

AN INTRODUCTION TO JEWISH LAW

Jewish law is a singular legal system that has been evolving for generations. Often conflated with biblical law or Israeli law, Jewish law needs to be studied in its own right. *An Introduction to Jewish Law* expounds the general structure of Jewish law and presents the cardinal principles of this religious legal system. An introduction to modern Jewish law as it applies to the daily life of Jews around the world, this volume presents Jewish law in a way that answers all the questions a student of comparative law would ask when encountering an unfamiliar legal system. Sources of Jewish law such as revelation, rabbinic and communal legislation, judicial decisions, and legal reasoning are defined and analyzed, and the authority of who decides what Jewish law is and why their decisions are binding is investigated.

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To my wife, Sandy

“She possesses abundant wisdom, so that whatever she does is proper.”

Genesis Apocryphon 20:7–8

To my children, Sarah, Henry, Esther and Tania

To my son-in-law, Elie

To my granddaughter, Noa-Haya

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Abbreviations

<i>BB</i>	Tractate Bava Batra
BCE	Before the Common Era
<i>Ber.</i>	Tractate Berachot
<i>BK</i>	Tractate Bava Kama
<i>BM</i>	Tractate Bava Metzia
<i>BT</i>	Babylonian Talmud
ca.	circa
CE	Common Era
<i>Deut.</i>	Deuteronomy
<i>Er.</i>	Tractate Eruvin
<i>Exod.</i>	Exodus
<i>Gen.</i>	Gen.
<i>Git.</i>	Tractate Gittin
<i>Guide</i>	Guide for the Perplexed (Maimonides)
<i>Heb.</i>	Hebrews
<i>HM</i>	Hoshen Mishpat
<i>Hor.</i>	Tractate Horayot
<i>JT</i>	Jerusalem Talmud
<i>Ket.</i>	Tractate Ketubot
<i>Kid.</i>	Tractate Kiddushin
<i>Lev.</i>	Leviticus
<i>M</i>	Mishna
<i>Mak.</i>	Tractate Makot
<i>Meg.</i>	Megillat
<i>Men.</i>	Tractate Menachot
<i>MT</i>	Mishneh Torah (Maimonides)
<i>Ned.</i>	Tractate Nedarim
<i>Nid.</i>	Tractate Nida

<i>Num.</i>	Numbers
<i>Pes.</i>	Tractate Pesachim
<i>Pl.</i>	Plural
<i>Prov.</i>	Proverbs
<i>Ps.</i>	Psalms
<i>Resp.</i>	Responsa
<i>RH</i>	Tractate Rosh Hashanah
<i>Shev.</i>	Tractate Shevu'ot
<i>Tem.</i>	Tractate Temura
<i>SA</i>	Shulchan Aruch
<i>San.</i>	Tractate Sanhedrin
<i>Yev.</i>	Tractate Yevamot