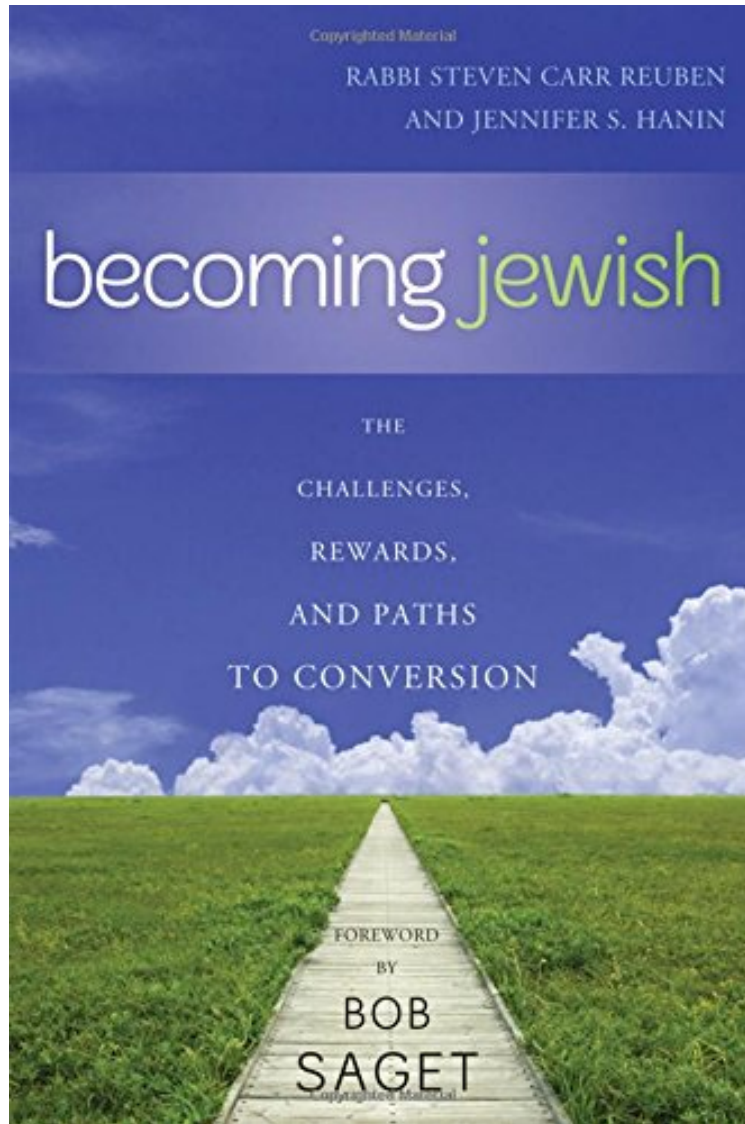


[Get free] Becoming Jewish: The Challenges, Rewards, and Paths to Conversion

Becoming Jewish: The Challenges, Rewards, and Paths to Conversion

Steven Carr Rabbi Reuben, Jennifer S. Hanin
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#320197 in Books Rowman Littlefield Publishers 2011-09-16 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.34 x .96 x 6.45l, 1.15 #File Name: 1442208481272 pages | File size: 59.Mb

Steven Carr Rabbi Reuben, Jennifer S. Hanin : Becoming Jewish: The Challenges, Rewards, and Paths to Conversion before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Becoming Jewish: The Challenges, Rewards, and Paths to Conversion:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great "intro to Judaism" book! By Stacey L. Scott This is a well-written, thought-provoking, fun book to read if whether you are interested in learning more about the Jewish culture

because of Jewish people in your life or you are considering conversion. The information provided is thorough and given in a clear, easy to understand manner. It provides you with enough info to have a basic understanding of Jewish history, culture, customs, holy days, and the issues Jews are facing in modern times. It's a book I will re-read and use as a resource in the future. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. very helpful book By Celina Mills I read the library's copy of this book last year when I began to look into conversion. Now that I'm close to finishing my conversion, I wanted to own my own copy of this book. I love it, it is so well done and very helpful. I highly recommend it to anyone curious about converting to Judaism. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. It's what you're looking for. By Hu, Yi-Su It's what you're looking for. But don't just stop here, buy other books on the subject too. You know, because you have a lot of time to read.

Becoming Jewish is the first all-inclusive, step-by-step guide to converting to Judaism. Steven Carr Reuben, a highly respected rabbi, and Jennifer S. Hanin, a convert to the faith, lead readers through the conversion process, providing the right mix of advice, resources and humor for the journey. Jews-to-be often find the steps to Judaism foreign, complex, and mysterious. From learning an ancient language, to entering the mikvah (ritual bath), to choosing a Hebrew name, to circumcision, to appearing before a bet din (Jewish court), becoming a Jew is anything but quick and easy. In this engaging and accessible guide, Reuben and Hanin offer practical wisdom for every step of conversion, including: telling family and friends selecting a denomination choosing a rabbi understanding Jewish rituals celebrating Jewish holidays putting aside childhood holidays keeping ties to the past advice on weddings, raising kids, and more Throughout, the authors focus on developing a healthy spiritual life, while helping readers understand what it means to be Jewish, absorb Jewish teachings, and live a Jewish life.

