

Rabbinic Fantasies: Imaginative Narratives from Classical Hebrew Literature

David Stern



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This remarkable anthology of sixteen narratives from ancient and medieval Hebrew texts opens a new window onto the Jewish imagination. Presenting the captivating world of rabbinic storytelling, it reveals facets of the Jewish experience and tradition that would otherwise have remained unknown and examines the surprisingly deep connection between the values of classical Judaism and the art of imaginative narrative writing. Virtually all the narratives appear here in English for the first time. Sometimes pious, sometimes playful, and sometimes almost scandalous, they are each accompanied by an introduction and notes. The selections are framed by essays by David Stern and Mark Jay Mirsky that examine the various moods and forms in which the rabbinic imagination found expression and explore the impact that this unique form of narrative has had on modern fiction. The translations are by Norman Bronznick, Yaakov Elman, Michal Govrin, Arthur Green, Martha Himmelfarb, Ivan Marcus, Mark Jay Mirsky, Joel Rosenberg, David Ruderman, Raymond Scheindlin, David Stern, and Avi Weinstein.



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