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# The Jewish Teachers of Jesus, James, and Jude: What Earliest Christianity Learned from the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

*David A. deSilva*

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Jews have sometimes been reluctant to claim Jesus as one of their own; Christians have often been reluctant to acknowledge the degree to which Jesus' message and mission were at home amidst, and shaped by, the Judaism(s) of the Second Temple Period. In *The Jewish Teachers of Jesus, James, and Jude* David deSilva introduces readers to the ancient Jewish writings known as the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha and examines their formative impact on the teachings and mission of Jesus and his half-brothers, James and Jude. Knowledge of this literature, deSilva argues, helps to bridge the perceived gap between Jesus and Judaism when Judaism is understood only in terms of the Hebrew Bible (or "Old Testament"), and not as a living, growing body of faith and practice.

Where our understanding of early Judaism is limited to the religion reflected in the Hebrew Bible, Jesus will appear more as an outsider speaking "against" Judaism and introducing more that is novel. Where our understanding of early Judaism is also informed by the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, we will see Jesus and his half-brothers speaking and interacting more fully within Judaism. By engaging critical issues in this comparative study, deSilva produces a portrait of Jesus that is fully at home in Roman Judea and Galilee, and perhaps an explanation for why these extra-biblical Jewish texts continued to be preserved in Christian circles.

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