**An example of how The Jewish Annotated New Testament, and developing sensitivity to anti-Jewish rhetoric, is emphasized in Introduction to the New Testament**

This the minor assignment prompt for week two in the class:

In her essay, "Bearing False Witness: Common Errors Made about Early Judaism," Dr. Amy-Jill Levine notes that one of the reasons that depictions of Jews and Judaism have become distorted in Christian preaching and teaching is because seminaries do not teach Judaism in antiquity and modernity well. Dr. Levine's diagnosis of the problem is one reason that The Jewish Annotated New Testament is assigned for this class. This week's readings and lectures focus on Judaism in the time of Jesus. One theme from the week's content is that it was complex and diverse.

My hope for the essays assigned for this week is that they will help to correct some of the common stereotypes we hold about ancient Judaism, offering a more complex and accurate picture. To this end, both the online forum and the preparation for "Book Club" ask you to identify two misconceptions or stereotypes about Judaism in the time of Jesus that you held before completing the readings and were corrected of complexified by them. You are then to replace those misconceptions/stereotypes with a statement of the more-accurate reality. I recognize that it can be difficult to own up to the stereotypes and misconceptions we previously held, especially if they have only just been corrected. But it is also very productive to do so. I encourage you not to feel ashamed of these misconceptions, but to learn from them and from those of your peers.

I ask that you format these in a particular way that aims to contrast sharply and succinctly the myth and reality.

For each of your two pairs, you should have in bold **Myth about Ancient Judaism:**and **Reality about Ancient Judaism:**with a single sentence following each. Under the bolded pair you can provide further explanation. Here is an example of the template to follow.

**Myth about Ancient Judaism:**Jews in the time of Jesus all believed the same things and expressed their Judaism in the same ways.

**Reality about Ancient Judaism:**Judaism in the time of Jesus was marked by diversity of belief and practice.

While the vast majority of Jews in the Second Temple Period were monotheists, maintained that Torah and certain prescriptions in it (such as resting on the Sabbath and not eating pork) were central to Jewish practice, and accorded importance to the Temple, this does not mean that Judaism in this time was monolithic or simplistic. Rather, like Christianity today, Judaism in antiquity was complex and diverse, even multi-denominational. Beyond the "essential" or "non-negotiable" beliefs and practices, there were a host of negotiable beliefs and practices that varied between different Jewish individuals and groups.

If you are participating in the forums, you will post your myths and realities there. If you are attending "Book Club," I advise that you go around and each person share one myth and reality at a time and that you go around twice times so that everyone has an opportunity to share both of their corrected myths.