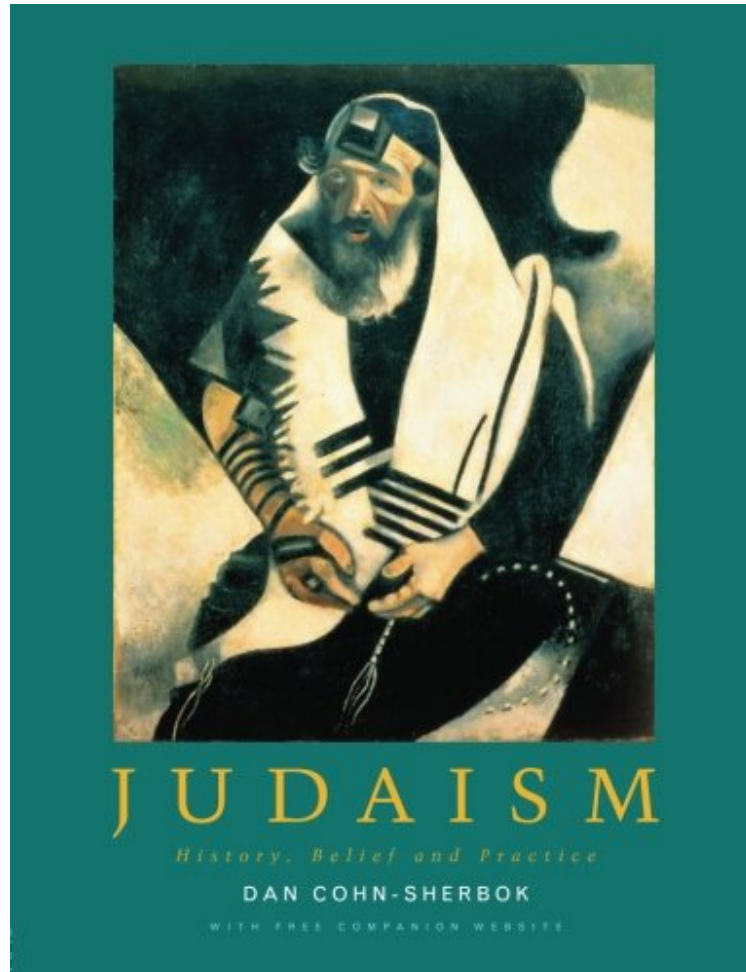


(Read ebook) Judaism: History, Belief and Practice

Judaism: History, Belief and Practice

Dan Cohn-Sherbok

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Dan Cohn-Sherbok : Judaism: History, Belief and Practice before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Judaism: History, Belief and Practice:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Tricia FranGreat condition0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Binding good though.By Breanna SkinnerSome highlights marginal notes that are distracting. Binding good though.11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. A great one-volume surveyBy FrKurt MessickThis text is the primary text for a course I teach on Modern Contemporary Judaism, at a university primarily set up for military personnel to get their education via distance education. It is ideally suited for a course in Judaism, as it is divided into three broad sections (history, belief, and practice) which are each in turn subdivided into short chapters easily digested by students, linking together well both within the sections and across the three principle divisions.The longest section is the history section, and Cohn-Sherbok begins in ancient Mesopotamia, drawing on archaeological evidence and chronicles of other ancient peoples as well as biblical sources for his development of the

