Jews practiced a 'common Judaism' centred on temple, synagogue, and home. This collection of essays builds on Sanders's insights in order to explore both the consistency and the variety of first-century Judaism.

The book is divided into three parts. Part 1 considers common Judaism in its local settings. The second group of essays looks specifically at the intersection between the lived religion of the ordinary people and the major sects and parties. The final group focuses on the Hellenistic and Roman contexts of common Judaism, examining the impact of the broader social, political and cultural context on common Judaism.

There is much to commend in this volume, including several essays whose resonance extends beyond historical inquiry. In particular, Part 2 contains several essays with deeply resonant insights for modern day Jewish-Christian relations. For example, Albert Baumgarten's essay on reassessing the place of the Pharisees offers an important corrective to the view in which one's posture towards the Pharisees plays a large role in determining attitudes toward Jews and their religion as a whole, while Anders Runesson's fascinating study of the Matthean community shows how a misunderstanding of the immediate socio-historical context of the community, out of which the Gospel was written, has led to disastrous consequences in the history of Jewish-Christian relations. Also of interest is Anne Moore's essay on the common understanding of the concept of the Kingdom of God amongst Jewish writers and the historical Jesus, along with Ian Scott's important essay on the development of two diverse approaches to religious epistemology as different responses to the shared social conflict which confronted the Jewish communities of that time.

Overall, this is a fine collection that is a valuable resource for scholars, students, and especially those interested in delving deeper into the historical development of Jewish-Christian relations.

Sinnes