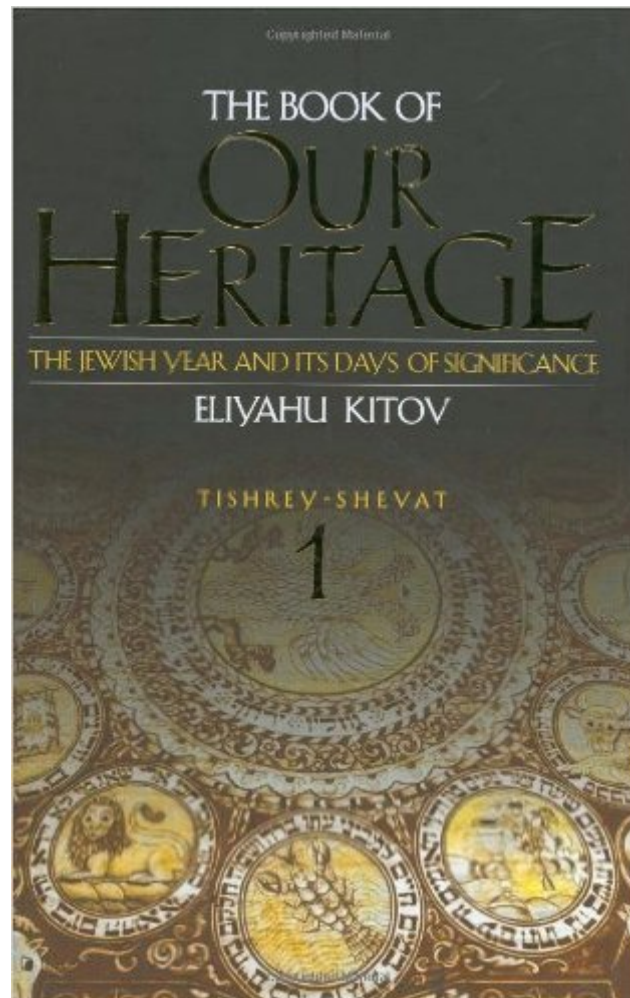


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The Book Of Our Heritage



Synopsis

The recurring cycle of the Jewish year provides a spectacular view into the length and breadth of the ongoing Jewish experience. Each and every month is unique. Every month has its own stories to tell, events to commemorate, and life lessons to impart. What emerges is a vast and wondrous tapestry of Jewish life and lore. And there is no text that better chronicles the cycle of the Jewish year than the classic, ever-popular Book of Our Heritage. This panoramic three-volume set takes readers on a magnificent journey through the Jewish year delving into all the major and minor festivals, feast days and fast days, their profound meaning and significance, along with customs and practices. The author draws upon a wealth of traditional resources and timeless wisdom to provide lessons and insights of everlasting value. Beautifully crafted and easy to read, this remarkable 3 volume set, as it guides you through each of the 12 months, will add enormously to your understanding and appreciation of all the spiritual and intellectual treasures the Jewish year has to offer. Individual volumes not sold separately.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If one wants to know the how, when, where, and why of Jewish observance, I can't imaging a better source of answers than THE BOOK OF OUR HERITAGE. For ease of use the book is broken down by month and then, chronologically, by days of importance. In addition to presenting biblical and historical reasons for just about everything, it even explains differences in tradition and methods of observance between various Jewish sects. I don't read Hebrew, except at the most elemental level, so I can't speak for the original, but the translation is written in such a clear manner that even the most complex issues are made comprehensible. For someone like me, who is only vaguely aware

of many of the less well-known traditions and requirements, this book is a gold mine of information. THE BOOK OF OUR HERITAGE covers all phases of the calendar year, holidays, fast days, days of joy, and days of sorrow. It clarifies both the meaning of the law and the appropriate methods of observance. It gives Rabbinical interpretations and insights of the Sages throughout Jewish history. Until reading the comments contained herein, I never really understood why, as a child, I asked the "Four Questions" at the Passover Seder, and I certainly never understood the deeper significance of the answers I received. Now I do. This is a reference that should be on the bookshelf in every Jewish home.

This is the most comprehensive book on Jewish Lifecycle events that I have read. It discusses the entire Jewish Calendar and reviews every significant date. In addition, he discusses areas that surprised me, such as Rosh Chodesh (the lunar calendar and celebrating the new month). The series also covers the intermediate days between holidays and the laws that apply. The detail in which he covers Sukkot and the "Four Species" is amazing. The wonderful part of it all is that the author traces the history of the events, and the pertinent Halacha (Jewish law) all the way back to the time of the First Temple. An excellent, comprehensive work! It is done in a very easy reading style and yet thoroughly covers the subject. This is a resource for someone who really wants to learn about living Judaism!

This trilogy covers all of the Jewish holidays superbly. It not only covers how and when the holiday is observed, but it goes into a great deal of background information as to why the holiday is observed and what the meaning is behind the observance. It is written in an interesting manner, and I have a hard time putting it down once I start reading it. It is worth every penny that I paid for it. Just a small warning though for those who are a bit less familiar with Hebrew and basic Jewish ideas: This may not be the first book you want to pick up. I did find myself creating a list of words to look up later that I did not know. I found that this aided with my memory of a number of key Jewish terms though, so this may not be a terrible problem really. If I could suggest an intro book before this one, I would suggest "To be a Jew" by Donin.

I for many years learned with the Hebrew version of this work, called 'Sefer HaToda-ah.' This book was turned to whenever we were approaching a holiday or time of special meaning. Then the interpretation of KiTov's reading of the sources would greatly enrich our learning. I too believe this should be a part of the library of every Jewish home.

The second most important book in my library, next to the Tanakh itself. It's worth carrying around with you wherever you go (if you buy the small version, split up into three volumes, each of which can fit easily in a jacket pocket). Filled with insight, legend and commentary (often expressing both sides of a question), divided up by day of the year and specific instructions, so you will always know the significance of the day that you're living through TODAY. You will never again forget to fast on the Seventeenth of Tammuz, you'll never forget why it's important to do so, and it will never stop inspiring you. This book is also never boring. One note - as this is written from an Orthodox perspective, there is the general sense that the various positive and negative commandments and traditions apply to men. A Jewish woman from an egalitarian perspective should be willing to look past this particular slant (which is consistent with Orthodox teaching but inconsistent with the requirements of the Torah) and find just as much value, so I'd recommend it to men and women as well.

It's hard to imagine a more perfect series of books on the subject of the Jewish year - the fasts and the feasts, the days of rejoice and the days of sorrow. No wonder it has become a 'must have' in Jewish homes, a work that can give inspiration to those from the most observant and knowledgeable to the beginner, the newly observant and the convert. It's well organised chronologically, being broken down by month into three volumes. The level of detail is striking. Yet what is even more surprising is how the book remains readable and fresh throughout, and is not some quagmire of laws and dry facts. It is kept alive by providing insights into the 'whys' of the holidays, not just the 'hows and whens'. Insights come from many sources, with any midrash on the subject explored. Also useful is the coverage of the numerous different holiday observances made by particular traditions and streams within the Jewish world. The book is not an account of one flavour of Judaism, making this a true Jewish calendar encyclopedia. Vast in scope and a pleasure to read, I have no hesitation in giving these volumes full marks and a full recommendation.

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