



# The Jews of Ancient Rome

*Harry Leon*

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Since its original publication in 1960, Harry J. Leon's "Jews of Ancient Rome" has been the standard reference work in English on the catacomb inscriptions in Rome. The updated edition makes this long out-of-print volume the single best entree to the archeological materials on Judaism in ancient Rome. A new introduction by Carolyn Osiek, of Catholic Theological Union, brings together the new inscriptional discoveries and assesses the scholarly import of Leon's original work. This updated edition includes new inscriptions with comments by Carolyn Osiek, line art and photos of inscriptions, an updated bibliography, and addenda to the first edition. For anyone interested in opening new windows into the social life of the Jews of ancient Rome, this volume is indispensable. The Jews of ancient Rome played an interesting and important role during those critical junctures in Jewish and world affairs" when the Jewish State was destroyed, when Judaism and Christianity parted company, and when new diaspora communities were established in the Roman world. The literary sources for the history of the Roman Jews have yielded but little information" certainly not enough for a convincing picture. Professor Harry J. Leon achieved an authentic portrait of that community by means of thorough investigation of the Jewish catacombs. The brief inscriptions reveal a wealth of significant information: the language of the people, their labors, their religion, and their manner of life. Many of the inscriptions are reproduced in photographs. The reader, whether lay person or scholar, will find Dr. Leon's synthesis of this information absorbing, as both ancient Rome and the ancient Jewish community come to life.

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