people who came to be called the Jews. Cohn-Sherbok presents both the popular and/or biblical accounts of the history as well as areas of divergence and controversy where archaeological and other data may conflict or be missing. This is true at different key periods such as the Exodus and conquest of Canaan, but occasionally this part is missing (for example, there are scholars who doubt the historicity of the figure David, due to lack of extra-biblical evidence; Cohn-Sherbok does not address this controversy). Further into history, things become a bit more clear, and Cohn-Sherbok's discussion of the post-Babylonian development through the Hellenistic, Roman, Islamic, and European experiences is very solid. The discussions of the nineteenth and twentieth century include topics such as the Zionist movement, the increasing Diaspora throughout the world, the rise of Anti-Semitism, the Holocaust, the advent of the state of Israel, and a few speculations on the future of Judaism in the world. Being more than a religion or an ethnic identity, the future of Judaism looks to be as rich and complex as its past. The second section of the text deals with beliefs. This looks at some pointedly theological issues (the unity of God, providence, revelation, etc.) as well as some issues that point toward identity (the idea of a chosen people, the promised land). There is also a good discussion of messianic ideas in Judaism, and what is thought about issues such as the afterlife. Cohn-Sherbok avoids the fairly common practice of discussing these ideas in relation to Christianity, to keep both the issue and discussion grounded in the Jewish context. The third section is devoted to Jewish practice. Tying these two latter sections together, Cohn-Sherbok states that this 'explores Judaism both as a religion and way of life, providing essential information on Jewish family and community customs as well as on the beliefs and traditions that have shaped the Jewish faith throughout nearly four thousand years of history.' Practices here refers both to religious rituals (worship, Sabbath, high holy days, etc.) as well as life-cycle and community practices that are incorporated into the way of life for Jews around the world. This is a great one-volume survey of Judaism. It is comprehensive, accessible, interesting, well-illustrated with maps and pictures, and organised in a good way. Perhaps the most helpful feature is the inclusion at the end of each chapter excerpts from original texts, letters and documents from the history, liturgical works, literary creations, and more. This gives a great sense of the flavour of Judaism apart from the words of a single author, and provides a more direct connection with the ideas and peoples discussed. Another great benefit of the book is the accompanying free companion website, which provides more material, guides, maps, and other helpful pieces for students and general readers. This is a great text, and one I will continue to use for my courses.

Written by an experienced university teacher, who is also a scholar and rabbi, this extensive textbook presents an unrivalled guide to the history, belief and practice of Judaism. Beginning with the ancient Near-Eastern background, it covers early Israelite history, the emergence of classical rabbinic literature and the rise of medieval Judaism in Islamic and Christian lands. It also explores the early modern period and the development of Jewry throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Extracts from primary sources are used to enliven the narrative and provide concrete examples of Jewish civilization. Judaism: introduces texts and commentaries, including the Hebrew Bible, rabbinic texts, mystical literature, Jewish philosophy and Jewish theology provides the skills necessary to understand these step-by-step explains how to interpret the major events in nearly 4,000 years of Jewish history supports study with discussion questions on the central historical and religious issues, includes key reading for each chapter and an extensive bibliography illustrates the development of Judaism, its concepts and observances, with nearly 200 maps and photographs. A companion website links each chapter to other online resources, and gives guidance on activities and support for teachers.

'Judaism: History, Belief and Practice ... will amaze. It's encyclopaedic cover of the entirety of the learned output of 4,000 years of Jewish life is a feat in itself. It is certainly to be recommended ... a truly fine book.' - Brian Fox, Jewish Telegraph
There is no doubt that this is an excellent introductory text for undergraduates and A level students. The chapters provide useful chunks of bite-size information with suitable resources to explore key concepts ... I have no reservations in making it the set text for my undergraduate introduction to Judaism.' - Dr Deidre Burke, British Journal of Religious Education
"Judaism by Dan Cohn-Sherbok is the most comprehensive introduction to Judaism available to American undergraduates. The concise chapters of this book provide excellent background information on Jewish history, culture, and religion. As a teacher, I can build upon this information when we pursue critical issues in specialized classes in Jewish Studies. My undergraduate students at this liberal arts college praise the encyclopedic character of the book as well as the maps and text samples. Many of my students keep this book as a future reference work." - Rivka Ulmer, The John D. Catherine T. MacArthur Chair in Jewish Studies, Bucknell University
About the Author
Dan Cohn-Sherbok is an American-born rabbi and Professor of Judaism at the University of Wales. He is a prolific and distinguished writer and the author of Routledge's Atlas of Jewish History, Fifty Key Jewish Thinkers, and Judaism in the Religion of the World series.