



Her Share of the Blessings: Women's Religions among Pagans, Jews, and Christians in the Greco-Roman World (Oxford Paperbacks)

Ross Shepard Kraemer

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In this pathbreaking volume, Ross Shepard Kraemer provides the first comprehensive look at women's religions in Greco-Roman antiquity. She vividly recreates the religious lives of early Christian, Jewish, and pagan women, with many fascinating examples: Greek women's devotion to goddesses, rites of Roman matrons, Jewish women in rabbinic and diaspora communities, Christian women's struggles to exercise authority and autonomy, and women's roles as leaders in the full spectrum of Greco-Roman religions. In every case, Kraemer reveals the connections between the social constraints under which women lived, and their religious beliefs and practices.

The relationship among female autonomy, sexuality, and religion emerges as a persistent theme. Analyzing the monastic Jewish Therapeutae and various Christian communities, Kraemer demonstrates the paradoxical liberation which women achieved by rejection of sexuality, the body, and the female. In the epilogue, Kraemer pursues the disturbing implications such findings have for contemporary women.

Based on an astonishing variety of primary sources, *Her Share of the Blessings* is an insightful work that goes beyond the limitations of previous scholarship to provide a more accurate portrait of women in the Greco-Roman world.

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