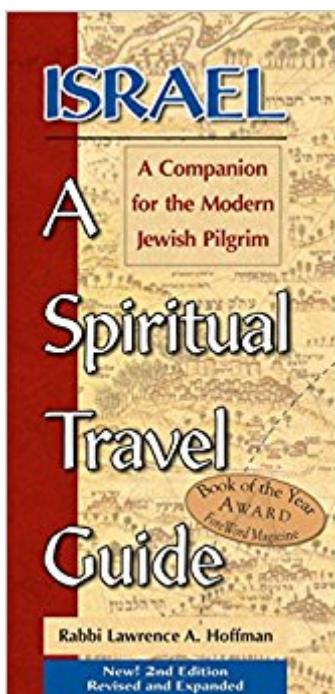


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# Israel: A Spiritual Travel Guide: A Companion For The Modern Jewish Pilgrim



## Synopsis

Be spiritually prepared for your journey in Israel. The only travel guide to Israel that will help you to prepare spiritually for your visit. Combining, in quick reference format, ancient blessings, medieval prayers, biblical references, and modern poetry, it helps today's pilgrim tap into the deep spiritual meaning of the ancient and modern sites of the Holy Land. For each of 25 major tourist destinations—from the Western Wall to Masada to a kibbutz in the Galilee—it gives guidance in sharply focused, four-step sections: Anticipation: To read in advance. Information to help orient you in the site's historical context. Approach: To read on the way there. Readings from traditional and modern sources to orient you in the site's spiritual context. Acknowledgment: To read at the site. A prayer or blessing to integrate the experience into your spiritual consciousness. Afterthought: Journaling space for writing your own thoughts and impressions. More than a guidebook: It is a spiritual map of the Holy Land.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman, PhD, has served for more than three decades as professor of liturgy at Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. He is a world-renowned liturgist and holder of the Stephen and Barbara Friedman Chair in Liturgy, Worship and Ritual. His work combines research in Jewish ritual, worship and spirituality with a passion for the spiritual renewal of contemporary Judaism. His many books, written and edited, include seven volumes in the Prayers of Awe series: Who by Fire, Who by Water—Un'taneh Tokef; All These Vows—Kol Nidre; We Have Sinned: Sin and Confession in Judaism—Ashamnu and

Al Chet; May God Remember: Memory and Memorializing in Judaism—Yizkor; All the World: Universalism, Particularism and the High Holy Days; Naming God: Avinu Malkeinu—Our Father, Our King; and Encountering God: El Rachum V'chanun—God Merciful and Gracious. Hoffman also edited the ten-volume series *My People's Prayer Book: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries*, winner of the National Jewish Book Award; and coedited *My People's Passover Haggadah: Traditional Texts, Modern Commentaries*, a finalist for the National Jewish Book Award (all Jewish Lights). Rabbi Hoffman cofounded and developed Synagogue 2/3000, a transdenominational project to envision and implement the ideal synagogue of the spirit for the twenty-first century. In that capacity, he wrote *Rethinking Synagogues: A New Vocabulary for Congregational Life* (Jewish Lights).

This is really a nice guide to have when visiting sites in Israel that gives a rich back story for the places you will visit. It includes a lot of insight from rabbis in the Reform and Conservative traditions, so if you're really Orthodox and/or a traditionalist, this may not be the guide for you.

Response to this book will inevitably be highly individual, but I for one was quite disappointed with it, and surprised by that. I liked the \*concept\* of this book, but I found the actual content to be not very interesting nor profound. Maybe someone else would respond differently. Profundity is a lot to ask, of course, but the title promises a lot. I think Rabbi Hoffman would have been better advised to write a good deal less and compile a lot more. But that's a different book.

Great book to read before you go to Israel. Reading this will open your eyes to what you are seeing.

But I did later, and it often moved me to tears. It is not a "guidebook" but rather a set of spiritual reflections on many places in Israel. I do understand why some people didn't like it - it IS highly idiosyncratic - there were things included that I might not have, and some things I wish were there. But if you are going to Israel for the first time, I highly recommend this book.

This is a great book to have with you on your trip to Israel. The readings and blessings add so much to an already special experience.

This is not a tour book, it's a spiritual guide. Just so you know.

This commentary was quite shallow. It shed no additional light on what has already been widely published. I would not buy it again.

When I went on my Birthright Israel trip, I was like many young Jewish people and just didn't know all that much about my religion and its history. Aside from prayers and tips on how you can approach these places with a more spiritual frame of mind, it also gives you the requisite history about it. And it's a tiny book and an easy read, so you can even read the section on the place you're going to during the bus ride there, or even the night before you go. This made a huge impact on what I got out of my trip to Israel. Another book I recommend for a similar reason, and you can check out my review of that one too, is Telushkin's *Jewish Literacy: The Most Important Things to Know About the Jewish Religion, Its People and Its History*

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