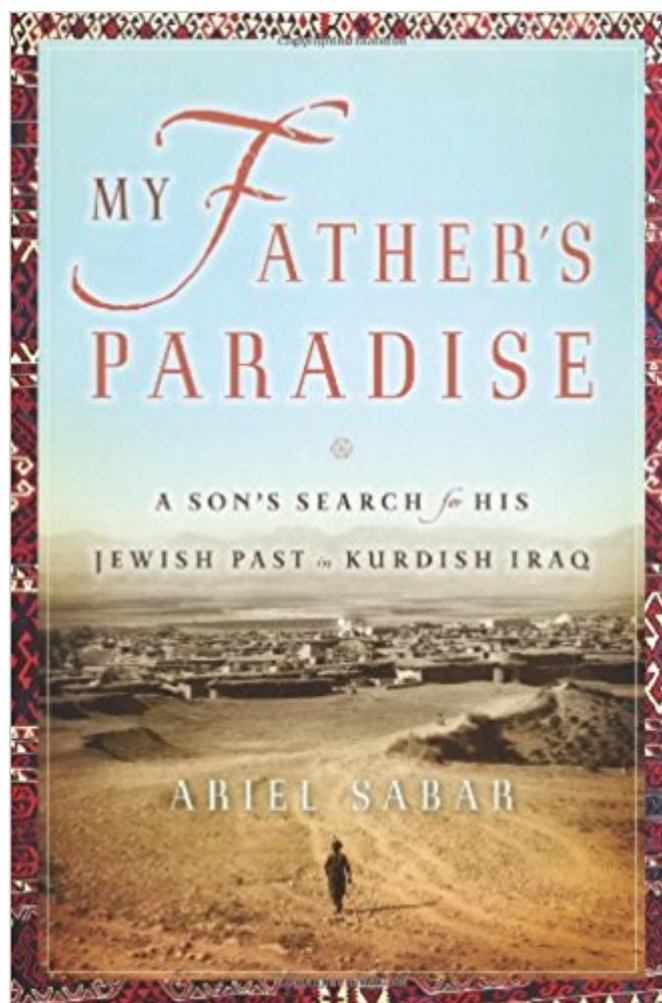


The book was found

My Father's Paradise: A Son's Search For His Jewish Past In Kurdish Iraq



Synopsis

In a remote corner of the world, forgotten for nearly three thousand years, lived an enclave of Kurdish Jews so isolated that they still spoke Aramaic, the language of Jesus. Mostly illiterate, they were self-made mystics and gifted storytellers and humble peddlers who dwelt in harmony with their Muslim and Christian neighbors in the mountains of northern Iraq. To these descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel, Yona Sabar was born. Yona's son Ariel grew up in Los Angeles, where Yona had become an esteemed professor, dedicating his career to preserving his people's traditions. Ariel wanted nothing to do with his father's strange immigrant heritage until he had a son of his own. Ariel Sabar brings to life the ancient town of Zakho, discovering his family's place in the sweeping saga of Middle-Eastern history. This powerful book is an improbable story of tolerance and hope set in what today is the very center of the world's attention.

Book Information

Hardcover: 325 pages

Publisher: Algonquin Books; First Edition edition (August 21, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1565124901

ISBN-13: 978-1565124905

Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 1.1 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars See all reviews (211 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #780,018 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #325 in Books > History > Middle East > Iraq #616 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Middle East #669 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Ethnic & National > Jewish

Customer Reviews

At heart this is about a Jewish man, born and raised in America, trying as a grown-up to find a connection to the immigrant father by whom he was baffled and embarrassed as a child. Ariel Sabar knows how to tell a story, however, and it's his writing and organization even more than the story itself that makes this book such a treasure. But the story is wonderful, too. The book starts in the village of Zakho, in Kurdish Iraq, with the tale of its people, including the author's great-grandfather, Ephraim, the dyer, whom the locals believe talks to angels. Sabar makes the village and its inhabitants come alive and while I at times wished there were more photos included in the book, Sabar's writing is usually picture enough. Sabar's parents are married (arranged, of course),

Sabar's father, Yona, and his siblings are born, and too many of them die. One goes tragically missing. Throughout the personal saga, Sabar presents a global context -- World Wars I & II, the relationship of his family's native language in Zakho (Aramaic) to the rest of Iraq, to the multi-culturalism and religious harmony of Kurdistan and how the area was divided in the wake of the first World War, to the changing attitudes toward Jews in Iraq and the Middle East and the foundation of Israel. In the '50's Sabar's family relocates, not entirely willingly, to Israel, where they find not the holy land of their dreams, but a huge and unwelcoming city in which they are the lowest of the low. Most of the middle of the book follows Yona's tale as he works to make something of himself in this hostile environment, eventually earning a scholarship to Yale and becoming a respected professor of Neo-Aramaic at UCLA.

