

## Aryeh Kaplan Jewish Meditation A Practical Guide

A rabbi describes his work in the area of using Zen meditation to enhance Jewish spirituality.

Meditative methods of Kabbalah. A lucid presentation of the meditative methods, mantras, mandalas and other devices used, as well as a penetrating interpretation of their significance in the light of contemporary meditative research.

The late Aryeh Kaplan was one of the most creative personalities to bless the Jewish scene in the last generation. At his death he left many unpublished articles and other works. This collection contains some of his most provocative insights, combining ancient Kabbalistic teaching with the discoveries of modern science. Among the topics covered in this volume are such basic concepts as the Jewish and Kabbalistic view of immortality, resurrection of the dead, the age of the universe, and astrology. All are published for the first time. The book also includes a translation of Rabbi Israel Lipschitz' 1845 article on resurrection, which deals in part with the paleontological discoveries of the first half of the nineteenth century. It is thus one of the earliest such treatments by an Orthodox thinker, one which Rabbi Kaplan referred to and uses as a precedent for his own views.

Written in a warm, accessible, and intimate style, *Be Still and Get Going* will touch those who are searching for an authentic spiritual practice that speaks to them in their own cultural language. Lew is one of the most sought-after rabbis on the lecture circuit. He has had national media exposure for his dynamic fusion of Eastern insight and Bible study, having been the subject of stories on ABC News, the McNeil Lehrer News Hour, and various NPR programs. In the past five years there have been national conferences on Jewish meditation in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Miami where Lew has been a featured speaker. Lew's first book, *One God Clapping*, was a San Francisco Chronicle bestseller and winner of the PEN Josephine Miles Award for Literary Excellence. Publishers Weekly hailed him as "a perceptive thinker" for his "refreshing and sometimes startling perspective" in his last book, *This Is Real and You Are Completely Unprepared*.

For centuries, spiritual teachers have told stories to convey lessons about God and perceptions of the world around us. Hasidic master Rebbe Nachman of Breslov perfected this teaching method through his captivating and entertaining stories which are fast-moving, richly structured, and filled with penetrating insights. This collection presents Rebbe Nachman's beloved teachings, translated by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan and accompanied by illuminating commentary drawn from the works of Rebbe Nachman's pupils. With a preface by Rabbi Chaim Kramer, this important work brings authentic interpretations of Rebbe Nachman's stories to English-speaking readers, allowing them to see the rich heritage of Torah and Kabbalah that underlies each word of his teachings. (Previously published in hardcover by Breslov Research Institute as *Rabbi Nachman's Stories* [ISBN 0-930213-02-5].)

Students of meditation are usually surprised to discover that a Jewish meditation tradition exists and that it was an authentic and integral part of mainstream Judaism until the eighteenth century. *Jewish Meditation* is a step-by-step introduction to meditation and the Jewish practice of meditation in particular. This practical guide covers such topics as mantra meditation, contemplation, and visualization within a Jewish context. It shows us how to use meditative techniques to enhance prayer using the traditional liturgy—the Amidah and the Shema. Through simple exercises and clear explanations of theory, Rabbi Kaplan gives us the tools to develop our spiritual potential through an authentically Jewish meditative practice.

There is an ancient Hebrew text that speaks of a Torah Kedumah, a "Primordial Teaching," that existed before the creation of the world. This is not the Torah as it is known in conventional terms; it is something far more mysterious—something pre-existent and pre-creation. The Primordial Torah does not come from some ancient time, and is not based on any historical texts; it is a teaching more primordial than the creation of the world, and thus not bound to the dimensions of time and space. This book is based on the first public presentation of the Kedumah Teaching—the mystical path of the Primordial Torah. With clarity, humor, and erudition, Zvi Ish-Shalom guides us on an experiential journey back to our deepest nature, the non-conceptual ground of reality and primordial source of all wisdom teachings.

In this volume published by the OU and NCSY, Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan asks hard questions about Judaism and its commandments, and he gives compelling answers that have broadened the horizons of countless

This essay is an examination of the age of the universe as discussed in Kabbalistic works. It is important to realize that the Kabbalistic texts do not only discuss mysticism, but also many areas of hashkafah (Jewish outlook) which are of great importance to us. Let us begin with the classic question asked about the age of the universe. At face value, the Torah seemingly teaches us that the universe is 6,000 years old. Therefore, many people would hold the opinion that anyone who believes that the world is older than 6,000 years is an apikores (one who denies the basic tenets of Judaism). However, there is scientific evidence that the universe is more than 6,000 years old; maybe millions of times more. How do we resolve this question?

