


SIENACollege
 The Kieval Institute for
 Jewish-Christian Studies
 515 Loudon Road
 Loudonville, New York 12211-1462

The Lure of the Apocryphal

Between 350 BCE and 200 CE the Jewish homeland and Diaspora experienced a literary outburst that would transform not only the religious culture of the Jews, but ultimately the entire world. These books ranged from historical and wisdom literature to poetry and novellas, from the supernatural to the prosaic. Some looked back to the past, reviewing God's original plan for humankind. Others tried to comprehend how the divine intersected with personal lives and still others speculated on a near-future "Day of the Lord" when the world would have a new beginning.

The books written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek were called *hitzonim* in Hebrew – "the outside books" – since their topics extended beyond the scope of the Jews' sacred library – the Torah, the Prophetic/Historical writing and an anthology of Psalms – which had become authoritative around 400 BCE. When the Jewish homeland was absorbed into the empire of Alexander the Great in 333 BCE, like all of its subjects the Jews were profoundly influenced by its dominant Hellenistic culture. The new *hitzonim* reflected their new spiritual diversity in all its complexity.

With the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple in 70 CE that concluded the Great Revolt against Rome, a spiritual vacuum was suddenly created in Jewish life. To fill it, the Rabbis turned to the varied literary sources from among the *hitzonim*, and they selected 12 books which, along with the Psalms, became the third division of the sacred library. Now they were no longer outsiders, but in the innermost heart of Judaism. Thus the Jews became a book-centered instead of a Temple-centered people, deriving guidance, inspiration and comfort from what they called the TaNaKh, the Hebrew acronym for Torah, Prophets and Writings.

The early church would later incorporate the TaNaKh into the Biblia, the Christian sacred library, renaming it "the Old Testament," and include some of the rejected *hitzonim*, now called the "apocrypha," the books hidden away by the Jews, a name subsequently applied to many books written under Christian auspices. In recent years the discovery of forgotten Jewish *hitzonim* among the Dead Sea Scrolls and Christian apocrypha in Egypt and elsewhere have aroused widespread interest in these ancient documents. These books maintain their allure to scholars and laity alike.

—Rabbi Bernard Bloom

The Lure of the Apocryphal



The Kieval Institute for
Jewish-Christian
Studies at Siena College

24th Annual Colloquium

November 2 and 3, 2008

Siena College



SIENACollege

The Kieval Institute for
Jewish-Christian Studies

Program

Sunday, November 2, 2008
Roger Bacon Hall, Key Auditorium
2:30 p.m

Remarks.....Peter Zaas
*Director, Kieval Institute
for Jewish-Christian Studies*

Welcome.....Fr. Kevin Mullen, '75, O.F.M.
President, Siena College

Lecture.....Martha Himmelfarb

Lecture..... John Collins

Discussion.....Audience welcome to participate

Monday, November 3, 2008
Serra Hall, West Dining Room
10:00 a.m.

Brunch and
Discussion.....John Collins, Martha Himmelfarb

Moderator.....Rabbi Bernard Bloom

Greetings.....Bishop Howard Hubbard
Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany

About the Kieval Institute

The Hayyim H. Kieval Institute for Jewish-Christian Studies was founded in 1983 and is named for its inaugural director, Rabbi Hayyim Kieval. An advisory board of Siena faculty and other area regional clergy and community leaders advises the Institute on matters of policy and program.

The annual colloquia are dedicated to bringing internationally-recognized scholars on campus to discuss matters of history, theology and current events pertaining to the continuing historical relationship between Jews and Christians. The events are free and open to the public.

Keynote Speakers



John Collins, Ph.D.
Holmes Professor of Old Testament
Criticism and Interpretation,
Yale University



Martha Himmelfarb, Ph.D.
William H. Danforth Professor of Religion,
Princeton University

SAVE THE DATE

Colonie Jewish Association Lecture
May 6, 2009
"Jewish-Christian Dialogue in Jazz"

The Lure of the Apocryphal

_____ I shall participate in the Colloquium

You can also respond online at
www.siena.edu/kievalrsvp

_____ I would like to support the Kieval
Institute with a gift of \$_____

Make check payable to:
Kieval Institute for Jewish-Christian Studies
Siena College
Loudonville, NY 12211

For information, call 518-783-2361

Name _____

Institution _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Advisory Board

Claire Dalton
Fr. Chris DeGiovine
Stanley Isser
Leon Halpert
Rev. James Kane
Shalom Kieval
Rev. Robert C. Lamar
Mary Walsh Meany
Fr. Dennis Tamburello, O.F.M.

Emeritus Board Members

Rev. William Clasen

Ex-Officio

Fr. Kevin Mullen, '75, O.F.M.
Rabbi Bernard Bloom
Peter Zaas