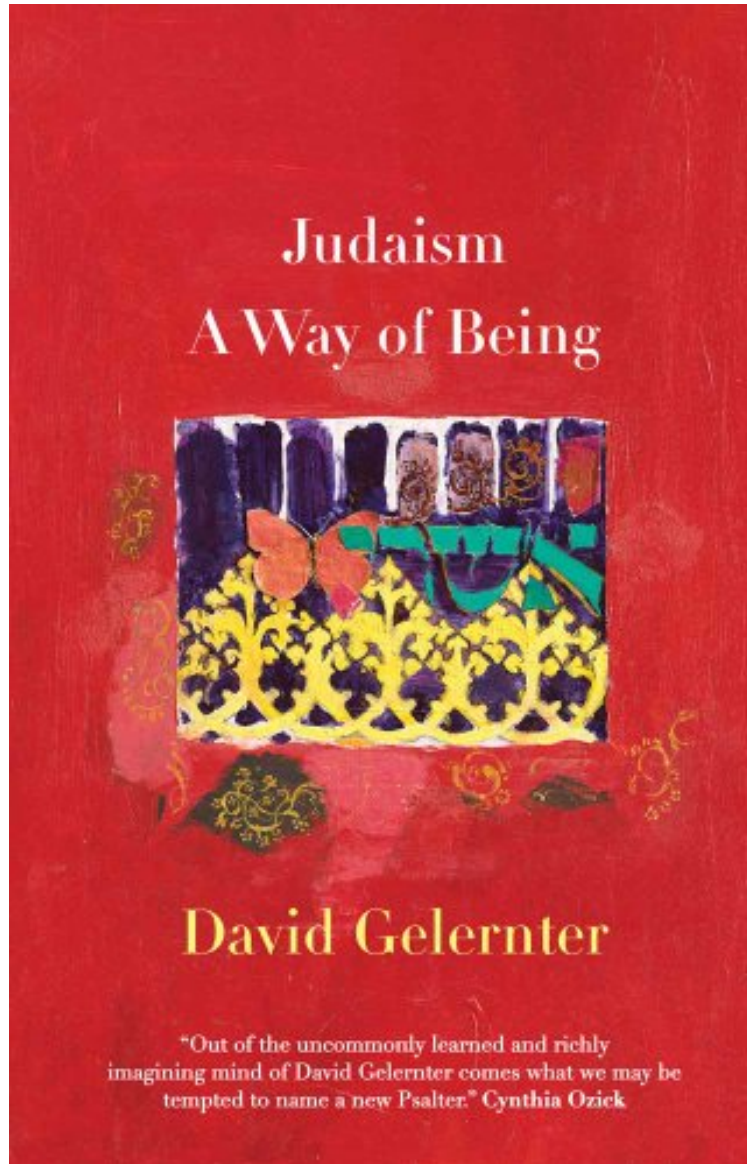


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Judaism: A Way of Being

David Hillel Gelernter

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David Hillel Gelernter : Judaism: A Way of Being before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Judaism: A Way of Being:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. REFRESHING !By Eric Chaffee There's a joyful and refreshing quality to this book. I really liked it, but subtracted one star as it is not lender enabled. If I could have bought the pulp edition easily here in Mexico (for a dime less!) I would be able to share a paper edition with friends. Shame on the publisher for not enabling the lending feature. Hey, I bought the book I ought to be able to share it without giving

away my \$100 Kindle! As a nominal Christian heretic who no longer sits in pews (aside from funerals and weddings) and who has studied at an ivy div school, I highly recommend this book. It has stimulated my studies of scripture, and my deep appreciation for the teachings of Rabbi Jesus of Nazareth. (Thanks to Professor Harvey Cox for this appellation.) 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. An astonishingly erudite and moving exposition on the core of Orthodox Judaism. By Jeff Goldfarb Professor Gelernter's book is an true feat of erudition and gives us a window into an extraordinary mind at the height of its powers. Not incidentally, it explores the "why" of being Jewish, as well as the how, when, where, etc. By usefully distilling the essence of Judaism via four lenses, this work helped me gain a new appreciation for the religion of my birth and the ways of our people. I would recommend this book for anyone who struggles with religion in the face of a modern world--I found it to be a true antidote to the cynical atheism and ironic detachment that characterize our secular culture. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Andrew Doran Great

Written for observant and non-observant Jews and anyone interested in religion, this remarkable book by the distinguished scholar David Gelernter seeks to answer the deceptively simple question: What is Judaism really about? Gelernter views Judaism as one of humanity's most profound and sublimely beautiful achievements. But because Judaism is a way of life rather than a formal system of thought, it has been difficult for anyone but a practicing Jew to understand its unique intellectual and spiritual structure. Gelernter explores compelling questions, such as: How does Judaism's obsession with life on earth versus the world-to-come separate it fundamentally from Christianity and Islam? Why do Jews believe in God, and how can they after the Holocaust? What makes Classical Judaism the most important intellectual development in Western history? Why does Judaism teach that, in the course of the Jewish people's coming-of-age, God moved out of history and into the human mind, abandoning all power but the capacity to talk to each person from inside and thereby to influence events only indirectly? In discussing these and other questions, Gelernter seeks to lay out Jewish beliefs on four basic topics: the sanctity of everyday life; man and God; the meaning of sexuality and family; good, evil, and the nature of God's justice in a cruel world and to convey a profound and stirring sense of what it means to be Jewish.

From Booklist Gelernter means to answer four fundamental questions from a strictly Jewish perspective: How do we understand our place in the universe? Is physical creation all there is? How can we live our lives as human beings? Does life have a greater goal beyond mere survival? Culling from various Jewish sources, he answers by means of thematic images that resonate throughout a lived Jewish life. Those image-themes (and questions coordinate with the principal four) include separation (what is the point of Jewish religious law?), the veil (how can we be in touch with the transcendent?), perfect asymmetry (what role does family play?), and inward pilgrimage (how can Judaism reconcile a just and merciful God with evil?). In the appendix, he answers two further questions, Why believe in God? and What makes Judaism the most important intellectual development in Western history?, and offers a brief treatise on Jewish and Christian ethics. Though written for Jews unsatisfied by usual approaches to Judaism, the book may fascinate non-Jews interested in its questions, too, regardless of whether they agree with Gelernter's conclusions. --June Sawyers "'The Jewish experience, as Gelernter shows, echoes profoundly across the wider experience of humanity. Judaism itself is a wide-ranging book about the beliefs, practices and philosophy of the world's first monotheistic religion - a book that Jews and non-Jews alike will find well worth reading.' (Jay Lefkowitz, Wall Street Journal) 'In this brief but intellectually packed book, Gelernter attempts to present Judaism as a total structure... that can lead to understanding the pressing questions of human existence... Challenging, often exhilarating, richly learned, intensely personal, and tough-minded, Judaism offers a passionate picture of Judaism.' (Maron L. Waxman, Jewish Book World)" About the Author David Gelernter is professor of computer science at Yale University and contributing editor at the Weekly Standard. He is the author of several books, including *Mirror Worlds*, *The Muse and the Machine*, and the novel *1939*. His writings on Judaism have appeared in *Commentary* and elsewhere. He lives in Woodbridge, CT.