*Kabbalah of Creation* is a new translation of the early Kabbalah of Rabbi Isaac Luria, founder of the most influential Jewish mystical school of the last 400 years. Living in relative obscurity in Northern Galilee, Luria experienced a powerful epiphany that influenced his lyrical, influential text. Poetically and meditatively described, the range of subjects includes the revelation of the Godhead's light in the world and its relationship to every aspect of the human life cycle, including lovemaking, conception, gestation, birth, and maturation.

"When the summer begins to approach, go out to meditate in the meadows. When every bush of the field begins to return to life and grow, they all yearn to be included in your prayer." Rebbe Nachman emphasized the greatness of spontaneous, improvised prayer uttered in one's own language and springing from the heart -- hitbodedut. This handbook of his teachings on prayer includes Rabbi Kaplan's scholarly introduction setting hitbodedut in its context in the history of Jewish prayer and meditation.

"A profoundly inspiring yet practical guide to well-being from one of modern Judaism's most beloved sages. As a congregational rabbi for half a century and the bestselling author of *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* and twelve other books on faith, ethics, and how to translate the timeless wisdom of religious thought into dealing with everyday challenges, Harold Kushner knows a thing or two about living a good life. In this compassionate new work, Kushner distills nine essential lessons from the sum of his teaching, study and experience, offering a lifetime's worth of spiritual food for thought, pragmatic advice, inspiration for better living, and strength for trying times. With vital, original insights into everything from belief ("there is no commandment

in Judaism to believe in God"), to conscience (the Garden of Eden story as you've never heard it), to mercy ("forgiveness is a favor you do yourself, not a favor to the person who offended you"), grounded in Kushner's brilliant readings of Scripture, history and popular culture, *Nine Essential Things I've Learned About Life* is a capstone addition to Kushner's oeuvre"-- Discover the hidden secrets of Torah and Kabbalah through the captivating stories of Rebbe Nachman of Breslov. Rabbi Nachman's stories are among the great classics of Jewish literature. They have been recognized by Jews and non-Jews alike for their depth and insight into both the human condition and the realm of the mysterious. from Aryeh Kaplan's Translator's Introduction For centuries, spiritual teachers have told stories to convey lessons about God and perceptions of the world around us. Hasidic master Rebbe Nachman of Breslov (1772-1810) perfected this teaching method through his engrossing and entertaining stories that are fast-moving, brilliantly structured, and filled with penetrating insights. This collection presents the wisdom of Rebbe Nachman, translated by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan and accompanied by illuminating commentary drawn from the works of Rebbe Nachman's pupils. This important work brings you authentic interpretations of Rebbe Nachman's stories, allowing you to experience the rich heritage of Torah and Kabbalah that underlies each word of his inspirational teachings. Kabbalah is an ancient Jewish wisdom that explains the laws of spiritual energy. Up until very recently the Kabbalah was reserved for the elite, those who only after years of scholarship and practice were allowed to enter this mystical realm. However, one doesn't need to devote one's life to intense study to reap the rich rewards of the Kabbalah. With just a basic understanding of a few key concepts, our lives can be enriched immensely. We can then begin to fulfill our deepest dreams and reach our most important goals, becoming the people we long to become. By learning to understand the Sefirot--the ten spiritual properties that flow from the cosmic source into our heart--we can connect to the universe and profoundly transform our experience of daily life. For example, *Hessed*, or "loving-kindness," represents the desire to be generous, while *Gevurah* is the desire to focus intently or withhold. These properties must be balanced in order for harmony and well-being to occur. Rabbi Laibl Wolf shows how to maintain that balance and enjoy a healthy and productive life by using simple meditation and creative visualization techniques to grasp the spiritual nature of our life. Practical Kabbalah draws upon ancient wisdom but offers a modern interpretation and easy-to-understand techniques for delving deeper into our selves and our world and for reaping the bounteous gifts that were always meant for us.

Collected essays on Jewish themes.

Students of meditation are usually surprised to discover that a Jewish meditation tradition exists and that it was an authentic and integral part of mainstream Judaism until the eighteenth century. *Jewish Meditation* is a step-by-step introduction to meditation and the Jewish practice of meditation in particular. This practical guide covers such topics as mantra meditation, contemplation, and visualization within a Jewish context. It shows us how to use meditative techniques to enhance prayer using the traditional liturgy—the Amidah and the Shema. Through simple exercises and clear explanations of theory, Rabbi Kaplan gives us the tools to develop our spiritual potential through an authentically Jewish meditative practice.

