



The Hillel Narratives: What the Tales of the First Rabbi Can Teach Us about Our Judaism

Louis Rieser

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The story of Hillel, frozen near-to-death on the snowy roof of the Study Hall, is well-known. In its details, however, the story is impossible. No one could lay under three cubits of snow overnight and live. And Jerusalem never receives three cubits of snow-certainly not on the night of the winter solstice, as recounted in the Babylonian Talmud five centuries after Hillel's birth. Louis Rieser set out to find the real meaning of the legends of Hillel. What is the Talmud trying to teach us about rabbis, about leadership, about important values? This provocative book argues that while the famous legends of Hillel may have nothing to teach about Hillel's actual biography, they have a great deal to teach us about Judaism. "A fresh and engaging reading of the Rabbinic biography. Louis Rieser has reopened the Rabbinic stories and made them interesting again." -Jacob Neusner

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