Book Review of Hillel Goldberg's "Storied Lives around the World"

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Dr. Israel Drazin is the author of twenty-three books, including a series of five volumes on the Aramaic translation of the Hebrew Bible, which he co-authored with Dr. Stanley M. Wagner, and a series of four books on the twelfth century philosopher Moses Maimonides, the latest being Maimonides: Reason Above All, published by Gefen Publishing House, which he wrote alone. His website, visited by over 25,000 people annually is www.booksnthoughts.com.

Storied Jewish Lives around the World, by Hillel Goldberg

Feldheim Publishers, 2013, 228 pages

Rabbi Hillel Goldberg, an award winning author who has published inspiring Jewish stories for over 45 years, and has authored five previous books, has now given us three dozen well-crafted, easy-to-read, inspiring tales of people who we will admire, people we should emulate.

“There is greatness,” Rabbi Goldberg writes, “not only in well known leaders. ‘There is no person who does not have his hour.’ I have known this person too – the ‘simple Jew,’ the poshuteh Yid – shining in his moment of distinction. I have tried to capture” the greatness of these Jews, and their contribution to those around them.

The rabbi succeeds. His stories are interesting, inspiring, and very moving. He tells of people who lived normal lives, but unexpectedly became angels of God.

Among many others, Rabbi Goldberg tells about Professor Frank Talmage who died at age fifty. Despite being very ill, he devoted himself to what became a

classic work on the Bible commentator David Kimchi (1160-1235). Although at times quite ill, he continued to teach and inspire students.

He tells us about Daniel Kravitz who because of kindness to a skinhead neo-Nazi, he was able to persuade him to reconnect with his parents and abandon his neo-Nazi group.

There are also stories of an eighteenth century Polish nobleman who converted to Judaism and surrendered his life for his new religion; a holocaust survivor who died years
after the holocaust with the same pious behavior as his grandfather when he died; and the tale of Werner and Lucie who despite numerous difficulties, including the horrors of
the holocaust, difficulties created by the British when they administered Palestine, and a separation of seven years, were able to remain true to each other, reunite, and marry.

In short, this is an inspiring book that readers will enjoy because the stories are fascinating and because of the positive feelings they will produce when they are read.