Becoming Jewish is the proverbial treasure trove of information about converting to Judaism, with facts, fables, and foibles all rolled into one well-written, well-conceived book. The two authors, one a rabbi, one a convert, write smoothly together, blending their viewpoints and deftly piggybacking on each others thoughts and feelings. A wealth of material covers everything from shopping for a rabbi, understanding Jewish values, learning about Jewish ideas on believing vs. belonging, studying Hebrew, honoring Shabbat, and celebrating the holidays at home to facing the Mikvah and the Bet Din. It also touches on issues related to raising Jewish children and brings to life the great love of the Jewish people for Israel and, especially, Jerusalem. Meaningful anecdotes about Hanin's conversion process and the new ways she learned to relate not only to Judaism but to a world that now looked different to her are sprinkled throughout the book and add a grace note of personal warmth to an already welcoming set of concepts. The book is well-organized and easy to follow. Reuben, a Reconstructionist rabbi, artfully explains the differences among the Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox movements and his own, honoring each in its own right and also mentioning trans-denominational Jewish organizations. Appendices explain the syllabi of typical conversion courses, and a glossary provides definitions of common Jewish terms, including tzedakah, Talmud, and sufganiyot. A resources section helps encourage Jewish activism by listing online Jewish magazines, such as Jewcy, museums of Jewish history and Israel-centered think tanks. Appendices, glossary, index, resources. (Jewish Book World) Conversion to Judaism usually occurs when a non-Jewish person falls in love with a Jew and the two determine that a common religious faith will make for a happier marriage. Co-author Hanin took a different route. She was already married to a Jew and was the mother of three-year old twins when she became friendly with a Jewish woman, attended her synagogue, and found there a sense of warmth that led to her conversion. Deciding to write about her experience, Hanin met Reuben, a Reconstructionist rabbi, who shared her views. The result of their collaboration is this wise and edifying guidebook to the process by which someone chooses to become a Jew. The authors spell out not only the steps to be taken, but also provide a wealth of information about Jewish traditions, practices, and customs. Their topics include: choosing a rabbi and a Jewish denomination; dealing with family and friends; observing the holidays; facing the religious court (Bet Din); raising children; anti-Semitism; and more. This second aspect of the presentation is so enlightening that all readers -- non-Jews and Jews, who can learn some unfamiliar aspects of their own religion will find the book highly instructive. (Publishers Weekly) Today, there's general agreement at least that conversion to Judaism is possible, even if there's still plenty of disagreement among authorities across the religious spectrum about what constitutes an acceptable conversion. Reconstructionist Rabbi Steven Carr Reuben and Jennifer S. Hanin don't want anyone to let that get them down on their way to joining the tribe, so their cheery guidebook, *Becoming Jewish: The Challenges, Rewards, and Paths to Conversion* (Rowman Littlefield, September) shepherds eager aspirants onward with sections like *Facing the Bet Din: Don't Sweat It*. Most remarkably, this has got to be the only book ever co-written by an ordained rabbi published with a foreword by the incomparable Bob Saget. (Tablet) Converting to Judaism is a long, involved process. This guide by a Reconstructionist rabbi and a freelance writer, who converted herself, is a welcome resource. The authors explain details such as finding the right denomination, choosing a rabbi, selecting a Hebrew name, and the need to learn Hebrew. They also discuss Jewish culture and beliefs, holidays, and traditions. Chapters on telling family and friends about the decision to convert, raising Jewish children, Kabbalah, anti-Semitism, and Israel help those converting understand important issues. There is also more doctrinaire information

