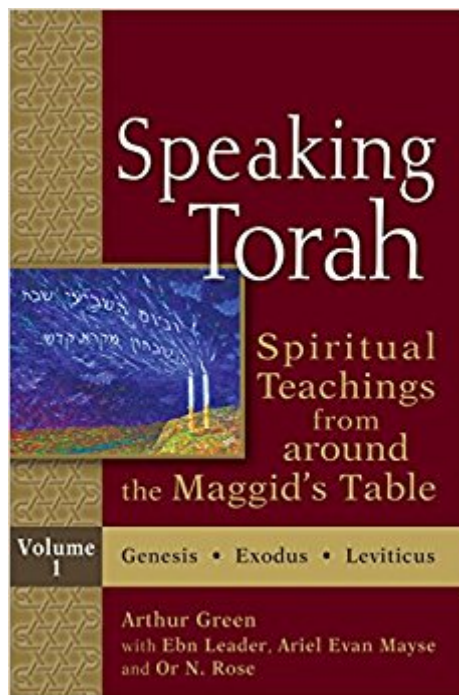


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# Speaking Torah, : Spiritual Teachings From Around The Maggid's Table, Vol. 1



## Synopsis

The most powerful Hasidic teachings made accessible •from some of the world's preeminent authorities on Jewish thought and spirituality."The teachings of Torah, from beginning to end, are read here as a path toward liberation, a way of uplifting your soul and allowing it to journey homeward, back to its Source in the oneness of all being. Or, even better, to discover that oneness right here, in a loving but transformative embrace of both world and self."•from "To the Reader"While Hasidic tales have become widely known to modern audiences, the profound spiritual teachings that stand at the very heart of Hasidism have remained a closed book for all except scholars. This fascinating selection•presented in two volumes following the weekly Torah reading and the holiday cycle, and featured in English and Hebrew•makes the teachings accessible in an extraordinary way. Volume 1 covers Genesis, Exodus and Leviticus, and includes a history of early Hasidism and a summary of central religious teachings of the Maggid's school. Volume 2 covers Numbers and Deuteronomy and the holiday cycle, and includes brief biographies of the Hasidic figures. Each teaching is presented with a fresh translation and contemporary commentary that builds a bridge between the eighteenth and twenty-first centuries. And each teaching concludes with a dynamic round-table discussion between distinguished Jewish scholar Arthur Green and his closest students•the editors of this volume. They highlight the wisdom that is most meaningful for them, thus serving as a contemporary circle's reflections on the original mystical circle of master and disciples who created these teachings. Volume 1 of a 2-volume set

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"If I could I surely would stand in the place where the disciples of the Maggid stood. This daydream of mine finds its closest fulfillment in this book.... Bring[s] the choicest voices of Hasidic spirituality to the modern reader." • Reb Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, author, *Davening: A Guide to Meaningful Jewish Prayer* and *Jewish with Feeling: A Guide to Meaningful Jewish Practice* "A stunning entry point into the heart of Hasidism • a wealth of carefully curated insights that are rich and penetrating, even shattering.... A treasure for any student of Torah." • Rabbi Sharon Brous, founder, IKAR, Los Angeles "[A selection of] the juiciest, most inspiring insights from the finest Hasidic sources. These teachings will surprise and delight you, touching your soul." • Daniel C. Matt, translator and annotator, *Zohar: Annotated & Explained* • [From] the incomparable teacher of Torah of our time.... Contextualizes and presents ... the richness of insights as well as the spiritual depth and significance the Hasidic tradition holds for modern persons. A delight to be savored and returned to over and over again! • Rabbi David Ellenson, president, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion • Opens [the world of the Hasidic masters] to those looking for spiritual meaning in Torah and in their lives. • Rabbi Michael Strassfeld, spiritual leader, Society for the Advancement of Judaism; author, *The Book of Life: Embracing Judaism as a Spiritual Practice* • This is the resource we've been waiting for, a milestone in the accessibility of classical Jewish spirituality. No Shabbos Torah hevra should be without it. • Lawrence Kushner, Emanu-El Scholar at The Congregation Emanu-El of San Francisco; author, *I'm God; You're Not: Observations on Organized Religion & Other Disguises of the Ego* • Invites the spiritual seeker to feel the excitement of direct encounter with primary Hasidic texts and their capacity to awaken the soul.... 'Round Two™ discussions serve as templates for the kind of questing and questioning that small groups of seekers might do together, suddenly finding that they, too, are engaged in 'speaking Torah.™ • Nancy Flam, co-director of programs, Institute for Jewish Spirituality; series editor, *LifeLights* • A splendid compilation • expertly presented to foster hearing, insight, and spiritual sharing. • Michael Fishbane, Nathan Cummings Distinguished Service Professor of Jewish Studies, University of Chicago • Reminds us that Jewish masters read the Torah to discover the spiritual depths just beneath the surface. Every Shabbat and every holiday will be enriched when you study the Torah portion with this extraordinary collection of text and commentary. • Rabbi Jeremy Kalmanofsky, Congregation Ansche Chesed, New York City • Inspires contemporary readers to uplift their souls homeward and free themselves from their personal enslavement. It is a gem of inspiration and should be in every synagogue. • Dr. Alan Brill, Cooperman/Ross Endowed Professor, Graduate Department of Jewish-Christian Studies, Seton Hall University • Insightful ...

