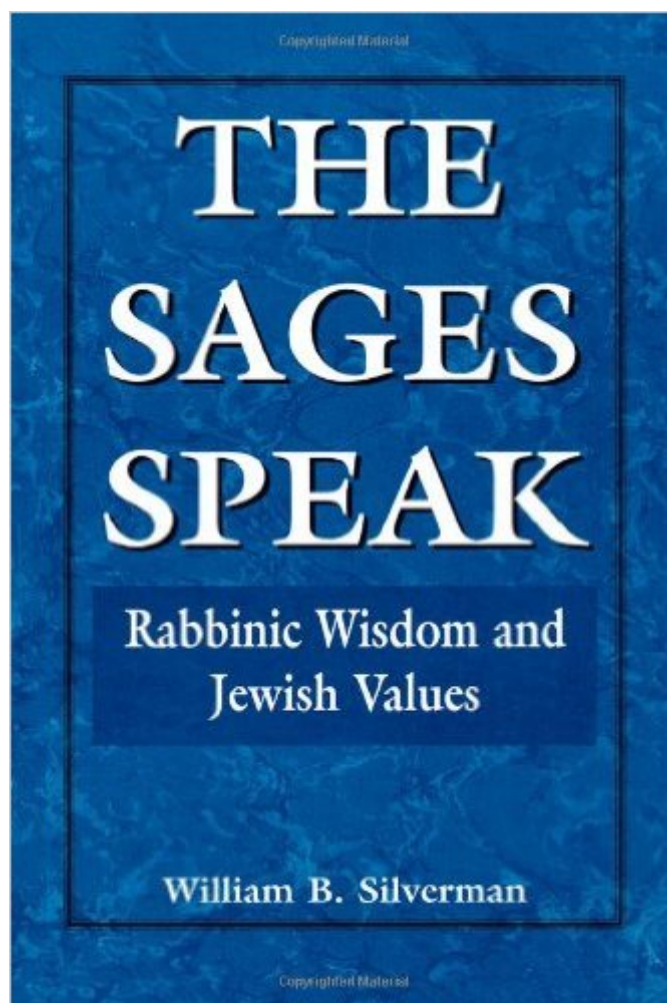


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The Sages Speak: Rabbinic Wisdom And Jewish Values



Synopsis

Organized by subject, this is a collection of teachings and quotations from the Talmud, the Bible, rabbinical commentaries, and ancient and modern religious and secular writings. Writers include Elie Wiesel, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Hebrew poet Hayim Bialik, Cynthia Ozick, Emile Zola, Albert Einstein, Bruno Bettelheim, Gertrude Stein, Irving Howe, and Maimonides. In commentary that explains why these teachings remain meaningful to Jews today, Rabbi Telushkin addresses such issues as relationships between people; individuals and their quest for meaning; what God wants from us; the modern Jewish experience; and Jewish values as they confront the Holocaust, Zionism, and Israel. Telushkin's commentaries are especially helpful because of the myriad quotations from the Talmud. There are also anti-Semitic quotations from Pharaoh and Haman (the first two recorded anti-Semites), from Voltaire, Hitler, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, H. L. Mencken, Gen. Ulysses Grant, Henry Ford, Charles Lindberg, and Louis Farrakhan, to name a few. But there is much wisdom here. Jews--and even non-Jews--will find the book a treasure. George Cohen (Booklist)

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Customer Reviews

The Sages Speak: Rabbinical Wisdom and Jewish Values, by William B. Silverman, sets out the encyclopedic task of ordering rabbinical opinions about various topics, including, God, Man, Prayer, Holiness, Justice, Faith, Eternal Life, The World to Come, and Hope. Each of these chapters is divided into sub-chapters, taking an element of the broader topic and exploring one aspect. There is a hoary tradition in Judaism for such endeavors. Rabbinical literature is a sprawling corpus, spread

across two Talmuds, commentaries, responsa, books and books, and complete command of this literature is for the select few. So, writers like Silverman take this unorganized material and organize it. Taking a passage from the Babylonian Talmud and placing it alongside a story about the Baal Shem Tov which share a common theme. There will always be a place in Jewish life for such a work, since it provides a vital bridge to a past literature this is out of the reach of most. We need such books to provide a thread leading to the past, giving us sustenance in the present, and a line to the future.

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