



A Circle in the Square: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin Reinvents the Synagogue

Edward Abramson

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A Circle in the Square tells the story of a project that by all the rules of logic should have failed, but instead succeeded wildly. In the 1960s, a time of deep religious and existential crisis, when the question of God's existence was being debated among people of all faiths, a young man fresh out of graduate school began teaching an ancient religion to its own members - Jews who had little or no connection to Judaism.

In 1964, when twenty-three-year-old Rabbi Steven Riskin became the rabbi of Lincoln Square Synagogue on New York's Upper West Side, he had no set plan. Nevertheless, he revolutionized Orthodox Judaism by making it attractive and relevant to American Jews.

Within these pages, readers will learn about Rabbi Riskin's unprecedented approach to adult Jewish education and his steadfast commitment to reaching out to each and every Jew within and beyond the four walls of Lincoln Square Synagogue. Rabbi Riskin also emphasized the importance of bringing heaven down to earth, and inviting God into the synagogue as a regular guest. *A Circle in the Square* is a spellbinding account of one man's profound influence on Orthodox Judaism - an influence that is felt to this day.

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