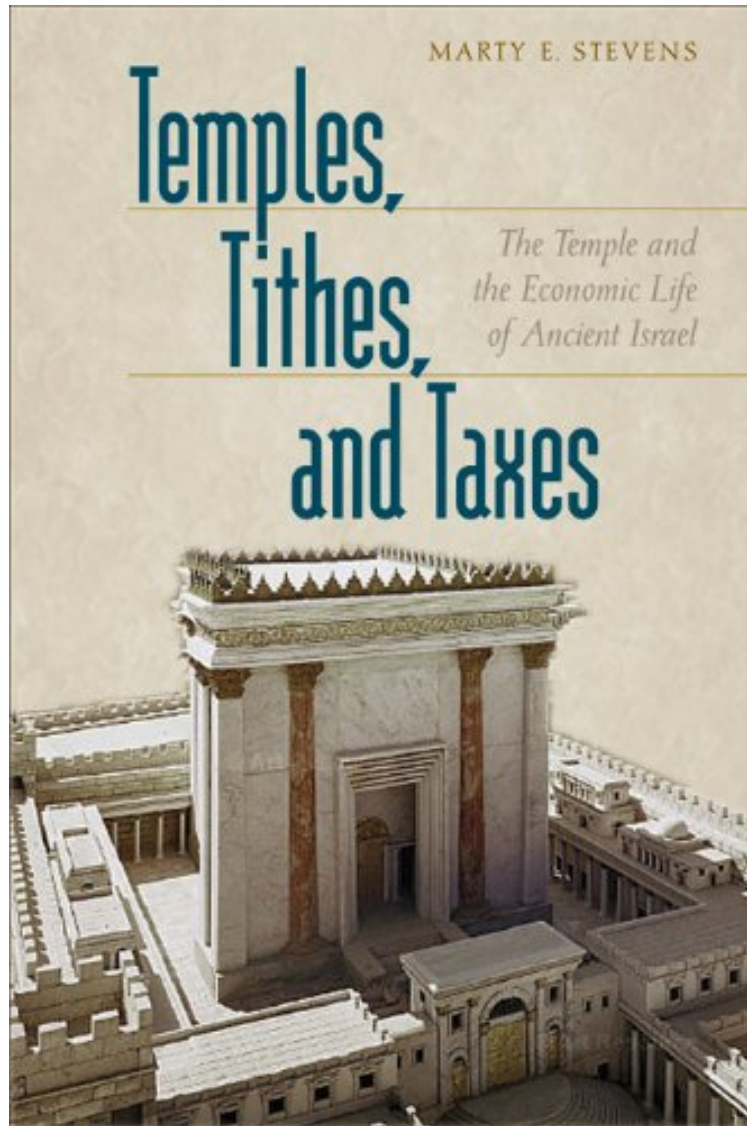


Temples, Tithes, and Taxes: The Temple and the Economic Life of Ancient Israel

Marty E. Stevens

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The temple in Jerusalem was both the center of ancient Israel's religious life and also an economic center for the nation. In this groundbreaking study of the economic functions of the Jerusalem temple, Marty E. Stevens, who worked for fifteen years as a certified public accountant prior to getting a PhD in Old Testament, demonstrates that the temple acted as the central bank, internal revenue collector, source of loans, and even debt collector for ancient Israel. Applying a broad knowledge of temple-systems throughout the ancient Near East, Stevens sheds light on the roles played by various officials mentioned in Scripture and their tasks within the temple complex. Neither "Big Brother" nor "big business," the temple still served government and commerce in the course of conducting its religious functions. This fascinating book opens new avenues for understanding the Jerusalem temple and its impact on Israelite society.

[Temples, Tithes and Taxes]provides a clear and detailed understanding of the temple as an institution that affected the whole of life. For this gift, biblical scholars and biblical readers can only be grateful. -- Catholic Biblical Quarterly

From the Back CoverThe temple in Jerusalem was both the center of ancient Israel's religious life and also an economic center for the nation. In this groundbreaking study of the economic functions of the Jerusalem temple, Marty E. Stevens, who worked for fifteen years as a certified public accountant prior to getting a PhD in Old Testament, demonstrates that the temple acted as the central bank, internal revenue collector, source of loans, and even debt collector for ancient Israel. Applying a broad knowledge of temple-systems throughout the ancient Near East, Stevens sheds light on the roles played by various officials mentioned in Scripture and their tasks within the temple complex. Neither "Big Brother" nor "big business," the temple still served government and commerce in the course of conducting its religious functions. This fascinating book opens new avenues for understanding the Jerusalem temple and its impact on Israelite society."Professor Stevens has generously provided both the guild and the church a marvelously accessible study of the economic role of the temple in ancient Israel. She brings to her analysis the precision of an accountant, the judiciousness of a historian, and the passion of an educator. Her work will prove to be an indispensable reference work and an engaging textbook."--William P. Brown, professor of Old Testament, Columbia Theological Seminary

"This study presents an entirely new way of looking at the Jerusalem temples and their personnel. Stevens brings to light the most neglected aspect of temple life in most previous scholarship, that is, the commercial role it played in the culture of its times. She has introduced fresh ways of conceiving its function as the power behind the throne and nation."--John M. Halligan, professor emeritus of biblical studies, St. John Fisher College

About the AuthorMarty E Stevens is Visiting Assistant Professor of Biblical Language and Assistant to the Dean for Graduate Studies at Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia. Prior to embarking on an academic career, she worked for 15 years as a CPA in the US, Canada and Europe.