



Solomon and the Ant: And Other Jewish Folktales

From Boyds Mills Press

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Solomon and the Ant: And Other Jewish Folktales From Boyds Mills Press

A treasure trove of forty-three religious, wisdom, riddle, and trickster Jewish folktales that have been told near the hearth, at the table, and in the synagogue for centuries. Sheldon Oberman, a master storyteller, retells the tales with simplicity and grace, making them perfect for performing and reading aloud. Peninnah Schram, herself an acclaimed storyteller and folklorist, provides lively notes and commentary that examine the meaning of each tale and its place in history.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 5 Up—An unusually varied and useful collection of 44 folktales ranging from legends involving the ethical dilemmas of King Solomon to stories of the Prophet Elijah to wisdom tales of ancient rabbis to universal stories given a Jewish slant and selections from near-modern times. The inspiration for Obermans retellings stems from many cultures and continents, yet his direct, relatively unadorned language manages to convey the time and atmosphere of each setting. Sometimes reverent, sometimes jocular, each of the stories has something to teach. Oberman appends explanatory notes and source information to each folktale.

Penninah Schram, who completed the editing after Obermans death, has augmented the commentaries.

Scholars will appreciate the notes indicating folkloric motifs and variants as well as the full bibliography.

This is a gold mine for storytellers and educators alike.—*Miriam Lang Budin, Chappaqua Public Library, NY*
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From Booklist

Gr. 5-8. Told in the relaxed, informal voice of someone totally at home with the material, this collection of 43 traditional Jewish stories is authoritative as well as immensely entertaining. Before his recent death, scholar-storyteller Oberman collected and retold the folktales, providing brief introductions to each along with endnotes about culture and sources. His colleague Penninah Schram has added a fine general introduction and contributed some of the commentary. The stories, from both Ashkenazi and Sephardic traditions, are arranged more or less chronologically—from biblical days through the talmudic period to more contemporary times. There are legends, medieval fables, trickster tales, and more. As Oberman points out, the fun is not in the kick at the end of the stories, but in the telling and the wry sense of recognition. The stories, wonderful for storytelling and sharing, are accessible even to listeners younger than the target audience, and the notes and commentary will provide older children with context and history. For more stories to share with children, look to Isaac Bashevis Singer's *Gimpel the Fool: And Other Stories* (1957).

Hazel Rochman

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Review

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"A gold mine for storytellers and educators alike." --*School Library Journal*

"Storytellers, librarians, teachers, parents, writers, and illustrators - rejoice! . . . In an introduction that alone is worth the price of the book, Peninnah Schram discusses the characteristics of Jewish folklore and calls this book, Oberman's last one, his legacy. Everything that a collection of folklore should have is here. Before each story, there are brief introductory remarks that supply background, historical setting, or thematic content. The stories themselves are fairly short, from a paragraph to a few pages, and they beg to be told to children. . . . Following each story is a note by Oberman, additional commentary written by Schram, plus sources and variants, and motif numbers from the Israel Folktale Archives (IFA). These sections are invaluable resources for adults, whose understanding of each story and Jewish folklore in general will be

increased by reading them. . . . The fact that many of these stories have not been retold and illustrated for children should be an inspiration to writers and illustrators! . . . This book is [Oberman's] crowning achievement and indeed, a legacy to everyone who cherishes Jewish stories." --*Association of Jewish Libraries Newsletter*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jennifer McNab:

Do you really one of the book lovers? If so, do you ever feeling doubt if you find yourself in the book store? Aim to pick one book that you find out the inside because don't evaluate book by its deal with may doesn't work here is difficult job because you are frightened that the inside maybe not while fantastic as in the outside appearance likes. Maybe you answer is usually Solomon and the Ant: And Other Jewish Folktales why because the great cover that make you consider with regards to the content will not disappoint you. The inside or content is actually fantastic as the outside or perhaps cover. Your reading 6th sense will directly direct you to pick up this book.

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