



## Torah for Gentiles?

### What the Jewish Authors of the Didache had to say

by Daniel Nessim

#### DESCRIPTION:

Dating from the first century, the Didache offers a unique window into early Jewish Christianity. Its Jewish-Christian author seeks to mediate the Torah for the text's gentile recipients, steering diplomatically between the Scylla and Charybdis of the Law-observing church in Jerusalem and Paul's more open teaching. The Didache is thus very clear that gentile believers do not need to convert to Judaism, but at the same time its author argues that the Torah - particularly the second table of the Decalogue - is universal. The Deuteronomic paradigm of the 'Way of Life' against the 'Way of Death' applies to all.

In Torah for Gentiles? Daniel Nessim explores this juxtaposition in depth. How is Jesus' 'easy yoke' to be held alongside the strenuous commands of Mosaic Law? What does it mean to attain perfection? The path the Didache offers is not as straightforward as one might suppose, yet both Jews and Christians would recognize its moral basis as largely the same as that which underpins Judaeo-Christian values today. Moreover, the Christian community it describes, from a time when that community still looked very much to its Jewish forebears, makes it a fascinating example of the origins of Christian life and worship.

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