

Contents

<i>Foreword</i>	vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	x
1. Daniel and the Book of Daniel	1
2. Judaism in the Second Temple Period	6
3. Jerusalem in Second Temple Literature	44
4. The Image of the Masada Martyrs in Their Own Eyes and in the Eyes of Their Contemporaries	76
5. “What Is Hanukkah?”: The Historical Setting of the Hasmonean Temple Dedication	113
6. Did the Jewish People Obscure the Memory of the Maccabees in the Middle Ages?	137
7. “Love Your Fellow Man”	156
8. “But Who Can Detect Their Errors?” (Ps 19:13): On Some Biblical Readings in the Second Temple Period	162
9. The Decalogue and the New Testament	172

10. “Who Sanctified Our Beloved from the Womb”	191
11. “He Planted It as Eternal Life in Our Midst”	199
12. Hillel the Elder and His Trust in God	207
13. Hillel’s Moderation	210
14. Philo of Alexandria	216
15. Josephus on the Pharisees and the Stoa	221
16. “Which Is the Straight Way That a Man Should Choose for Himself?” (m. Avot 2.1)	232
17. Martyrology in the Second Temple Period and Early Christianity	248
18. Jewish Messianism Reflected in the Early Church	258
19. Nadab and Abihu According to Philo and the Rabbis	289
20. Virgil the Wizard in an Ancient Jewish Narrative	297
21. Januris — Janus	305
22. Anti-Jewish “Blood Libels” in Light of Hellenistic Worldviews	309
23. “Have You Ever Seen a Lion Toiling as a Porter?”	331
24. An Ancient Hebrew List of Second Temple High Priests	343
25. Who Is the Ruler of Gennesar?	349
26. Anti-Jewish Sentiment in the Gospel of Matthew	351
<i>Index of Names</i>	354
<i>Index of Subjects</i>	360
<i>Index of Sources</i>	365

Foreword

Those who do not know Hebrew may finally read the English versions of David Flusser's collected essays. The present volume, *Judaism of the Second Temple Period: The Jewish Sages and Their Literature*, is the culmination of a remarkable effort and collaboration on the part of translator Azzan Yadin and three publishers: Magnes Press, Jerusalem Perspective, and Eerdmans. It is with great satisfaction that the publishers bring Flusser's insights to a wider audience.

Flusser conversed fluently in nine languages and read scholarly literature in an additional seventeen. His first language was German. His second, learned fluently only after his immigration to Israel, was Hebrew. Consequently, most of Flusser's published writings are in German or Hebrew. Only a small percentage of Flusser's articles were authored in English. The scope and importance of Flusser's research are so great that it is unthinkable that his Hebrew and German writings should for long remain untranslated to English. Flusser's contributions to the study of Jewish Literature of the Second Temple Period, including Jewish-Hellenistic literature, apocryphal works, rabbinic literature and the New Testament, is inestimable. Jerusalem Perspective is pleased to have had a hand in this publishing endeavor.

Though Flusser wrote less often in the English language, he did succeed in producing two volumes in English: with the help of his student R. Steven Notley, he wrote *Jesus: The Sage from Galilee* (4th ed.; Eerdmans, 2007); and with the help of his student Brad H. Young, he collected most of his English articles into *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1988, 725 pp.).

My relationship with Flusser was one of a pupil to his mentor. Enrolled as a student in the department of Jewish History at the Hebrew University, I began to study New Testament and Early Christianity with Flusser in 1964. At that time, he was only 46 years old. He continued to enlighten me until the final days of his life, even from his hospital bed at the Hadassah University Medical Center in Jerusalem. Professor Flusser died on September 15, 2000, his 83rd birthday.

Flusser was one of the world's leading Jewish authorities on the New Testament and Early Christianity. His pioneering research on Jesus and Christianity's relationship to Judaism won him international recognition. Flusser's collaboration with Robert L. Lindsey, beginning in 1961, resulted in a new approach to the Synoptic Gospels, the approach espoused by The Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research (www.js.org), which is an association of Jewish and Christian scholars. This unique cooperation was capped recently by the twelve essays (including one by Flusser, published posthumously) of *Jesus' Last Week: Jerusalem Studies in the Synoptic Gospels* (ed. R. S. Notley, M. Turnage and B. Becker; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2005).

In my judgment, disciples should assure that all the unpublished material of a prominent teacher is published before they publish their own research. The teacher's work takes precedence over the disciple's. With this in mind, I approached Hai Tsabar, director of Magnes Press, the publishing arm of the Hebrew University, about the possibility of translating into English the two-volume collection of Flusser's Hebrew articles that Magnes Press recently had published. To my delight, Hai was as enthusiastic about the project as I was. It is my pleasure here to thank him publicly for facilitating this difficult and lengthy project.

Even before the project was envisioned, Jerusalem Perspective had made an effort to expand Flusser's English bibliography. Since 1989, we have published most of Flusser's English output; note these examples: “. . . To Bury Caiaphas, Not to Praise Him” (*Jerusalem Perspective* 33 & 34 [July-Oct. 1991], 23-28), and “New Portrait of Salome” (*Jerusalem Perspective* 55 [April-June 1999], 18-23). These and Flusser's other recent articles also have been published electronically at <http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/>.

The publishers wish to express their appreciation to Serge Ruzer. In consultation with Flusser, Ruzer collected, arranged, and brought to press the two volumes of Flusser's published Hebrew articles. (The present volume is the translation of the second volume of that collection.) The publishers are greatly indebted to the volume's translator, Azzan Yadin, Associate Professor of Jewish Studies at Rutgers University. My thanks are extended to the editors and graphic artists of Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, who have given us a product worthy of Flusser's genius.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank the members of the Branch family, the donors who made this volume possible (see p. x).

DAVID BIVIN

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