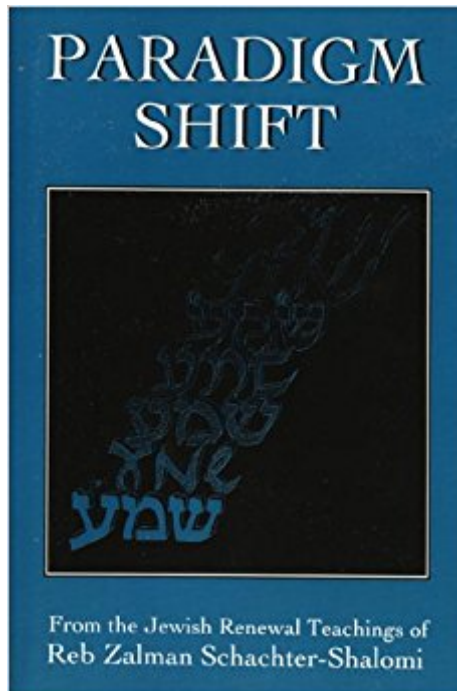


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Paradigm Shift: From The Jewish Renewal Teachings Of Reb Zalman Schachter-Shalomi



Synopsis

Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi is one of the most innovative and inspiring rabbis in the Jewish world today. Often considered the 'grandfather of the Havurah movement' and the most influential advocate of the rapidly growing movement of Jewish Renewal, Reb Zalman (as he is known by his countless students and admirers) has earned a reputation as a courageous, profoundly spiritual contemporary master. Jewish Renewal, as Reb Zalman explains it, is based on Kabbalah, Hasidism, and other forms of Jewish mysticism. 'Jewish Renewal does not want to abandon sacred and cherished traditions,' teaches Reb Zalman. Rather, the 'paradigm shift' advocates of Jewish Renewal call for asks that we recognize - as we have in the past - that there are newly emerging ways of looking at reality. Just as humankind had to adjust to the knowledge that the earth is not the center of the universe, so too do we today have to recognize that our understanding of our world has undergone significant change. Reb Zalman teaches that we must let go of the old paradigms rather than cling to these obsolete ways of thinking. In this book, Reb Zalman Schachter-Shalomi offers what he calls 'the journey of my own recontextualization of Judaism as helped by Jewish mysticism.' Reb Zalman points out that Judaism has undergone several 'paradigm shifts' throughout its long history, such as the period after the destruction of the First and Second Temples, when, as Reb Zalman explains, 'all of our practice and belief had to be reframed.' Paradigm Shift: From the Jewish Renewal Teachings of Reb Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, in addition to being a record of the major teachings of Reb Zalman over the past thirty years, is a call for Jewish renewal once again. A passionate teacher of kabbalistic tradition, Reb Zalman offers a unique blend of Jewish mystical ideas as they encounter the forces and sensibilities of today.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Just so that people don't get the idea from the other review that the book is about Jesus: This is one of THE essential works in the movement known as Jewish renewal, by one of the most profound and original Jewish thinkers of our time. Follow "Reb Zalman" on his lifelong spiritual journey as he explores interfaith relations (beyond the "I love you, you love me" banalities that often pass for dialogue), previous instances of the reconstruction of Judaism, exciting old and new prayer and meditation techniques, and visions of Judaism's and humanity's future.

Zalman Schacter-Shalomi has to be given the great credit of understanding that the tremendous changes which have occurred in the world, changes in science and technology perhaps above all, but changes in all dimensions of culture and history require that the Jewish people confront and understand these realities. I do not believe that the 'paradigm shift' as he understands it sufficiently comprehends all the changes, all the developments. But at least he understands that for the Torah to be a living Torah, and for the Jewish people to be true servants of God they cannot hide within the enclosed space of a past, or pretend they have no relation to others. For this alone he is a courageous thinker of the kind the Jewish people need more of.

There are not many books that change a person's life. This book changed my life. It got me thinking about new ways of seeing myself, my religious beliefs, my community, and how I related to my concept of G*d. It also introduced me to the writings of my teacher and friend, Rabbi Gershon Winkler, (shlita). After I read this book, I traveled to the 1994 (5?) Jewish Renewal Kallah in Colorado Springs, Colorado, to meet with the Rebbe, Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi. There I also met Rabbi David Wolf-Blanke, z"l and Rabbi Avram Davis, Sarah Shendleman, Nan Gefon-Fink, and many others whose writings I had read and whose philosophy of living as a Jew in a modern world, I appreciated and shared. Needless to say, I completely recommend this book for all who are seeking a serious book about 21st century Judaism.

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