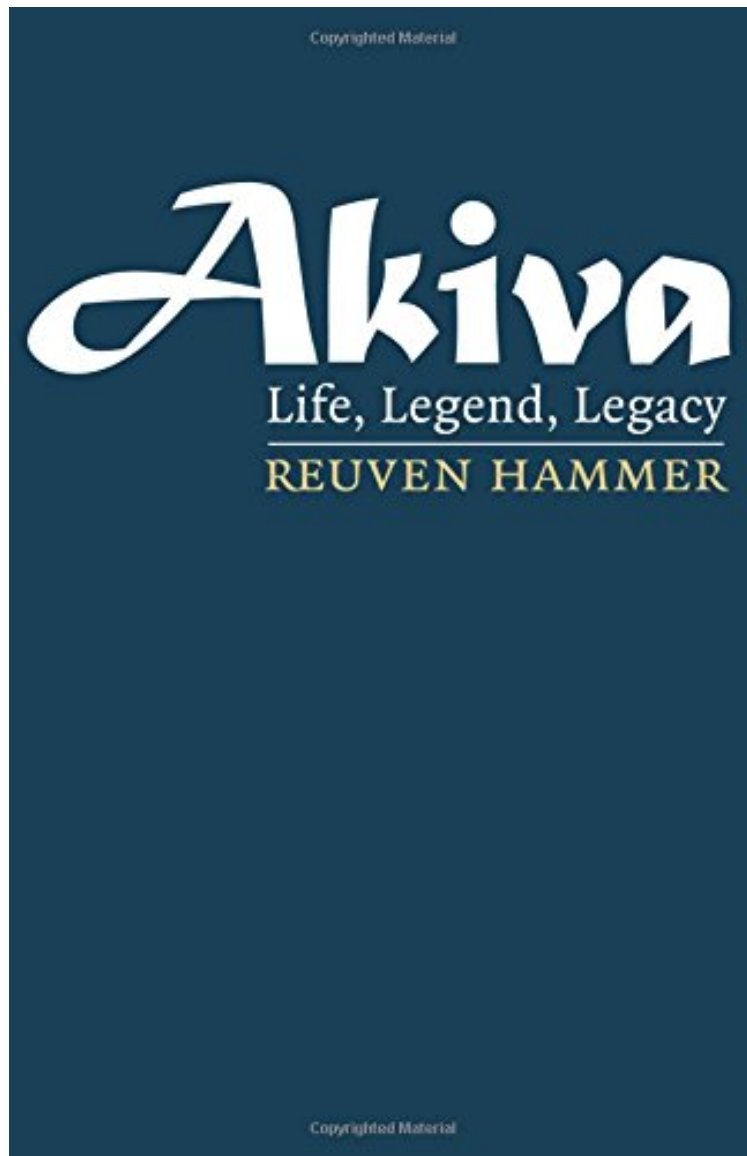


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## Akiva: Life, Legend, Legacy

*Rabbi Reuven Hammer*

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#214076 in Books Reuven Hammer 2015-10-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.60 x 1.10 x 5.80l, #File Name: 082761215X272 pages Akiva Life Legend Legacy | File size: 31.Mb

**Rabbi Reuven Hammer : Akiva: Life, Legend, Legacy** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Akiva: Life, Legend, Legacy:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A very good learned description of the sage's life and thinking By Israel Drazin Rabbi Akiva's life is a mystery. There are many legends about him, but they are untrue. He had many students, but not the 20,000 or 40,000 that legends contend. As Reuven Hammer points out in his excellent study Akiva, Life, Legend, Legacy, he did not live 120 years as the Bible states Moses lived. He did not die by having his

skin scraped from his body. He did not start his studies at age 40. The name Rachel assigned to his wife, is not found in the early contradictory legends of his marriage; it was inserted in a late Midrash because Rachel means sheep, and a sheep is mentioned earlier in this imaginative version of Akiva's life, and giving this name to Akiva's wife added symmetry. The Israel Prize Winner, Professor Shamma Friedman shows this in his excellent *A Good Story Deserves Retelling: The Unfolding of the Akiva Legend*. In fact, we do not know when Akiva was born, when he started his studies, and when he died. Our best guess, according to Hammer, is that he was born around 50 CE and died sometime between 132 and 135 BCE. Some of Rabbi Akiva's teachings mentioned by Hammer, are: 1. If two people are lost in a desert and one of them has only enough water to survive, he should not share it, the owner should drink it and live. Another sage, Ben Patura, advised that they should share the water even though they would both die. 2. Stealing from a non-Jew is worse than stealing from a Jew because it desecrates the name of God. 3. Bar Kosiba, later called Bar Kokhva, was the messiah, a most unfortunate lapse of judgment. 4. When Jews went into exile, God's presence was exiled with them. 5. In his eyes Torah study was even more important than observance. 6. The Torah was written by God in heaven prior to creation and that every word, every letter, every sign had meaning and must be interpreted. Hammer writes: Akiva's work did not stop with his death. By the end of the century the efforts of his loyal disciples led to the creation of the major works of Rabbinic Judaism, based on Akiva's teachings: the Mishnah and the Tosefta (and) midrashim. They formed the foundation for the continuation of Jewish life in the harsh conditions that prevailed, the life-giving water that sustained the Jewish people.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I rate the deliverer highly. The book itself is ...By book5eater I rate the deliverer highly. The book itself is a mixed bag. I accept that large portions of Reb Akiva's life are unclear. He is a figure of myths and tales. I wish the writer had been firmer in separating Akiva the man from Akiva the symbol.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Disappointing and incomplete. By SWF There are many good stories here but a failure to synthesize. The author does not justify his acceptance of some facts and rejection of others.

The legendary Akiva ben Yosef has fascinated Jews for centuries. Arguably the most important of the Tannaim, or early Jewish sages, Akiva lived during a crucial era in the development of Judaism as we know it today, and his theology played a major part in the development of Rabbinic Judaism. Reuven Hammer details Akiva's life as it led to a martyr's death and he delves into the rich legacy Akiva left us.

"Hammer performs a delicate balancing act not only between deciding between fact and legend, but in showing the struggles within the rabbinic community. Readers looking to learn more about Akiva and the growth of rabbinic Judaism will find his work has much to offer." Rabbi Rachel Esserman, Reporter Group