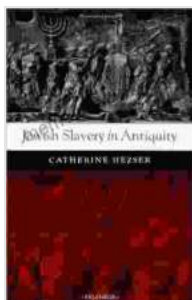


# Jewish Slavery in Antiquity: Uncovering a Hidden History



**Jewish Slavery in Antiquity** by Catherine Hezser

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 4919 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Print length : 452 pages

Lending : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

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The history of slavery in antiquity is a complex and multifaceted one, with Jewish enslavement playing a significant role. For centuries, Jewish slaves toiled in various capacities across the ancient Mediterranean world, from the bustling cities of Greece and Rome to the vast empires of the Near East. Catherine Hezser's groundbreaking work, *Jewish Slavery in Antiquity*, meticulously examines this neglected aspect of history, shedding light on the experiences and contributions of Jewish slaves within ancient societies.

In this comprehensive and insightful book, Hezser draws upon a wealth of archaeological, textual, and epigraphic evidence to reconstruct the lives of Jewish slaves. She explores the different forms of slavery in antiquity, from domestic servitude to agricultural labor, and examines the legal and social status of Jewish slaves within various civilizations.

## Jewish Slavery in the Ancient Near East

The origins of Jewish slavery can be traced back to the ancient Near East. In the biblical period, Jewish slaves were often captured during warfare or Free Download from neighboring nations. They performed a variety of tasks, including agricultural work, household chores, and skilled labor.

As Jewish communities grew and prospered in the Near East, so too did the number of Jewish slaves. By the Persian period (539-331 BCE), Jewish slaves had become an integral part of many aristocratic and wealthy households. They were often employed as scribes, administrators, and financial managers.

### **Jewish Slavery in the Greco-Roman World**

The conquests of Alexander the Great in the 4th century BCE brought about significant changes for Jewish communities in the Mediterranean world. Under Greek rule, Jewish slaves became increasingly common, particularly in regions such as Egypt and Asia Minor.

In the Roman Empire, Jewish slavery reached its peak. Jewish slaves were imported from all corners of the empire and were used for a wide range of purposes. They worked as agricultural laborers on vast estates, rowed in galleys, and served as domestic servants in wealthy Roman households.

### **The Experience of Jewish Slaves**

The experience of Jewish slaves varied greatly depending on their individual circumstances and the society in which they lived. Some Jewish slaves were treated relatively well, while others endured harsh treatment and cruel punishments.

Jewish slaves often formed close bonds with their fellow slaves, regardless of their religious or ethnic background. They shared their experiences, supported each other, and developed their own unique culture and traditions.

Many Jewish slaves also maintained their connection to Judaism. They observed Jewish holidays, practiced Jewish law, and sought to uphold their religious traditions in a foreign land.

## **The Impact of Jewish Slavery**

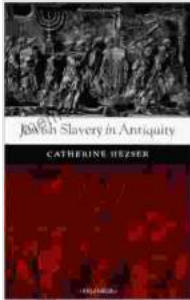
Jewish slavery had a profound impact on Jewish communities in antiquity. The forced migration and displacement of Jewish slaves contributed to the spread of Judaism throughout the Mediterranean world.

Jewish slaves also made significant contributions to the economic and social development of ancient civilizations. They worked in a variety of industries, from agriculture to commerce, and their skills and expertise were highly valued.

Furthermore, the experience of Jewish slavery influenced the development of Jewish thought and theology. Jewish slaves often turned to their faith for comfort and strength, and their experiences shaped their understanding of God and the nature of human suffering.

Catherine Hezser's *Jewish Slavery in Antiquity* is a groundbreaking work that sheds light on a long-hidden aspect of history. By meticulously examining the experiences and contributions of Jewish slaves, Hezser provides a deeper understanding of the social, economic, and religious dynamics of the ancient Mediterranean world.

This book is essential reading for anyone interested in ancient history, Jewish studies, or the history of slavery. It is a powerful reminder of the resilience and strength of the human spirit, even in the face of adversity.



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