



How Does Jewish Law Work

J. Simcha Cohen

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Should charity be given to fakers? Is it a mitzvah to post bail for a Jewish prisoner? Is there a halachic aversion against men having conversations with women? Is there hope for a real sinner to repent? Is the mitzvah to make a bride happy a communal mitzvah or a private commandment? What is the proper method of salting the challah eaten on Shabbat? How do rabbis arrive at the answers to questions such as these? In *How Does Jewish Law Work?: A Rabbi Analyzes 95 Contemporary Halachic Questions*, Rabbi J. Simcha Cohen, noted columnist for *The Jewish Press*, provides both the answers to questions of Jewish law and a look at the process by which the answers are derived. According to Rabbi Cohen, "Halachah, the distinctly unique Jewish legal system, crystallizes the guidelines of Judaism. It makes us into Jews and marks us as Jewish. As such, an understanding of the halachic process provides insight into the inner soul of Jewish life itself." In this book, Rabbi Cohen explores issues surrounding charity, Jewish communal concerns, repentance and rebuke, marriage and family life, rituals, Sabbath and holiday observances, and prayers. A companion volume to his previous best-seller, *Timely Jewish Questions, Timeless Rabbinic Answers*, *How Does Jewish Law Work?* clearly presents each question and carefully details the process of finding its answer. Through explication of verses from the Torah, talmudic passages, and other sources, the reader receives the answer to the question and is also given the background information to see how a rabbi arrives at the halachic decision. The book includes a helpful glossary, an index, notes, and references to facilitate further study. There are many books that provide answers to questions of Jewish observance and thought. *How Does Jewish Law Work?* differs in that it places the answers in their proper contexts. For the person seeking to understand Jewish law, this book offers the opportunity to learn why Jews do certain things. For those a

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Kenneth Grimes:

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