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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An Introduction to Jewish Law

FRANÇOIS-XAVIER LICARI
University of Lorraine
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

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

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