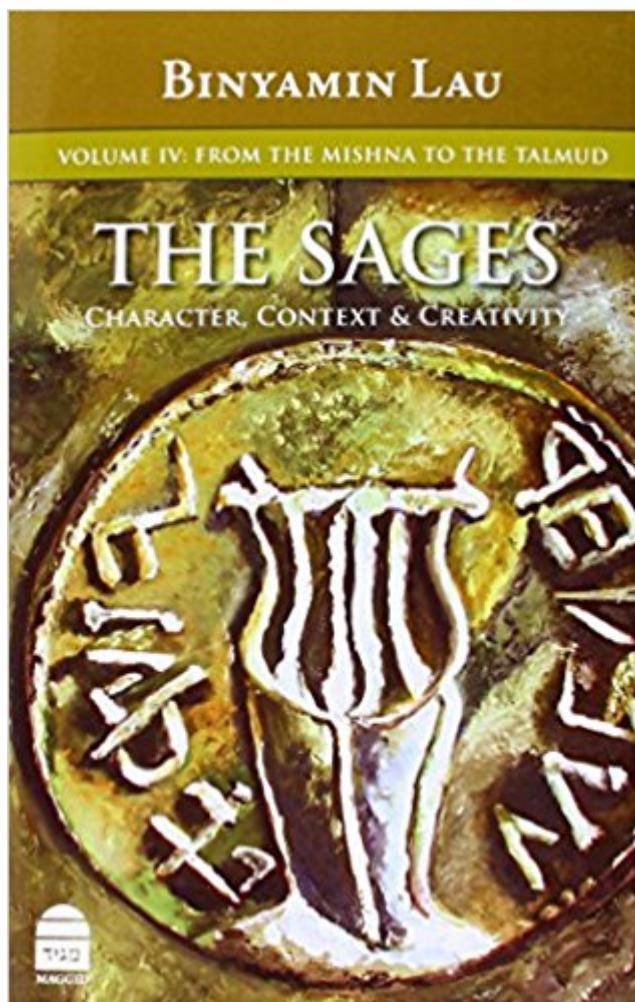


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The Sages: Character, Context, & Creativity, Volume IV: From The Mishna To The Talmud



Synopsis

The Sages brings the world of the Talmud to life, revealing the stories of the men behind its pages. This fascinating multivolume series explores the lives and times of great Jewish sages (azal) their teachers and disciples, their families and professions, the values they cherished and ideologies they opposed, the historical challenges they faced and the creative wisdom with which they faced them. Highly original and profoundly engaging, The Sages draws readers closer to the world of azal while deepening their understanding of our own. This series is the first work by the influential Jerusalem rabbi Binyamin Lau to appear in English.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

One of the best series of books that I enjoy reading is the very well-written, comprehensive, informative, and engrossing four volumes by Binyamin Lau, a highly respected Orthodox rabbi with a PhD. Lau introduces his readers to the history of Rabbinic Judaism, and the philosophy and ideology of its leaders with fascinating anecdotes and explanations of their sayings. He reports on the changes that occurred in Judaism due to new developments and tells many sayings and anecdotes about the ancient sages which he analyzes in an interesting and reasonable fashion. He doesn't consider the stories about the sages as legends that are worthless or as truthful reports. Instead he accepts the scholarly view that much in the reports is legendary, but we are able to learn a lot from them about the culture and history of the times as well as the ideas that concerned the sages and common people. In his first volume of this series, among many other subjects, Rabbi Lau discusses the origin of the Oral Law. He takes the position that the Oral Law was not revealed by

God, but the spirit of the Oral Law derives from the Written Torah and it is as if the Oral Law was revealed at Sinai, and he states that the Oral Law must keep developing. We do not have an exact date for the beginning of the Oral Law. It seems that the beginning of this period must be placed somewhere between the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (about 450 BCE) and the ascent of Alexander of Macedonia (333 BCE). • Lau describes the struggles accompanying the onset of the Oral Law. He speaks about the Sadducees and Pharisees. The Sadducees attempted to maintain the ancient regime.

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