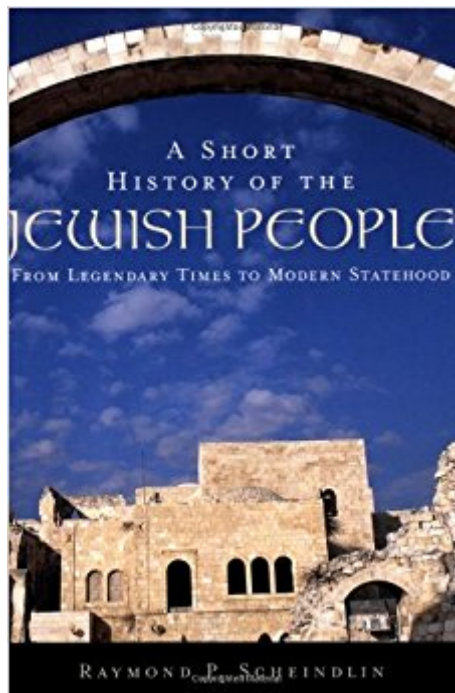




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A Short History Of The Jewish People: From Legendary Times To Modern Statehood



Synopsis

Where did the Jews come from? How did they retain their strong sense of community through centuries of dispersion? How have the Jews of the present, with their proud ethnic identity and thriving national home, emerged out of the downtrodden Jews of the past? Such questions arise naturally in the minds of anyone contemplating the long history of Jewish people. In one concise, authoritative volume, *A Short History of the Jewish People* provides insights and answers. This sweeping and highly informative work presents the major geographical, cultural, and political forces that have determined the course of Jewish history, introducing the many individuals, both religious and secular, who have shaped the character, mindset, and prospects of the Jewish people. Organized chronologically, the narrative follows the Jewish experience from legendary times to the peace agreements currently being negotiated in the Middle East. And, to give this overview an international and timely perspective, Raymond P. Scheindlin focuses his study on the pivotal events and dominant communities within each historical period. Written by a respected Hebrew scholar, cultural historian, noted author, and rabbi, *A Short History of the Jewish People* carefully describes the story of a people as varied as the many cultures in which they have lived. Including detailed maps and stirring photos, as well as timelines and sidebars, this pioneering work is a valuable resource for anyone broadly curious about the Jewish people.

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Customer Reviews

"Jewish history is often told not as a narrative of real people with human problems and interests but as an idealized national myth," writes Raymond Scheinlin, in the introduction to his excellent *A Short*

History of the Jewish People. Scheindlin is an observant Jew, but his book is not a history of the Jewish religion. It is a history of Jewish tribes around the world and the ways "they have interacted with the nations and cultures among whom they have lived, adapting to their environment while retaining a variety of continuities." The book's brevity precludes exhaustiveness, but its focus on particular Jewish communities and its disciplined analysis of their political successes and foibles give readers a firm grasp on the movements in Jewish history that have shaped the Middle East, Europe, and America. Amply illustrated with maps and photographs, the fluid prose of Scheindlin's History make this book a useful starting point for anyone seeking a secular history of Judaism that is neither skeptical nor hostile to religion. --Michael Joseph Gross --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"[A] well-written, handy little textbook....The book is well supplied with pedagogical aids, including excellent maps, boxes that explore allusions in the text itself in greater depth, a selected bibliography for each chapter, and a thorough index. As such it will be of great use as the first text in introductory surveys of the history of the Jews or the history of Judaism. It will also provide instructors with good foundations upon which to add more detailed material."--Religious Studies Review

"Scheindlin's short book provides a concise and readable summary of more than 3,000 years of Jewish history. It provides the student and general reader with an excellent introduction to the topic."--Marvin Swartz, University of Massachusetts at Amherst

"Scheindlin, a respected Hebrew scholar, cultural historian, noted author and rabbi, undertakes the daunting task of summarizing Jewish history in a concise fashion....In his narrative, ...Scheindlin sheds light on Jewish experience starting with legendary times to today's ongoing Middle East process. He doesn't shy away from problems the world's Jews have faced during their history, but concludes that 'in many ways, the Jewish condition in the present is better than it has been at any time since antiquity.'"--The Topeka Capital-Journal

