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Negotiating Power in Ezra–Nehemiah

Donna Laird

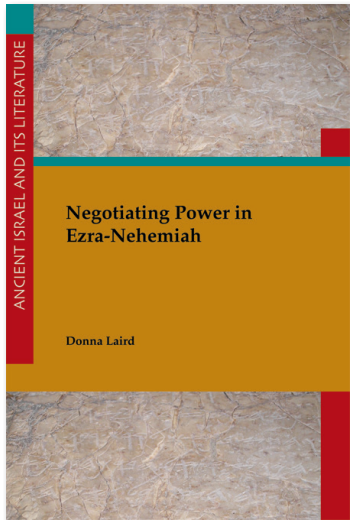
Explore how discourse reflects the changing political and social contexts for the community

Donna Laird examines Ezra and Nehemiah in light of modern sociological theorist Pierre Bourdieu. How did this context of hardship, exile, and return change what Ezra and Nehemiah viewed as important? How did they define who was a part of their community and who was an outsider? It goes on to explore how the books engaged readers at the time by addressing their changing circumstances, and it explores how different groups gained and used “social power,” or the ability to influence society.

Features:

- A nuanced description of how use of edicts, documents, and Aramaic advanced the author’s ability to negotiate Persia’s influence over the Jerusalem community
- Illustration of how past traditions were selectively used to justify dividing those who belong from “others” and relates this impulse to identity forged in exile
- Analysis that shows how theological thought grew and adjusted to the realities of the first temple’s destruction, foreign rule, and exilic experience

Donna Laird received her Ph.D in Biblical Studies from Drew University (2013). She teaches courses in Hebrew Bible at Ashland Theological Seminary.



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