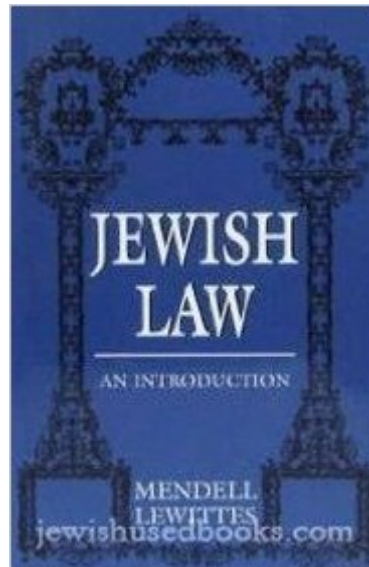


The book was found

Jewish Law: An Introduction



Synopsis

To learn more about Rowman & Littlefield titles please visit us at www.rowmanlittlefield.com.

Book Information

Paperback: 298 pages

Publisher: Jason Aronson, Inc. (September 1, 1994)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1568213026

ISBN-13: 978-1568213026

Product Dimensions: 7.1 x 0.8 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.2 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (3 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #364,317 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #9 inÂ Books > Religion &

Spirituality > Judaism > Law #162 inÂ Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Theology #550 inÂ Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Sacred Writings

Customer Reviews

Mendell Lewittes, a member of Yeshiva University's very first graduating class (1932) and a rabbi who served, it seems, all over North America for 35 years, here provides an excellent introductory overview of the history and development of Halakha. Beginning at the beginning (the creation of man), Rabbi Lewittes places the foundation of Jewish law firmly on the giving of divine commandments (mitzvot). The development of Jewish law itself essentially begins at Sinai (though with the recognition that some specifically Jewish mitzvot had been given prior to this time); the meaning of Halakha is discussed and its integration with human life expounded. The reader is then led carefully through the Written Torah and the Oral Torah, the eventual redaction of the Talmud, and the history of Halakha up to and including the Shulchan Aruch. Four closing chapters deftly analyze four modern "challenges" to Halakha: Hasidism; Reform; modern science and medical practice; and Zionism. An epilogue presents a few views of Rabbi Lewittes's own about the direction Halakha should take from here, arguing among other things that the Modern Orthodox approach is capable of both remaining true to Tradition and adapting it to modern needs. Throughout his exposition, Rabbi Lewittes maintains a firmly Maimonidean-rationalist outlook, striking just the right balance between "The mitzvot _do_ make rational sense" and "Jews are required to keep them anyway (when possible), even though they may not make sense _to us_ right at the moment.

Mendell Lewittes, a RIETS ordained Modern Orthodox Rabbi, has written a concise book on the development of halakhah ("Jewish law"), covering everything from the Torah to the Tanya, from the Zohar to Zionism. The book starts with the traditional view of Abraham, Moses, and the revelation by God to Moses at Mount Sinai. The rationale for accepting the mitzvot as binding, and as the source for all Jewish law, is discussed in depth, and illuminated by generous, albeit uncritical, quoting from our tradition's greatest sages. The importance of the Oral Law as well as the Written law is given a clear treatment, and is illustrated by demonstrating the development of early schisms in Judaism - the split between the Pharisees (progenitors of rabbinic Jews) and Sadducees (who rejected the Oral law). From here, the book moves into the era of the Tannaim and the Mishnah, and the development of the Talmud. Further topics include the development of the Gezerah, the Takkanah ("legal ordinance"), and Minhag ("custom"). From the Rishonim to the Acharonim, Lewittes tells the story of Ashkenazi and Sephardi rabbis who worked to reconcile Talmudic law with their changing world, and shows us the development of the many codes of Jewish law, particularly the Shulchan Aruch. Perhaps the most interesting part of this work lies in the discussion of the development of the Chasidic movement, and the response of the mainstream Jewish community to the Chassids. Covering the most controversial part of Jewish history, we are then exposed to the effects of the Emancipation and Haskalah (Enlightenment movement), which set the stage for the development of the modern Jewish denominations, Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform Judaism.

Mendell Lewittes, a member of Yeshiva University's very first graduating class (1932) and a rabbi who served, it seems, all over North America for 35 years, here provides an excellent introductory overview of the history and development of Halakha. Beginning at the beginning (the creation of man), Rabbi Lewittes places the foundation of Jewish law firmly on the giving of divine commandments (mitzvot). The development of Jewish law itself essentially begins at Sinai (though with the recognition that some specifically Jewish mitzvot had been given prior to this time); the meaning of Halakha is discussed and its integration with human life expounded. The reader is then led carefully through the Written Torah and the Oral Torah, the eventual redaction of the Talmud, and the history of Halakha up to and including the Shulchan Aruch. Four closing chapters deftly analyze four modern "challenges" to Halakha: Hasidism; Reform; modern science and medical practice; and Zionism. An epilogue presents a few views of Rabbi Lewittes's own about the direction Halakha should take from here, arguing among other things that the Modern Orthodox approach is capable of both remaining true to Tradition and adapting it to modern needs. Throughout his exposition, Rabbi Lewittes maintains a firmly Maimonidean-rationalist outlook, striking just the right

balance between "The mitzvot _do_ make rational sense" and "Jews are required to keep them anyway (when possible), even though they may not make sense _to us_ right at the moment.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

The Other in Jewish Thought and History: Constructions of Jewish Culture and Identity (New Perspectives on Jewish Studies) Business Ethics in Jewish Law: With a Concluding Section on Jewish Business Ethics in Contemporary Society Women, Birth, and Death in Jewish Law and Practice (HBI Series on Jewish Women) Five Centuries of Hanukkah Lamps from The Jewish Museum: A Catalogue Raisonné (Published in Association with the Jewish Museum, New York S) Healthy Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur Cookbook: Delicious Jewish Holiday Recipes (A Treasury of Jewish Holiday Dishes Book 1) Healthy Hanukkah Cookbook: Savory Jewish Holiday Recipes (A Treasury of Jewish Holiday Dishes Book 3) Jewish Holiday Style: A Guide to Celebrating Jewish Rituals in Style The Jewish Heritage Cookbook: A Fascinating Journey Through The Rich And Diverse History Of The Jewish Cuisine JEWISH IDENTITY AMONG THE IGBO OF NIGERIA: Israel's Lost Tribe and The Question of Belonging in the Jewish State The Big Jewish Book for Jews: Everything You Need to Know to Be a Really Jewish Jew God Laughed: Sources of Jewish Humor (Jewish Studies) Jewish Salonica: Between the Ottoman Empire and Modern Greece (Stanford Studies in Jewish History and C) Jewish Literacy Revised Ed: The Most Important Things to Know About the Jewish Religion, Its People, and Its History One Hundred Great Jewish Books: Three Millennia of Jewish Conversation Judaism: Everything You Need to Know About: Jewish Religion; Jewish Culture; and the Process of Converting to Judaism (How to Become a Jew) The Jewish Family Fun Book 2/E: Holiday Projects, Everyday Activities, and Travel Ideas with Jewish Themes Living a Jewish Life, Updated and Revised Edition: Jewish Traditions, Customs, and Values for Today's Families Jewish Literacy: The Most Important Things to Know About the Jewish Religion, Its People and Its History The Three Temples: On the Emergence of Jewish Mysticism (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization) The Conservative Movement in Judaism: Dilemmas and Opportunities (Suny Series in American Jewish Society in the 1990s) (Suny Series, American Jewish Society in the 1990s)

[Dmca](#)