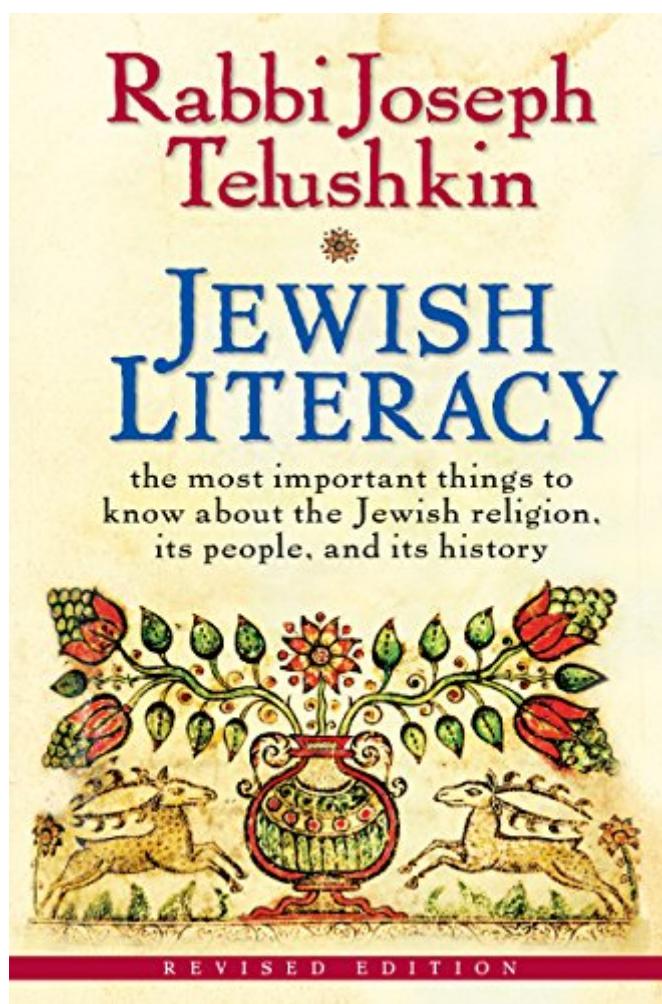


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Jewish Literacy Revised Ed: The Most Important Things To Know About The Jewish Religion, Its People, And Its History



Synopsis

What does it mean to be a Jew? How does one begin to answer so extensive a question? In this insightful and completely updated tome, esteemed rabbi and bestselling author Joseph Telushkin helps answer the question of what it means to be a Jew, in the largest sense. Widely recognized as one of the most respected and indispensable reference books on Jewish life, culture, tradition, and religion, Jewish Literacy covers every essential aspect of the Jewish people and Judaism. In 352 short and engaging chapters, Rabbi Telushkin discusses everything from the Jewish Bible and Talmud to Jewish notions of ethics to antisemitism and the Holocaust; from the history of Jews around the world to Zionism and the politics of a Jewish state; from the significance of religious traditions and holidays to how they are practiced in daily life. Whether you want to know more about Judaism in general or have specific questions you'd like answered, Jewish Literacy is sure to contain the information you need. Rabbi Telushkin's expert knowledge of Judaism makes the updated and revised edition of Jewish Literacy an invaluable reference. A comprehensive yet thoroughly accessible resource for anyone interested in learning the fundamentals of Judaism, Jewish Literacy is a must for every Jewish home.

Book Information

File Size: 2225 KB

Print Length: 804 pages

Publisher: HarperCollins e-books; Revised edition (September 28, 2010)

Publication Date: September 28, 2010

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B003V1WT22

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #188,533 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #37 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Jewish Life #49 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Religion > Judaism #183 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > History

Customer Reviews

This volume is commonly given to Jewish Confirmants, and with good reason. It covers, in a compact and well-written fashion, Jewish history, religion, and culture. There are 15 parts: 1) Bible, 2) The Second Commonwealth, the Mishna, and the Talmud, 3) Early Medieval Period: Under Islam and Christianity, 4) Late Medieval Period, 5) Modern Period--Western and Eastern Europe, 6) Zionism and Israel, 7) The Holocaust, 8) American-Jewish Life, 9) Soviet Jewry, 10) Antisemitism, 11) Jewish Texts, 12) Jewish Ethics and Basic Beliefs, 13) The Hebrew Calendar and Jewish Holidays, 14) Life Cycle, and 15) Synagogue and Prayers. This volume is much easier to read than an alphabetically-organized encyclopedia. The author is a member of the Modern Orthodox movement (which combines traditional Talmud study with secular study). His work treats quite fairly the three largest denominations of Judaism (Orthodox, Conservative, Reform), but the section on Mordecai Kaplan and Reconstructionist Judaism is rather weak--a much better summation is given by Emanuel S. Goldsmith in the Preface to Dynamic Judaism (pp. 15-30). Humanistic Judaism isn't treated at all. The typography is very good; I found just two typos (p. 345, "statue" instead of "statute"; p. 364, "Orthodox rabbits" instead of "Orthodox rabbis"). The index is fine, but there is no glossary of terms. One glaring omission in the history section is a table of famous, accomplished Jews in the areas of mathematics, science, engineering, business, philosophy, music, and sports. (The history section is really very gloomy and disturbing; it ignores the lives of many high-achieving and happy Jews.) Leon Trotsky is covered, but Ayn Rand isn't! The section on theodicy discusses supernaturalism and atheism, but not transnaturalism.

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