

Preface

These days the world is experiencing a shocking increase of antisemitism. Acts of violence and verbal harassment have increased in both quantity and quality worldwide. Even universities – intended as havens of non-violent and fact-based exchange – have become places where Jews no longer feel safe.

When we started this project, we did not expect the aggression to take on such dimensions in our time. Nevertheless, we all knew that antisemitism was an oppressive reality for Jews even in our time. We therefore wanted to investigate this question within the scope of our academic subject.

This volume includes contributions from two meetings of the Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Program Unit of the Society of Biblical Literature in 2020 and 2021 and of an international conference in Salzburg in 2022 held within the framework of the International Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature. The first two were organized by Barbara Schmitz and Frank Ueberschaer; the latter by Georg Fischer and Benedikt J. Collinet. The combination of these conferences was a fortunate circumstance and an example of excellent cooperation between organizers, participants, contributors, series editors, and the publishing house.

The volume begins with an overview by Georg Fischer and ends with an evaluative contribution by Amy-Jill Levine, who also highlights the contemporary significance of the studies published here. We would like to express our special thanks to both of them, as this volume is basically also about providing historically informed impulses for the present state of affairs.

One of the lessons we must learn from this volume is that Jews were already affected by hatred, discrimination, and persecution in antiquity; and it is unfortunately one of the insights we must gain in our day that this has not changed. It is on us, to stand against antisemitism both in our societies and especially at our universities and in our academic communities.

We believe in the power of learning, working together, and personal engagement. Therefore, we want to thank all those who contributed to the conferences and to this volume – and especially to the team of de Gruyter who have accompanied this volume most prudently and competently.

Benedikt J. Collinet and Frank Ueberschaer, editors

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