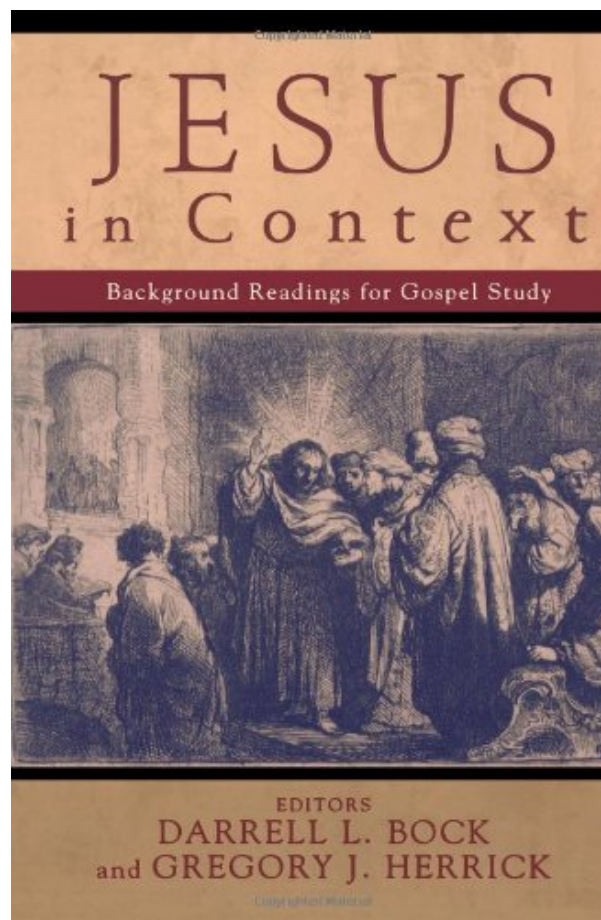
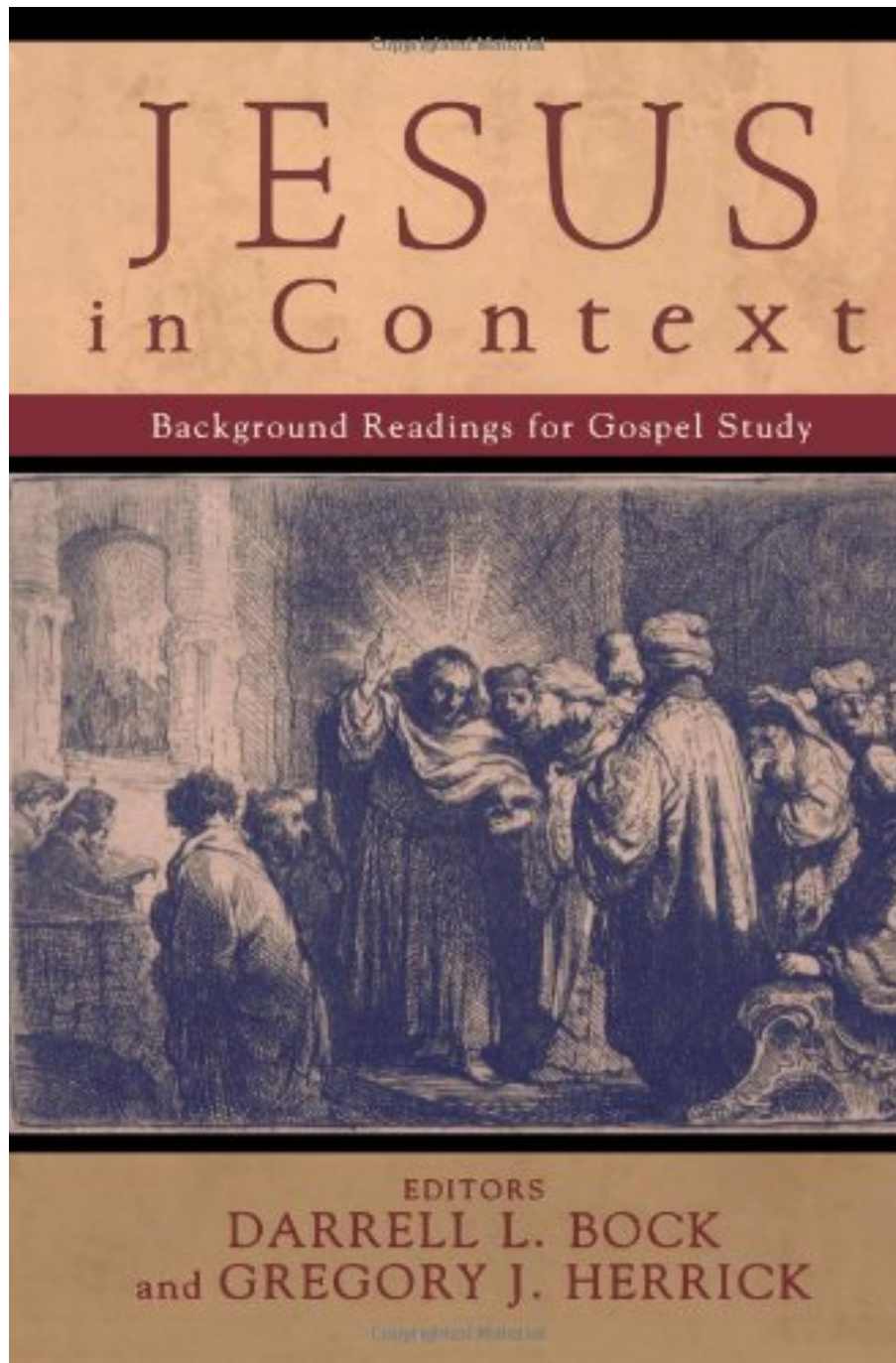


