



Rashi (The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization)

Avraham Grossman

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To this day, the commentaries on the Bible and Talmud written by the 11th-century scholar known as Rashi remain unsurpassed. Rashi's influence on Jewish thinking was, and still is, significant. His commentary on the Pentateuch was the first Hebrew book to be printed, giving rise to hundreds of supercommentaries. Christian scholars, too, have relied heavily on his explanations of biblical texts. In this volume - now available in paperback - author Avraham Grossman presents a masterly survey of the social and cultural background to Rashi's work and pulls together the strands of information available on Rashi's life, his personality, his reputation during his lifetime, and his influence as a teacher. Grossman discusses each of Rashi's main commentaries in turn, including such aspects as his sources, his interpretative method, his innovations, and his style and language. Attention is also given to Rashi's halakhic monographs, responsa, and liturgical poems. Despite Rashi's importance as a scholar and the vast literature published about him, two central questions remain essentially unanswered: what was Rashi's worldview, and was he a conservative or a revolutionary? Professor Grossman considers these points at length, and his in-depth analysis of Rashi's worldview - particularly Rashi's understanding of Jewish uniqueness, Jewish values, and Jewish society - leads to conclusions that are likely to stimulate much debate. *** "Grossman's book is an impressive one. Even after completing the book, Rashi as a person is still as elusive as ever. What Grossman has done though is show how remarkable Rashi was, how broad and impactful his written works are. "Rashi" is a very readable, accessible and fascinating biography of his life, writings and worldview." -- Ben Rothke, The Times of Israel, The Blogs, February 2016 [Subject: Jewish Studies, Religious Studies]

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