



Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ

Klaus Wengst, John Bowden

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How providential, it is often argued, that Christianity began under the pax Romano, an unprecedented time of peace throughout the world! At what other time could the gospel have spread so quickly? Certainly the pax Romana was a time of peace, prosperity and justice for some - yet for others, the majority, it was a time of oppression, misery and suffering under the tyrant's whim. This latter dimension is not often brought out, so this new book plays an important role in redressing the balance. In it, Professor Wengst brings out what it was really like to live in the Roman empire. He is not so much concerned to offer a 'balanced' account as to show what it felt like from below, its effect on the nameless multitudes of whose immeasurable tears and sufferings, hopes and fears there is only indirect evidence. This serves as a prelude to a discussion of the experiences which Jesus and the early Christians had of Roman rule and the way in which they reacted to it. There is no mistaking the fact that the results of the study are not just a piece of past history, but are extraordinarily relevant to the modern world.

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