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## Embry, Herms, and Wrights' "Early Jewish literature: an anthology" (book review)

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# Book Reviews

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Embry, B., Herms, R., & Wright, A. T. (Eds.). (2017). *Early Jewish literature: an anthology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. 1484 pp. \$125.00. ISBN 9780802890139, 9780802890146

In this two volume anthology, editors Embry, Herms, and Wright present a wide-ranging – though not comprehensive – selection of works from the Second Temple period (roughly 516 BCE to 70 CE). The editors' declared purpose in compiling *Early Jewish Literature* was to create a stand-alone, entry-level base text that could also be used as a supplement for advanced studies. The work is organized by genre and theme, with each section containing the text of the primary source, background and author information, geographical notes, historical viewpoints, translation disparities, commentaries, and much more. Though a great deal of the New and Old Testaments is included or referenced, the content extends far beyond this to include Apocryphal writings, the Pseudepigrapha, Qumran texts, the works of important minds such as Josephus and Philo of Alexandria, as well as other histories, legends, and religious writings.

In addition the text, these volumes are full of black and white photographs, charts, timelines, maps, and illustrations that add clarity and context to the content. These are scattered throughout the text for easy reference. There are also glossaries of biographical names, terms, and abbreviations. The terms defined in these glossaries are also bolded in the text to aid the reader. The footnotes throughout not only offer source information, but also provide additional notes, clarifications, cross-references, and recommended readings.

Overall, this work exhibits the high literary productivity of the period; highlights the diversity between different Jewish groups; and offers insight into the contemporary social, political, and theological currents. Though not particularly focused on the origins of Christianity, those roots and themes can be found here as well. Given the immense body of work that fits the scope of an anthology like this one, the editors have expertly selected the focal texts and assembled a vibrant representative snapshot of the scholarly conversation surrounding each work.

## Reviewer

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