

PRESS RELEASE

Jews and Anti-Judaism in Esther and the Church

By Tricia Miller

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The biblical Book of Esther records an account of Jewish resistance to attempted genocide in the setting of the Persian Empire. According to the text, Jews were targeted for annihilation simply because of their Jewish identity. However, the story also reports that they were allowed to defend themselves against anyone who sought to kill them. In the context of attempted genocide, the message of Esther addresses a timeless and universal issue of justice – that humans have the right and responsibility to defend themselves against those who intend to murder.

Jews and Anti-Judaism in Esther and the Church shows how the anti-Judaism that is a central feature of Esther relates to the contemporary issue of the contested legitimacy of the State of Israel as part of the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict. In her outstanding book, Dr. Tricia Miller uses an academic approach to demonstrate the relationship of historic theology to current events concerning Israel for the purpose of encouraging Christians to support Israel's right to exist and defend itself against those who seek its destruction.

This is the most careful study of the book of Esther and its anti-Jewish interpretations in the Church I have read. By placing the book of Esther in the context of realpolitik and hermeneutics that are filled with Jewish resistance to attempted genocide, Tricia Miller addresses the history of Christian anti-Judaism, the errors of replacement theology, and anti-Zionism as the new anti-Judaism. The book reads like a detective story which, by way of excellent exegetical scholarship and sound academic perception of history, puts the contemporary issue of the contested legitimacy of the State of Israel into the context of the universal right and obligation of self-defence. This investigation represents progressive thinking and the reality of strong bridges built between Jews and Christians in recent times.

Revd. Dr. Petra Heldt, Professor, Rothberg International School, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Any theology student can be grateful to have this meticulous study of the origins and historical context of the Book of Esther in its Hebrew and Greek versions. The author also demonstrates the ideological continuity that characterizes attempts to eradicate the Jewish People from Ancient Persia to the modern Middle East.

Malcolm F. Lowe, Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity in Jerusalem

About the Author: Tricia Miller (PhD) is a former Adjunct Professor at Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, CA. She earned her Ph.D. in Hebrew Bible from Claremont Graduate University and is now a senior research analyst at the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America.

About the publisher: James Clarke and Co Ltd is a long-established British academic publisher specialising in historical and theological books and also in reference material. It has been associated with the Lutterworth Press since 1984.

Review copies are available directly from the publisher.

For more information contact **Fiona Christie**, Sales & Publicity Department

Address: James Clarke and Co Ltd, PO Box 60 Cambridge CB1 2NT, United Kingdom

E-mail: publicity@jamesclarke.co.uk

Tel: 0044 (0)1223 350 865

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