

A Queen in the Tomb of the Kings: An Ancient Monument and its Modern Legacy

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Those who wish to learn more about Queen Helena of Adiabene in ancient sources can read the writings of Josephus as well as selections from rabbinic texts:

Primary Sources:

- Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 5.119, 147, 253-254, 6.355 [references to Helena's tomb and palace]
- Josephus, *Antiquities* 20.17-96; [narrative about Helena and her sons, Monbaz and Izates]
- *Mishnah Nazir* 3:6
- *Mishnah Yoma* 3:10; *Bavli Yoma* 37b-38a
- *Tosefta Sukkah* 1:1; *Bavli Sukkah* 2b-3a

Scholarly Literature:

- On Helena of Adiabene in Josephus, see Etko Liebowitz, "A New Perspective on Two Jewish Queens in the Second Temple Period: Alexandra of Judaea and Helene of Adiabene," in *Sources and Interpretation in Ancient Judaism: Studies for Tal Ilan at Sixty* (ed. Meron M. Piotrkowski, Geoffrey Herman, and Saskia Doenitz; Leiden: Brill, 2018): 41-65.
- On Helena of Adiabene in rabbinic sources, see Malka Simkovitch, "[Queen Helena of Adiabene and Her Sons in Midrash and History](#)," *TheTorah.com* (2018).
- On Queen Helena in medieval Jewish texts, see Galit Hasan-Rokem, "Polymorphic Helena: *Toledot Yeshu* as a Palimpsest of Religious Narratives and Identities," in *Toledot Yeshu Revisited* (ed. Schäfer, Meerson, and Deutsch), 247-282.
- On the Tomb of the Kings, see Andrew Lawler, *Under Jerusalem: The Buried History of the World's Most Contested City* (New York: Doubleday, 2021).