puts in dialogue the thought of the most original and formative group of Hasidic masters, demonstrating the nature of their spiritual aspirations and the dynamics of the laboratory that produced the leadership of Hasidism as a movement. A fresh and inspired project that brings to life the spirituality of an unprecedented constellation of religious geniuses.

•Moshe Idel, Max Cooper Professor of Jewish Thought, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Sparkling translations, judicious selections, wise-framing comments, comprehensive scope, with an authoritative historical introduction that masterfully summarizes a lifetime of scholarship: Rabbi Arthur Green and his students have produced the most insightful, valuable and accessible presentation of early Hasidism available in the English language, an indispensable resource for study and devotional work.

•Nehemia Polen, professor of Jewish thought, Hebrew College

As heaven and earth met in creation, so too does scholarship and true passion of the love of the Hasidic masters meet in this monumental work of devotion and wisdom. If you were to commit to learning one book, this should be it!

•Reb Mimi Feigelson, Mashpia Ruchanit

In a world which too often feels fractured and dark, these precious teachings come along to lend clarity, light and hope. This extraordinary work stirs the mind, uplifts the spirit and makes age-old wisdom accessible in a way which liberates us from our most narrow places.

•Matthew D. Gewirtz, senior rabbi, Congregation Bnai Jeshurun, Short Hills, New Jersey

Magnificent ... a treasure for all who seek to understand the rich variety of spiritual worldviews and religious experiences of the people who created the Hasidic movement. The world of those sitting around their master's table comes alive in this book. The multiple levels of interpretations offered in their teachings allow us to encounter these incredible personalities in their own world and to then explore the vitality of their teaching for our contemporary Jewish life.

•Melila Hellner-Eshed, research fellow, Shalom Hartman Institute

The most powerful Hasidic teachings made accessible from some of the world's preeminent authorities on Jewish thought and spirituality. Hasidism, a great movement of spiritual revival within Judaism, began in eighteenth-century Eastern Europe and continues to have great influence on Jewish life today. A key tool of this revival was the oral sermon, using novel mystical readings of the Torah to open people's minds to thinking more profoundly about the texts and how the wisdom relates directly to their own lives. While Hasidic tales have become widely known to modern audiences, the teachings that stand at the very heart of Hasidism have remained a closed book for all except scholars. This fascinating selection presented in two volumes following the weekly Torah reading and the holiday cycle, and featured in English and Hebrew renders them accessible in an

extraordinary way. Volume 1 covers Genesis, Exodus and Leviticus, and includes a history of early Hasidism and a summary of central religious teachings of the Maggid's school. Volume 2 covers Numbers and Deuteronomy and the holiday cycle, and includes brief biographies of the Hasidic figures. Each teaching is presented with a fresh translation and contemporary commentary that builds a bridge between the eighteenth and twenty-first centuries. And each teaching concludes with a dynamic round-table discussion between distinguished Jewish scholar Arthur Green and his closest students the editors of this volume. They highlight the wisdom most meaningful for them, thus serving as a contemporary circle's reflections on the original mystical circle of master and disciples who created these teachings.

Awesome! It was discovered as a reverence book during morning Torah study. I downloaded the free sample and I was impressed with the other opportunities I had to gain knowledge from some studies that I did many years ago. I was so impressed that I actually bought the Kindle version so I could use the text to speech function. I am well satisfied with my purchase and the results that it gives me. Btw "Maggid" table means preachers table.

I expected way to much. The commentaries are underwhelming and sort of trite.

Using this book in a Torah study weekly class. Nice change of pace to delve into Hassidic and Kabbalistic thinking. Impossible to read this book by oneself outside of the class. Need many to help understand and bring out the deeper thoughts. It is all very allegorical and full of mystery beyond ones normal 21st century mind.

A two volume collection of Hasidic Torah commentary with contemporary discussion at the end of each parasha. It's a wonderful resource for a small study group of 2 -3.. .

### Lessons Learned and Lessons Used

What I liked the most was it's flow of information. Very succinct and tidy all the way to the end. Wish all books were written like this. As a testament I will tell you I have all their books and can't wait for more from them.

Underwhelming. Whenever I turn to it I am disappointed.

very good torah commentary I have both volumes

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