The events of the Middle East that assault us each day from CNN and other sources seem to be motivated by an understanding of the world that is completely removed from what is taken for granted by the West. It is a world where one's religion is not only their faith but their tribal identification; where everything is conducted in the context of cultural assumptions more rooted in the world of medieval nomadic traders than the egalitarian ideas of modern nation-states. "Why do they act this way?" we often wonder as we witness their stubborn refusal to act like us. Although not written for that purpose, Ariel Sabar's *My Father's Paradise* gives keen insight into this world that is at once both lost but still with us in today's headlines. Sabar's family line traces back to a time when the Jews of the Middle East were not centered in Israel but spread throughout the region. Most of these communities are now gone - leaving because of their dream of a Jewish state or their fear of remaining behind what is now enemy lines. Like the now firm divide between the Greece and Turkey, the current situation tells us nothing about the past - and everything. Sabar was motivated to trace his roots and this led to an small area in what is now Kurdish Iraq. There his family was part of a small Jewish community that was so isolated they still spoke Aramaic - a language that once was the lingua franca of the Middle East but was thought to have died centuries earlier. In retracing his family's steps, Sabar's eyes were opened to a world we barely know existed, one where the strange mix of ethnic and religious identities worked with and often around the authorities to preserve some semblance of their traditions.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

My Father's Paradise: A Son's Search for His Jewish Past in Kurdish Iraq Word Search Book for Adults: Word Search Puzzles to Improve Memory and Exercise: word search, word search books, word search books for adults, adult word search books, word search puzzle books Word Search

Puzzles Large Print: Large print word search, Word search books, Word search books for adults, Adult word search books, Word search puzzle books, Extra large print word search Beautiful Boy: A Father's Journey through His Son's Meth Addiction Mullas, Sufis, and Heretics: The Role of Religion in Kurdish Society: Collected Articles (Analecta Isisiana: Ottoman and Turkish Studies) Prayer Warriors: The True Story of a Gay Son, His Fundamentalist Christian Family, and Their Battle for His Soul The Other in Jewish Thought and History: Constructions of Jewish Culture and Identity (New Perspectives on Jewish Studies) Warriors Word Scramble: Word Scramble Games - Word Search, Word Puzzles And Word Scrambles (Word Games, Brain Games, Word Search, Word Search Games, Word ... Scramble, Word Scrabble, Unscramble Word) The Best Large Print Word Search Puzzle Book: A Collection of 50 Themed Word Search Puzzles; Great for Adults and for Kids! (The Best Large Print Word Search Puzzle Books) (Volume 1) Fingerspelling Word Search Games - 36 Word Search Puzzles with the American Sign Language Alphabet: Volume 01 (Fingerspelling Word Search Games for Adults) The Divine Comedy & Paradise: Paradise v. 3 (Classics) Paradise Lost: An Annotated Bibliography (Paradise series Book 1) Because of His Past (For His Pleasure, Book 24) Keep My Son: A Mother's Unprecedented Battle and Victory Over her Son's Mental Illness Son of a Son of a Gambler: Winners, Losers, and What to do when you win the Lottery (Wealth Without Wall Street) There Is Greatness Within You, My Son: A Blue Mountain Arts Collection of Thoughts Every Parent Wants to Share with a Son Los hombres son de Marte, las mujeres son de Venus Some Assembly Required: A Journal of My Son's First Son Henry's Demons: Living with Schizophrenia, A Father and Son's Story Letters to My Son: A Father's Wisdom on Manhood, Life, and Love

[Contact Us](#)

[DMCA](#)

[Privacy](#)

[FAQ & Help](#)