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About the Author

Darrell L. Bock (Ph.D., University of Aberdeen) is research professor of New Testament studies at Dallas Theological Seminary. He is the author or editor of many books, including the two-volume commentary on Luke in the Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament series, Jesus according to Scripture, and Studying the Historical Jesus.

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Knowing the historical and cultural background of the Bible is crucial to properly understanding and interpreting it. But the passing of 2,000 years often prevents today's reader from fully understanding the significance of various actions and teachings of Jesus in the Gospels. For example, the radical nature of Jesus's healings on the Sabbath may go unnoticed without an awareness of first-century Jewish teaching on what was and was not permissible.

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About the Author

Darrell L. Bock (Ph.D., University of Aberdeen) is research professor of New Testament studies at Dallas Theological Seminary. He is the author or editor of many books, including the two-volume commentary on Luke in the Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament series, *Jesus according to Scripture*, and *Studying the Historical Jesus*.

Gregory J. Herrick (Ph.D., Dallas Theological Seminary) is a researcher and writer with the Biblical Studies Foundation.

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Keeping the gospels in context, excellent for study or preaching

By E. Johnson

In a chronological fashion, Darrell Bock provides readings that can be used by the teacher or preacher to help the audience better understand the context of the gospel passages. Utilizing Jewish texts such as the

apocrypha, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and other sources, there is no better way the student can grasp the meaning of the gospel narratives without understanding the background, so I think this will make a perfect addition to any Christian's library. And you don't even have to know German to be able to read it! (like the Strack-Billerbeck six-volume set) Nicely done, and all in a paperback at a reasonable cost.

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful.

A Very Solid Study Tool for the Background Context of the Gospels

By Trey Palmisano

For those who are looking for more than the small group church bible study, which often treats every bible story from the perspective of its "universal application," this book is precisely the tool for the serious student of scripture, and how any exegetical study should be approached.

Bock and Herrick provide the essential background information to the gospel narratives, demonstrating that Jesus was not some enlightened mystic created centuries later by the church, but rather show page after page how he comfortably fit into the particular worldview and culture of 2nd Temple Judaism. As the previous reviewer noted, the book takes passages from the gospels in chronological order and provides examples of the same behaviors, customs, and beliefs as they crop up in extra-biblical Jewish texts.

While the book has its strong points, I did find that some of the examples did not fully clarify the text in question. For example, where Luke 8:1-3 is the highlighted passage showing women lending support to Jesus' ministry, the extra-biblical passage used as the parallel only shows that women were not valued in the opinion of some Jewish Rabbis. It may then actually be said that in this instance, the gospel narrative is unique and Jesus is turning a cultural practice on its head. But I think the book is much stronger where it sticks to the examples that show socio-historical coherence through the cultural norms reflected in the gospels and other Jewish literature.

Nevertheless, this is a great book for the believer and skeptic alike looking to plot the gospels in their proper context and not simply left to be read through the lens of contemporary interpretation.

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