While accompanying eight high-spirited Jewish delegates to Dharamsala, India, for a historic Buddhist–Jewish dialogue with the Dalai Lama, poet Rodger Kamenetz comes to understand the convergence of Buddhist and Jewish thought. Along the way he encounters Ram Dass and Richard Gere, and dialogues with leading rabbis and Jewish thinkers, including Zalman Schacter, Yitz and Blue Greenberg, and a host of religious and disaffected Jews and Jewish Buddhists. This amazing journey through Tibetan Buddhism and Judaism leads Kamenetz to a renewed appreciation of his living Jewish roots.

Jewish mystics from biblical times to the present have explored the hidden secrets of the Torah in quest of a single goal: to lose the self in the Infinite "No-thingness" (Ein Sof) and be at one with God. In language accessible to the layperson, this *Shambhala Guide* provides a detailed introduction to the complex world of Kabbalah and Jewish mysticism. With an extensive background in meditation practice, Perle Besserman emphasizes Kabbalah's spiritual disciplines, grounded in righteous living, devotional practices, and meditation. She discusses the Kabbalistic universe, including the four worlds and ten sefirot; Jewish meditation techniques and instructions for beginning meditation; mystics and teachers from Rabbi Akiva and the Baal Shem Tov to Aryeh Kaplan; the often uneasy relationship between Kabbalah and mainstream Judaism; and applying the ancient wisdom of Jewish mysticism to life in the world of today. Unraveling the web of ancient traditions hidden in such texts as the *Sefer Yetzirah* and the *Zohar*, this book traces history and offers an accessible introduction to understanding Kabbalah and its practices. Jewish mysticism has flourished—sometimes brilliantly, sometimes darkly—over five thousand years. This pioneering, popular text on Jewish mysticism was the first written for a general audience, and in it, Perle Besserman offers a lively and accessible introduction to the methods, schools, and practitioners of this intriguing world. She traces the history of Kabbalah through the lives of its illustrious scholars and saints and unravels the web of ancient traditions hidden in such texts as *Sefer Yetzirah* and the *Zohar*. Running through these pages are the words of the outstanding Kabbalists and mystics—including Simeon bar Yohai, Isaac Luria, Abraham Abulafia, and the Baal Shem Tov—giving instructions on practices ranging from contemplation of the Bible's secret teachings to ritual, ecstatic prayer, and intensive meditation.

A supportive and wise guide that is an absolute must for anyone who wants to learn Jewish meditation or improve their practice now updated and expanded! Nan Fink Gefen teaches you how to meditate on your own, and starts you on the path to a deeper connection with the Divine and to greater insight about your own life. The most comprehensive introduction to a time honored practice: Answers commonly asked questions about the nature and history of Jewish meditation, and examines how it differs from other meditative practices Shows beginners how to start their practice, including where and how to do it Gives step-by-step instructions for meditations that are at the core of Jewish meditative practice Explains the challenges and rewards of a Jewish meditative practice.

Meditation empowers us to transcend our material mind-set and touch the Infinite and Eternal. "True meditation transforms the way we see reality.... It touches the place inside us where a spark of the Eternal dwells. Meditation unites us with our true Self." —from the Introduction The life of meditation is much more than the act of sitting for half an hour or forty-five minutes and looking inward. It is a whole way of life. Through meditation we learn to live in a heightened awareness and walk at all times in the presence of God. Rabbi Yoel Glick brings wisdom from personal experience and Eastern traditions to illuminate and vitalize familiar Jewish rituals, vocabulary and imagery. He provides specific guidelines and practical techniques grounded in Judaism for each stage of the life of meditation, outlining the inner processes we encounter and the questions we face: How does meditation help us connect with the Collective Jewish

Soul? What happens in our mind, body and soul when we meditate? How do we resist the pull of a material mind-set and live in expanded consciousness? What does it feel like to reach union with our spiritual source? • How do we remain aware of God's living presence in our everyday life?

Eye to the Infinite: A Jewish Meditation Guidebook (revised and expanded): An introduction to Jewish meditation, with visualisations, meditations & techniques adapted from the Talmud, Kabbalah & Classics of Jewish theology. Over 300 pages packed with techniques, meditations, esoteric secrets, complete with diagrams and tables and fully annotated. Over 700 footnotes. Have you ever wondered about a Jewish system of meditation? How is it practised? How different is it from other disciplines? Can your life be improved through Jewish meditation? These questions and more are addressed in this unique guide. EYE TO THE INFINITE is a hands-on Jewish spiritual guidebook with introductions to the metaphysical worlds, techniques, visualisations, authentic meditations, and step-by-step instructions, enabling you to derive immediate benefit wherever you are in your spiritual journey. "A great step-by-step walkthrough of key concepts, with an easy to understand, non-technical approach. An excellent work on Jewish meditation and focusing on God for everyone! Beautiful work." Reb Akiva, editor of Mystical Paths "Rabbi Rubin's work not only continues in the trailblazing path of Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan's ZT"L work, but actually and practically builds upon it." Dr. Elliot Cohen, Director of the Ohr Menorah Centre for Jewish Meditation. "It is rare to find a book that explores Jewish meditation in depth, explains it with flair and nuance and provides practical ways to engage in Jewish meditation. Eye to the Infinite is just such a book." Rabbi Johnny Solomon, Jewish Education Consultant, BSc (Hons)

