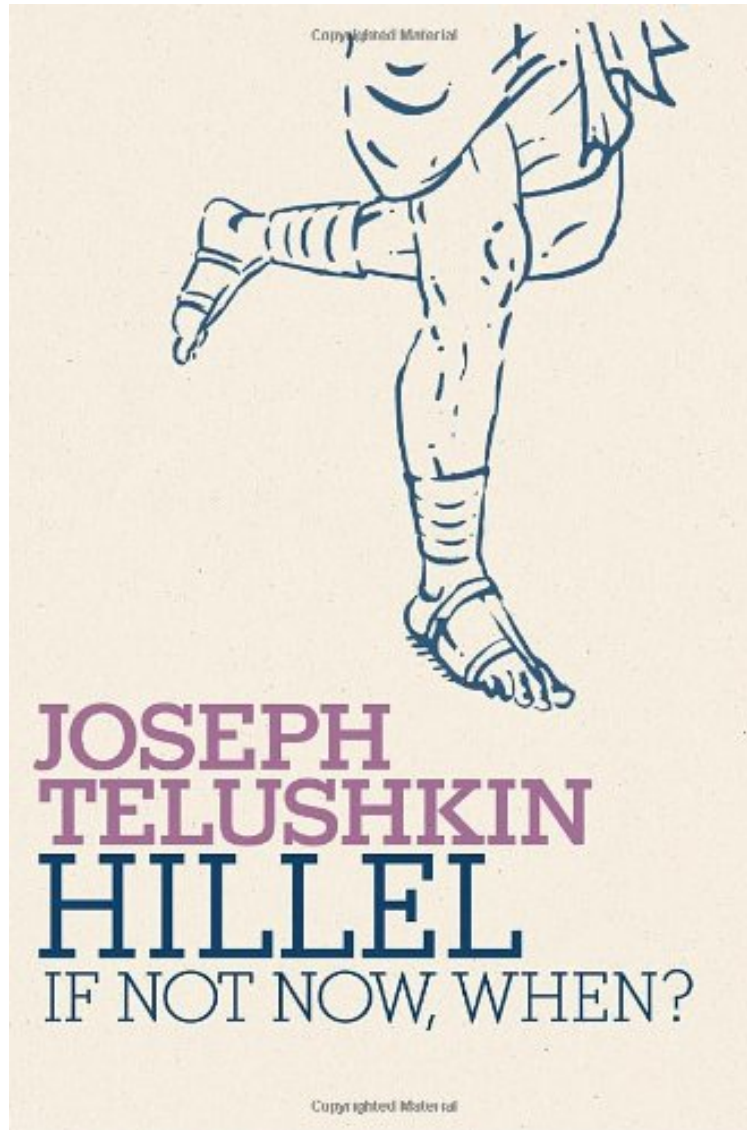


[Ebook pdf] Hillel: If Not Now, When? (Jewish Encounters Series)

Hillel: If Not Now, When? (Jewish Encounters Series)

Joseph Telushkin

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Joseph Telushkin : Hillel: If Not Now, When? (Jewish Encounters Series) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hillel: If Not Now, When? (Jewish Encounters Series):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. "Why We Need Hillel!" And, Some Other Observations. HILLEL: A Biography: A Critical Review By Andre Lawrence When Rabbi Joseph Telushkin remarked, "Why We Need Hillel Now More Than Ever!," it was not an attempt to make an exaggerated proclamation. I suggest, Telushkin was calling out to the Hillel who resides in each of us. This book is Rabbi Telushkin's quest to open a discussion on the

extraordinary life and ideas of The Talmud's most famous teacher. Hillel lived in the 1st century BCE and during the reign of King Herod. Under the dominion of Rome and still the object of interest from the Greeks. Roman and Greek citizens living side by side with Jews in Jerusalem. This was the focus of the priests' wrath: foreign culture, foreign language, foreign education and foreign religious beliefs. Add to that, you had the migration of Babylonian Jews back to Jerusalem (and often victims of disparaging remarks from "native" Jews, as were the citizens of those imperialist nations.) This was the environment that Hillel and Shammai had to work in. We often typecast Hillel and Shammai as polar opposites in terms of understanding and ruling--halakha--the Truth as Telushkin lays out in his book that the issues are not cut and dry; it's not exactly liberal and conservative. These were two men who looked at their country's situation, had the responsibility of teaching Torah and had varying interest in Judaism from foreigners. What were they supposed to do? Now, the early chapters, Telushkin discusses the issue of conversion and observance. For Shammai, to make it easy for conversion *may have* thought that the problem of Jewish observance (which had always been an issue) would become exponentially worse if the community was integrated with foreigners and perhaps their lack of interest in what they'd deem as benign. Hillel, also understanding the landscape, looked at the possibility that there'd come a day when Jews wouldn't think it necessary to marry another Jew. His decision was practical and balanced with optimism. He felt, as Telushkin reminds us, that there'd be a possibility that when converts experienced the beauty of Judaism, they'd be less likely to throw it away and any offspring would have the benefit to be reared in a household where Torah is observed and loved. There's also the issue of divorce. Here, it seems as if Shammai is more appreciative of women's rights. For Hillel, divorce was a man's domain. If, as Shammai ruled that in the case of infidelity a divorce was granted to either party, something that later rabbis considered a balance in terms of remuneration for the injured party. Hillel left the decision of separation as a matter of a husband's right to be happy or satisfied. Telushkin surmised that Hillel takes Deut. 24:1 as the line which determines that a man is seen as the aggressor in forming the union and as such he has the *right* to renounce that decision if he finds anything "unseemly" with his wife. The issue of education was also an issue of division of between them. Education for the affluent only? Or, teach everyone at every opportunity? I understand Hillel a whole lot better. With few exceptions, Hillel's thoughts and rulings are indeed life changing. With all of the contemporary concerns involved with Jewish intermarriage which seems to be the mainstay of our luminaries' (like Alan Dershowitz') national dialog, Hillel's hope in the power and the glory of Torah will withstand any threat--real or imagined--to the Jewish people. And, Jewish people of all stripes. HILLEL: IF NOT NOW, WHEN? By Rabbi Joseph Telushkin... 5 stars. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Great, comprehensive book! By Diego BPR. Regardless of your religious background, this book is sure to grab your interest if you want to get to know some of the rabbinic teachings that have molded modern Judaism (and some of Christianity). I picked it up to gain a deeper understanding of Hillel's influence on Jesus' and the New Testament as a unit. This book delivered satisfactorily. I have not read anything else from Telushkin, but in this book his tone is so warm and friendly that you feel like the one teaching you everything is a close friend. I definitely recommend it to everyone! 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. where gentle wisdom began. By R. Farr. Herod the Great was king, a suspicious and dangerous king. In that time two great lights shine in Judaism: Shammai and Hillel. That we easily know, but Rabbi Telushkin brings Hillel out of the dim past so we can look at the man and also his teaching. He would not only establish a dynasty but also carry influence further down through the centuries of Judaism. Christianity also would soon appear from a child born during his life time. Could he have influenced the thinking coming from that? May Rabbi Telushkin be blest for making Hillel more alive for us in our violent time.