Raymond P. Scheindlin has managed to write, in 263 pages, an accurate, secular and very readable history of the Jewish people. He takes the reader, chronologically, from the period of the first known references to the Israelites outside the Bible, (1220 B.C.E.), an Egyptian inscription commemorating the victory of the pharaoh Merneptah over the wandering tribe, to the declaration of Israeli statehood in 1948, and further still to the present peace negotiations in the Middle East. This sweeping and highly informative work presents the major geographical, cultural and political forces that have determined the course of Jewish history. Scheindlin also discusses the many individuals,

secular and religious, who have shaped the mindset and character of the Jewish people. I am taking a course in Jewish history and asked my professor for "an excellent but readable book" on the subject. I told him I wanted to be able to "enjoy the reading process as well as study." He immediately suggested Rabbi Scheindlin's "A Short History of the Jewish People." I must say that if it is possible to call a history book "riveting" and "compelling" and still maintain credibility, I will say it. I could not put the book down! The text is beautifully written and the history itself, as well as the people who made it, are fascinating. The book also serves as an excellent outline of Jewish History and has assisted me in understanding the course's assigned texts. Highly recommended! JANA

Having recently completed a long book on the Holocaust, I wanted to read a short history of the Jewish people. The Holocaust book caused me to desire a more complete understanding of the history of anti-Semitism. In other words, what went on before the Holocaust? Professor Scheindlin's book helped to answer some of my questions. The book starts at the year 1220 B.C.E. and ends in modern times (the copyright on my edition is 1998). I learned a lot from this book. I was fascinated by the Third and Fourth Lateran Councils, and how their injunctions adversely affected the Jews. Professor Scheindlin writes, "The Third Lateran Council, in 1179, was an important milestone, since it revived some long-neglected restrictions on the Jews, some of which were designed to bring about the social separation of Jews and Christians. Jews were prohibited from having Christian servants or employees, Christians were prohibited from living in Jewish neighborhoods, and the testimony of a Christian was to be accepted against that of a Jew. The Fourth Lateran Council, in 1215, took a decisive step further toward the segregation of Jews by creating the hated Jewish badge, which labeled every single Jew as a shameful outcast. It also prohibited Jews from holding public office and from appearing in public on Easter and certain other holy days." The purpose of sharing this quote from the book is twofold. First, I want to show what a good writer Professor Scheindlin is. Second, I want to show some parallels in how the Jews were treated in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and the twentieth century. History can indeed repeat itself. There is much more to the book than the small slice of history quoted above. If you are looking for a concise and well-written history of the Jewish people, I highly recommend this book. I'm sure I will read it again.

Scheindlin has managed to write nearly the perfect book for a lower division course on Jewish history. He successfully spans the entire scope of Jewish history from legendary times to the modern State of Israel in a mere 263 pages of very readable prose. His writing is neither dry nor laden with jargon. He writes like Leon Uris or Herman Wouk. Two issues of debate in the book

should be supplemented with additional readings. The first is that the portrayal of the Jewish-Christian schism is only presented in the context of medieval Antisemitism, and a more balanced and informative view of the formative period of Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity is found in *From Text To Tradition* by Lawrence Schiffman. The second is the lachrymos portrayal of Jewish life in the Middle Ages. That should be balanced with Salo Baron's groundbreaking article "Ghetto and Emancipation," reprinted in *The Menorah Treasury*, ed. Leo W. Schwarz (Philadelphia, 1964). With those two caveats, I would recommend this book for any introductory Jewish history or Jewish studies survey class.

This is probably the best survey history of the Jewish people that I've read. It is a "friendly" read, not overly dense and not overly simplistic. Also, the author has a modern, pro-Jewish perspective (as compared to some authors that see Judaism just as a precursor to Christianity, or reduces Jewish civilization to just a faith). I was a graduate student focusing on Jewish history and I've read a lot of them. I've used Scheindlin's book when I've taught Jewish history classes and my students found it informative and accessible.

A quick read, perfect for anyone who wants an easy to digest foundation in Jewish history.

the time came in brand new condition and is a pleasure to read

Good Value and Good Read.

well done

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