



Reading Renunciation

Elizabeth A. Clark

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A study of how asceticism was promoted through Biblical interpretation, *Reading Renunciation* uses contemporary literary theory to unravel the writing strategies of the early Christian authors. Not a general discussion of early Christian teachings on celibacy and marriage, the book is a close examination, in the author's words, of how "the Fathers' axiology of abstinence informed their interpretation of Scriptural texts and incited the production of ascetic meaning."

Elizabeth Clark begins with a survey of scholarship concerning early Christian asceticism that is designed to orient the nonspecialist. Section Two is organized around potentially troubling issues posed by Old Testament texts that demanded skillful handling by ascetically inclined Christian exegetes. The third section, "Reading Paul," focuses on the hermeneutical problems raised by I Corinthians 7, and the Deutero-Pauline and Pastoral Epistles.

Elizabeth Clark's remarkable work will be of interest to scholars of late antiquity, religion, literary theory, and history.

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