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Hurtado's "Ancient Jewish monotheism and early Christian Jesus-devotion: The context and character of Christological faith" (book review)

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Book Reviews



Hurtado, L.W. (2017). *Ancient Jewish monotheism and early Christian Jesus-devotion: The context and character of Christological faith*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press. 676 pp. \$39.95. ISBN 9781481307628

Larry Hurtado is well-known among New Testament scholars for his stress on the origins of early devotion to and worship of Jesus by his early followers. Since Jews were monotheistic, it is important to understand how the first Christians could worship Jesus, with seminal works such as *Lord Jesus Christ*. The present volume of thirty-two essays span forty years of research on the origins of the early high Christology that the first Christians quickly developed, contrary to the assertions of many who argue for a slow, evolutionary development of Christology. Hurtado's focus is always on historical analysis. Hurtado cautions readers to note the date of publication of the various essays because more recent works overlap with and show development of his thought. The essays are divided into four parts: "The Scholarly Context"; "The Ancient Jewish Context"; "Explanations"; and "Expressions." While the essays relate broadly to the title of the book, they can stand alone. They range in topics from refutation of Wilhelm Bousset's *Kyrios Christos*, with its argument that devotion to Jesus grew out of Hellenistic mystery cults to the "Binitarian Shape of Early Christian Worship." While these essays are available elsewhere, this volume makes it easier to see the development of Hurtado's thought and the issues he addressed. This book will be of most use to New Testament faculty and advanced students researching early Christology and New Testament passages that assert a divine status for Jesus. While Hurtado does not wear his theology on his sleeve, evangelical Christians who have a high view of Jesus and a high view of Scripture will welcome his conclusions.

Reviewer

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