about facing the Bet Din (rabbinic court) and going to the Mikvah (ritual bath). Written in a casual, friendly style with good humor and warmth, this accessible guide will help anyone considering conversion to Judaism. (Booklist) There is a long-standing tradition that, given the oppression that Jews have often faced, rabbis should make every effort to discourage would-be converts. Reuben (senior rabbi, Kehillat Israel Reconstructionist Congregation) and freelance writer Hanin, a convert to Judaism, by contrast, explain to the curious what conversion is apt to be like and address questions and issues that are likely to arise (Hebrew, Shabbat, kosher, Kabbalah, Israel, differing denominations). They instruct the reader on Judaism's this-world focus and its status as a religion that emphasizes belonging over belief and the value of every person. VERDICT Short chapters and a simple style make this an excellent choice for interested readers and perhaps the first book any rabbi ought to hand a would-be convert. With a foreword by actor and comedian Bob Saget. (Library Journal) An insistent lightheartedness and more than a few comic moments enliven *Becoming Jewish*.... Jewish readers will be surprised and enlightened by some of the details of the conversion process.... Reuben and Hanin describe the conversion process with both sweep and precision.... I expect that more than a few copies of *Becoming Jewish* will be purchased by Jews and handed to non-Jews in order to open a conversation about conversion. Indeed, it seems that the authors expected and intended the book to serve that function. But I am also convinced that the Jewish men and women who open and read the book will connect with traditions that they have forgotten or perhaps never knew at all. In that sense, the book offers a path into Judaism for both the Jew by birth and the Jew by choice. (Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles) *Becoming Jewish* is a practical guide for those who are considering conversion to Judaism. It places a particular emphasis on contemporary American Jewish culture but also describes the historic religious tradition. The authors show great sensitivity to the concerns and questions of converts and provide helpful advice in meeting such a challenging life change. Topics include, among others, American Jewish denominations, finding a rabbi, learning Hebrew, telling family and friends, conversion study programs, facing the bet din, marriage and family, kabbalah, anti-Semitism, and Israel. The folksy, familiar style is easy to read. (AJL Newsletter) *Becoming Jewish* deeply enriches the journey of anyone converting to Judaism but does so in a gutsy and refreshing way. I highly recommend it to those exploring paths to Judaism, those who are simply curious about the meaning of Judaism, those close to anyone becoming Jewish or those concerned with the future of the Jewish State: Israel. (Noa Tishby, actor/producer; founder, Act for Israel) Reading this book is like having a relaxed conversation with a great friend who is willing to explain the real truth of what it means to become Jewish and to walk you through it with calmness and clarity. What a gift to be able to take such a complicated topic and make it accessible and manageable not only for new Jews but also for longtime members of the tribe. (Leonard Felder, author of *Here I Am: Using Jewish Wisdom to Become More Present, Centered, and Available for Life*) Easily accessible, hip, and funny, *Becoming Jewish* is an excellent introduction and a warm welcome to Judaism. Highly recommended! (Ron Wolfson, Fingerhut Professor of Education, American Jewish University and author of *God's To-Do List*) I highly recommend *Becoming Jewish*. It is a clear and concise discussion for anyone considering becoming part of the Jewish people. This is the book to consult and it will answer many questions for the spiritual journey. (Rabbi Denise L. Eger, president, Board of Rabbis of Southern California) Written with clarity, wisdom, sunshine and heart, *Becoming Jewish* is an essential mentor for anyone embracing the Jewish family or exploring meaning and faith. A treasure trove for the soul. (Rabbi Klein) At a time when outreach has never mattered more, a sensitive, thoughtful and eminently practical guide for those seeking to join the Jewish people. (Rabbi Steven Z. Leder, senior Rabbi, Wilshire Boulevard Temple; author of *The Extraordinary Nature of Ordinary Things*) In a world filled with spiritual seekers, *Becoming Jewish* is an easy-going, accessible and warm hearted guide that offers insider tips while giving converts a license to laugh along the way. The authors witty approach helps converts synthesize a religion shrouded in secrecy with expressions, gestures, practices, customs, rituals and a language that dates back over 4,000 years. (Matt Miller, author of *The Tyranny of Dead Ideas*; host of NPR's *Left, Right, and Center*) With the growing debate about the connection between Jewish identity and Israel, *Becoming Jewish* serves as a useful reminder to all those who question the two and why it is so critical to see Judaism and Israel in tandem through the lens of conversation. (Asaf Romirowsky, Middle East Forum) Throughout history, many Jews have pondered what it means to be Jewish, an identity that combines religion, ethnicity, culture, history, language and other complex factors. In considering what it means to become Jewish, and why one would make that choice, the authors shed insight not only into the conversion process, but Jewish identity itself. I highly recommend *Becoming Jewish* for both reasons. (Aaron Eitan Meyer, research director of the Lawfare Project; legal correspondent for the Terror Finance Blog; board member, Act for Israel) We learn in *Becoming Jewish* that converts to Judaism are to be treated as though they were at Mount Sinai with all of Israel when Moses received God's laws. But, becoming a 'Jew by Choice' is not as simple an undertaking as imagining oneself in the desert sprinting away from Pharaoh. *Becoming Jewish* masterfully guides the interested would-be convert through the myriad of complicated issues and choices that they will confront. (William C. Daroff, vice president for Public Policy and Director of the Washington Office, Jewish Federations of North America) *Becoming Jewish* is a must read for anyone who is considering adopting the Jewish faith. Rabbi Steven Carr Reuben and Jennifer S. Hanin, herself a Jew by choice, have created a spectacular work that provides a clear, accessible and reader-friendly approach to those seeking to choose Judaism as their way of life. *Becoming Jewish* offers a path full of wisdom that will be invaluable to

anyone setting out on a Jewish journey. (Rabbi Naomi Levy, author of *To Begin Again* and *Hope Will Find You*)

About the Author Steven Carr Reuben is Senior Rabbi of Kehillat Israel Reconstructionist Congregation in California, the largest Reconstructionist congregation in the world. He is an avid speaker, author of numerous books, including *There's an Easter Egg on Your Seder Plate: Surviving Your Child's Interfaith Marriage*, articles, and blog videos on interfaith issues online and in publications ranging from *USA Today* to *The New York Post*. He lives in Pacific Palisades, California. Jennifer S. Hanin is a freelance writer, author, blogger, and a convert to Judaism. She is the author of *What to Do When You Can't Get Pregnant* and lives in southern California.