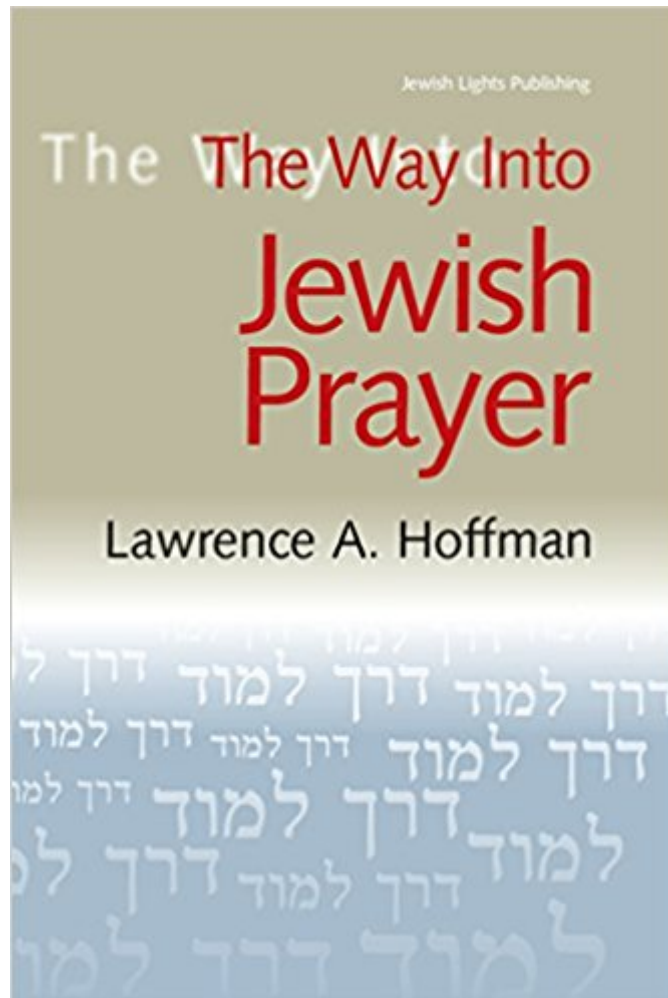


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The Way Into Jewish Prayer (Way Into--)



Synopsis

An accessible introduction to the reasons for and the ways of Jewish prayer. The Way Into Jewish Prayer helps us to explore the reasons for and the ways of Jewish prayer. It opens the door to 3,000 years of Jewish prayer, making available all you need to feel at home in the Jewish way of communicating with God.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Most informative and beautifully written. Thank you Rabbi Hoffman!

Great book. It was recommended by my rabbi. I have enjoyed reading it. I think it is very good for Jews and non-Jews alike.

This is an excellent book to help one to focus on prayer. It is not highly structured, but provides a framework for individual prayer development.

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I really enjoy the "Way Into" series.

Several years ago, I had the privilege of hearing Rabbi Hoffman speak at a convention I attended. He was a personable and dynamic speaker and he writes as compellingly as he speaks. Rabbi Hoffman is a Reform rabbi but, he views Jewish prayer from all perspectives, including traditional. He gives compelling reasons to pray as a Jew. Although many of the traditional prayers approach G-d as an anthropomorphic deity (a view of G-d that Hoffman rejects), Rabbi Hoffman nonetheless sees a great benefit to the Jewish liturgy since the traditional service requires that we pray together as a community. This unifying force of tradition makes Judaism the communal religion that it is. Although modern movements in Judaism make some changes to the liturgy to accomodate current understandings of theology, Rabbi Hoffman sees the benefits of traditional Jewish prayer while still supporting changes that are evolutionary, not drastic. A major example is referring to G-d in sexually neutral terms rather than describing G-d as a male. Rabbi Hoffman discusses the purpose of prayer and the theology underlining it. The book is presented in a manner that is accessible to someone unfamiliar with Judaism. Nonetheless, the book is comprehensive enough to offer new insights to people, such as I, who have an extensive background in Judaism. Here is an example of something I learned. I thought that Conservative Judaism was formed to be in the middle between the traditional orthodox movement and the liberal reform movement. Actually, Reform was formed by German Jews and the less formal eastern European and Russian Jews were looked down upon by the upper class German Jews. Accordingly, the eastern European Jews, in breaking with orthodoxy, wanted a liturgy that was less formal and churchlike than the reform liturgy. Thus, conservative Judaism, although in fact in the middle of the other two movements, was actually formed by one ethnic group of Jews in reaction to another. This book is very readable and, I believe, treats all three major movcements in Judaism fairly without playing favorites of one over the other. I recommend this book.

The Way Into Jewish Prayer by Lawrence A. Hoffman (Professor of Liturgy Worship and Ritual, Jewish Institute of Religion, Hebrew Union College) provides the reader with an accessibly informative introduction into the reasons for Jewish personal and ritual prayer, and the manner in which these prayers are performed. The six articulated chapters comprising this superbly presented instructional volume include "God and the Jewish People: To Whom Jew Pray

If you have never prayed as a Jew - and even if you have - this book is for you. The Way Into Series, designed as a 14 volume introduction to Judaism, hits its stride with this offering. Rabbi Hoffman offers a lucid and compelling reason to pray as a Jew. Going well beyond explaining the prayers (he writes other books about that, such as the My People's Prayer Book series), he explains about the Jews' relationship to God, as expressed through prayer. Rabbis, laity and interested readers who want to know about Judaism and prayer will find this book an indispensable volume.

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