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## Poverty, Law, and Divine Justice in Persian and Hellenistic Judah

Johannes Unsok Ro

**A view of Persian and Hellenistic Judean communities through theological and socioeconomic lenses**

Johannes Unsok Ro employs philological, historical, and sociological approaches to investigate the close connections between socioeconomic structures, social inequality, and theological developments in the Judean communities in Persian- and Hellenistic-era Palestine. Ro contends that competing points of view from communities of lay returnees, priestly returnees, and communities of resident Judeans and Samaritans were juxtaposed within the Hebrew Bible, which took shape during the postexilic period. By exploring issues such as the relationship between the shaping of the canon and literacy in the Judean community, the term *strangers* in the biblical law codes, the socioeconomic structures of Judean communities reflected in the biblical law codes, the development of the theological concept of divine punitive justice, the piety of the poor in certain psalms, and the concept of poverty in the Dead Sea Scrolls, Ro illustrates that the communities behind each text and its redactions can be ascertained through sociological and theological lenses.

### Features:

- Demonstration that a theology of the poor materialized orally among the poor but found written expression among Levites
- Insight into the socioeconomic and theological concerns of the authorial groups behind various biblical law codes
- A case that biblical “poverty” sometimes refers to humility and a theologically reflected consciousness of lowliness toward God

**Johannes Unsok Ro** is Senior Associate Professor at International Christian University in Tokyo, Japan. He is the author of *Die sogenannte ‘Armenfrömmigkeit’ im nachexilischen Israel* (2002) as well as the editor of *From Judah to Judaea: Socio-economic Structures and Processes in the Persian Period* (2012).

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