The author recounts his encounters and dialogues with Jewish mystics across the United States

The first book in any language ever to reveal the methodology of the ancient Kabbalists, this is one of the oldest and most important of all ancient Kabbalistic texts. All references, both to manuscripts and printed material are carefully cited, and the complete Hebrew text of The Bahir is included.

A highly radical interpretation of the Bible demonstrating the methods of meditation used by the Prophets to attain their unique states of consciousness. First English translation from ancient unpublished manuscripts, with commentary.

A much-needed response to missionaries, providing both a practical guide and sources that refute missionary claims.

Based on a series of lectures that Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan gave to a small group of students in Brooklyn in 1981, this contains transcripts of the series on the kabbalistic system, and testifies to his wonderful ability to transmit profound ideas in a readily-graspable way. Although this is an introductory text, it contains many perspectives that are expressed in a unique way, so it would be quite valuable even for the more advanced student of Jewish mysticism.

"When we awaken to our own light, it becomes possible to develop real wisdom about our life. As wisdom allows us to see clearly, our hearts break open with compassion for the struggles of our own lives and the lives of all beings. Awakened with wisdom and compassion, we are impelled to live our lives with kindness, and we are led to do whatever we can to repair the brokenness of our world." -From the Introduction

Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan has translated Sefer Yetzirah, the oldest and most mysterious of all kabbalistic texts, and now brings its theoretical, meditative, and magical implications to light. He expounds on the dynamics of the spiritual domain, the worlds of the Sefirot, souls, and angels. When properly understood, Sefer Yetzirah becomes the instruction manual for a very special type of meditation meant to strengthen concentration and to aid the development of telekinetic and telepathic powers.

Jewish Meditation A Practical Guide Schocken

The Mystic Quest explains the major ideas and concepts of Jewish mystical thought in a way that the general reader can clearly understand. Drawing upon his own extensive research as well as on the growing body of scholarly material on the subject, Dr. David Ariel, president of the Cleveland College of Jewish Studies, presents the extremely difficult and complex elements of Jewish mysticism in language that makes it accessible to the layperson. Jewish mysticism is as old as the Bible itself. It is a rich and subtle web of secret teachings and practices that has been part of Judaism since antiquity and has sought to keep the original spark of religious experience alive through the centuries. It is the relatively unknown, esoteric dimension of Judaism that has nourished a deep spiritual power within a tradition of law, ritual, and observance. A central element in Judaism, the "mystic quest" has shaped both Judaism and Jews throughout history, generating the kabbalistic tradition and Hasidism, which continue to thrive today. As Ariel says, "This book is concerned primarily with the development and meaning of the Kabbalah, the principal tradition of mystical Jewish thought." The Mystic Quest begins with an examination of the variety of phenomena known in different cultures as "mysticism." Ariel then located the Jewish mystical tradition within the context of Jewish history and traces its evolution throughout the ages. Jewish mystical theories about the hidden and revealed God, the feminine aspects of divinity, the mystical Torah, and the concepts of the soul and human destiny are then explored in detail. Finally, the author considers Hasidism and modern Jewish mystical thought, discussing the role of mysticism in contemporary Judaism. In language accessible to the beginner, yet sophisticated enough to captivate the advanced student, The Mystic Quest fills an important gap in our knowledge of mysticism by bringing a comprehensive and fresh understanding of the subject to a new generation of

Now in its 7th printing since republication in 1997, the Sefer Yetzirah has established itself as a primary source for all serious students of Kabbalah. Rabbi Kaplan's translation of this oldest and most mysterious of all Kabbalistic texts provides a unique perspective on the meditative and magical aspects of Kabbalah. He expounds on the dynamics of the spiritual domain, the worlds of Sefirot, souls and angels. This translation is based on Gra version of the Sefer Yetzirah and includes the author's extraordinary commentary on all its mystical aspects including kabbalistic astrology, Ezekiel's vision and the 231 gates. Also included are three alternative versions to make this volume the most complete work on the Sefer Yetzirah available in English.

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