

Blessed Are You: A Comprehensive Guide to Jewish Prayer

Jeffrey Cohen



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Blessed Are You: A Comprehensive Guide to Jewish Prayer offers the layperson, in a nonacademic, simple (but not simplistic) style, a one-volume, encyclopedic presentation of virtually every aspect of prayer in Judaism. Rabbi Jeffrey M. Cohen explores his subject from every angle: he looks at the historical development of prayer, the role of the synagogue, the specific rituals connected to prayer, important Jewish legal topics, the theology that is expressed through prayer, and the texts that are used. Rabbi Cohen covers his subjects by taking three routes. First, he presents a fascinating historical treatment of prayer, from its earliest origins to the most recent developments, and addresses such topics as when Jewish prayer became standardized and why. The second section of Blessed Are You explains the theology of Jewish prayer: Why do people pray? Does God answer prayer? Can we believe that the Almighty actually changes His mind as a result of our prayerful requests? The book's third section is a guided tour of the synagogue and its personnel, with enlightening discussions of the role of the rabbi, the ways in which one becomes a rabbi, and what being a rabbi really means. Rabbi Cohen also discusses the important ritual objects found in the synagogue, and he includes a description of each detail in the arrangement of the synagogue sanctuary. Rabbi Cohen, a well-known and highly regarded British rabbi, has been teaching the subject of prayer in Judaism for a few decades. His experience has enabled him to write a remarkably thorough, easy-to-understand, 'user-friendly' guide to one of the pivotal activities of Jewish life. It is no wonder that both the present and former chief rabbis of Great Britain have praised this volume in superlative terms.

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