

Aphrahat's Demonstrations: A Conversation with the Jews of Mesopotamia (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium)

E. Lizorkin



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Various opinions on the nature of Aphrahat's interactions with the Jews have essentially revolved around either accepting or rejecting the claim that the Persian Sage had contact with (Rabbinic) Jews and/or may have been influenced by them. The issue was never settled. To provide answers to the related questions the author uses a textual comparative methodology, juxtaposing texts from both sources and analyzing them in relation to each other. Every section that deals with such comparison is organized into three sub-sections: 1) agreement, 2) disagreement by omission; and 3) disagreement by confrontation. The study is structured around the general theme of ritual as addressed by Aphrahat in his work. It compares the treatment of circumcision, prayer, Passover, Kashrut and fasting in Aphrahat's Demonstrations with the treatment of the same themes in Babylonian Talmud. In addition to dealing with primary conclusions that answer the questions regarding the nature of Aphrahat's encounters with the Jews, the researcher provides a set of additional or secondary conclusions that concern variety of topics such as the nature of Jewish missions to the (Jewish) Christians and Aphrahat's treatment of the Christian Pascha in relationship to the idea of the Christian Sabbath.

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