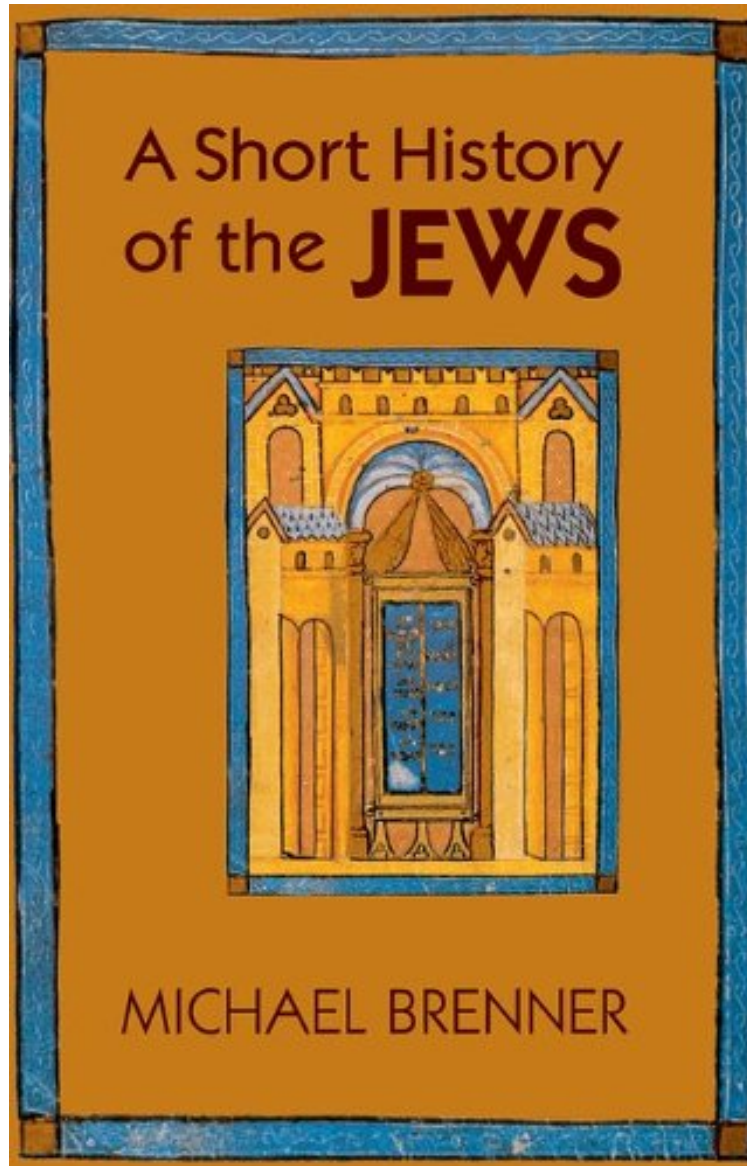


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## A Short History of the Jews

*Michael Brenner*

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**Michael Brenner : A Short History of the Jews** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Short History of the Jews:

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This is a sweeping and powerful narrative history of the Jewish people from biblical times to today. Based on the latest scholarship and richly illustrated, it is the most authoritative and accessible chronicle of the Jewish experience available. Michael Brenner tells a dramatic story of change and migration deeply rooted in tradition, taking readers from the mythic wanderings of Moses to the unspeakable atrocities of the Holocaust; from the Babylonian exile to the founding of the modern state of Israel; and from the Sephardic communities under medieval Islam to the shtetls of eastern Europe and the Hasidic enclaves of modern-day Brooklyn. The book is full of fascinating personal stories of exodus and return, from that told about Abraham, who brought his newfound faith into Canaan, to that of Holocaust survivor Esther Barkai, who lived on a kibbutz established on a German estate seized from the Nazi Julius Streicher as she awaited resettlement in Israel. Describing the events and people that have shaped Jewish history, and highlighting the important contributions Jews have made to the arts, politics, religion, and science, *A Short History of the Jews* is a compelling blend of storytelling and scholarship that brings the Jewish past marvelously to life.

From Publishers Weekly  
In this concise but all-encompassing account of the Jews, Brenner (*After the Holocaust*) does a remarkable job of escorting readers from the biblical narrative of Abraham's journey from Ur and idolatry through the treacherous, monotheistic course of Jewish history, concluding with modern-day Israeli society. A professor of Jewish history at the University of Munich, Brenner treats much of the biblical narrative as lore, accepting as fact only those stories and time lines corroborated by extra-biblical evidence. Wandering, tradition, and tragedy emerge as themes as the Jews, once exiled from their biblical homeland of Israel, spend much of history defending their religion, being coerced to forsake it, and yearning for the re-establishment of the Temple. Tragedies have followed the Jews: Crusades, expulsions, book burnings, the Holocaust; yet there have also been periods of efflorescence and development during which the Jews have thrived and produced works of great scholarship and innovation. Brenner's work successfully conveys, in a comprehensive and comprehensible fashion, the enduring history of the Jewish people. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.  
From Booklist  
As the title indicates, this is a compact survey of Jewish history, an introduction for general readers. Still, Professor Brenner manages to cover a great deal of ground while effectively explaining many of the key elements of the Jewish experience. From biblical times to the present, Brenner asserts, a recurring theme of Jewish history is migration, yet it is migration that constantly kept the land of Israel as the focus of Jewish emotions and aspirations. In the opening chapter, Brenner utilizes recent scholarly revelations to effectively glean fact from mythology regarding early wanderings of the Israelites and the supposed exodus from Egypt and conquest of Canaan, but these enduring myths continue to exercise profound influence on Jews. Subsequent chapters also emphasize Jewish movements, from the expulsion from Judea under the Romans to the Holocaust. Critics may object to the Eurocentric concentration of later chapters, which ignore the vibrant Jewish communities in North Africa and western Asia. But on the whole, this work serves as an excellent introduction. --Jay Freeman "As the title indicates, this is a compact survey of Jewish history, an introduction for general readers. Still, Professor Brenner manages to cover a great deal of ground while effectively explaining many of the key elements of the Jewish experience. From biblical times to the present, Brenner asserts, a recurring theme of Jewish history is migration, yet it is migration that constantly kept the land of Israel as the focus of Jewish emotions and aspirations. . . . On the whole, this work serves as an excellent introduction."--Jay Freeman, Booklist  
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"This is an excellent overview of Jewish history--a well-written, up-to-date survey for college students and the general reader. Considering the scope of the coverage, the book is remarkably concise. The explanations under the attractive illustrations aptly point to their relevance in the period being discussed."--Robert Seltzer, H-Net  
"Brenner offers a digestible, interesting, complex history, in an accessible format."--Jewish Book World  
"Recommended."--Sandra Collins, Library Journal  
"A Short History of the Jews is well-written and Jeremiah Riemer's translation from the German is quite readable. All in all, an excellent source for the reader, Jewish or otherwise."--Ed Sizemore, Denton Record-Chronicle  
"This elegantly produced, generously illustrated text attempts the impossible--the telling of 3,000 years of Jewish history in less than 400 pages."--Choice  
"Michael Brenner's lavishly illustrated and authoritative *A Short History of the Jews* is not exactly short, given its 421 pages with the index. But since he is dealing with about 3,000 years, Brenner's feat of condensation is commendable."--Sheldon Kirshner, Canadian Jewish News  
"[A]n interesting survey and good place to start for any reader curious about the history of the Jewish people in their societies."--Jay Howard Geller, Canadian Journal of History