Part of the Jewish Encounter series. What is hateful unto you, do not do unto your neighbor. That is the whole Torah, all the rest is commentary. Now, go and study. This is the most famous teaching of Hillel, one of the greatest rabbis of the Talmudic era. What makes it so extraordinary is that it was offered to a gentile seeking conversion. Joseph Telushkin feels that this Talmudic story has great relevance for us today. At a time when religiosity is equated with ritual observance alone, when few Jews seem concerned with bringing Jewish teachings into the world, and when more than 40 percent of Jews intermarry, Judaism is in need of more of the openness that Hillel possessed two thousand years ago. Hillel's teachings, stories, and legal rulings can be found throughout the Talmud; many of them share his emphasis on ethical and moral living as an essential element in Jewish religious practice, including his citing the concept of tikkun olam (repairing the world) as a basis for modifying Jewish law. Perhaps the most prominent rabbi and teacher in the Land of Israel during the reign of Herod, Hillel may well have influenced Jesus, his junior by several decades. In a provocative analysis of both Judaism and Christianity, Telushkin reveals why Hillel's teachings about ethics as God's central demand and his willingness to encourage the process of conversion began to be ignored in favor of the stricter and less inclusive teachings of his rabbinic adversary, Shammai. Here is a bold new look at an iconic religious leader.

From Publishers Weekly. Starred. A rabbi, lecturer, ethicist, novelist, playwright, and author, Telushkin demonstrates his unusual versatility in this 15th entry in the Jewish Encounters series. This new book about Hillel, "perhaps the greatest rabbi of the Talmud," is not a conventional biography, since little is known about Hillel's life. What is known

comes as maxims and teachings based on stories in the Talmud and the Midrash; speculation places the period of Hillel's religious leadership from about 30 B.C.E. to 10 C.E. During that time, he and his followers, the School of Hillel, frequently had disputes with the School of Shammai, led by Hillel's adversary. One argument they had dealt with was the attitude to be taken toward a potential convert. Hillel offered this instruction: "That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow. This is the entire Torah! All the rest is commentary. Now, go and study." Telushkin points out that this response is about ethics, not about rituals or even about God, thereby underlining Judaism's ethical essence. Telushkin's lucid explanations are a model of clarity, enabling readers to better understand and appreciate the significant contributions of Hillel and their contemporary applications. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Rabbi, lecturer, ethicist, novelist, playwright, and author, Telushkin demonstrates his unusual versatility in this fifteenth entry in the Jewish Encounters series. . . .Telushkin's lucid explanations are a model of clarity, enabling readers to better understand and appreciate the significant contributions of Hillel and their contemporary applications. Publishers Weekly (starred review) Joseph Telushkin's portrait of the ancient Jewish leader Hillel jumps off the page with its contemporary resonances. Hillel's lessons and sayings as a Talmud scholar have universal application for anyone interested in bringing dignity and peace to the world. In Hillel we find a master educator and a person of profound learning, spiritual depth, humility, and tolerance. David Gregory, moderator, Meet the Press Here's a book to start quite a little intra-Jewish conversation, and I, for one, will be eavesdropping with interest. Jack Miles, author of God: A Biography The venerable and much-quoted Rabbi Hillel has a lot to teach us twenty-first-century Jews. Thanks to Joseph Telushkin's book, we experience Hillel at his most optimistic, succinct, and radical, insisting on the primacy of righteous behavior, an arms-widewelcome for converts, the challenge and blessing of lifelong Jewish learning, and the importance of Jewish educators who love their students and studies in equal measure. Anita Diamant, author of Choosing a Jewish Life: A Handbook for People Converting to Judaism and for Their Families and Friends and president of Mayyim Hayyim Living Waters Community Mikveh About the Author Joseph Telushkin is the author of sixteen books, including Jewish Literacy, The Book of Jewish Values, and A Code of Jewish Ethics, the first volume of which received a National Jewish Book Award in 2006. He is a Senior Associate of CAL, serves on the board of the Jewish Book Council, is the rabbi of the Synagogue for the Performing Art in Los Angeles, and lectures throughout the United States. He lives in New York City.