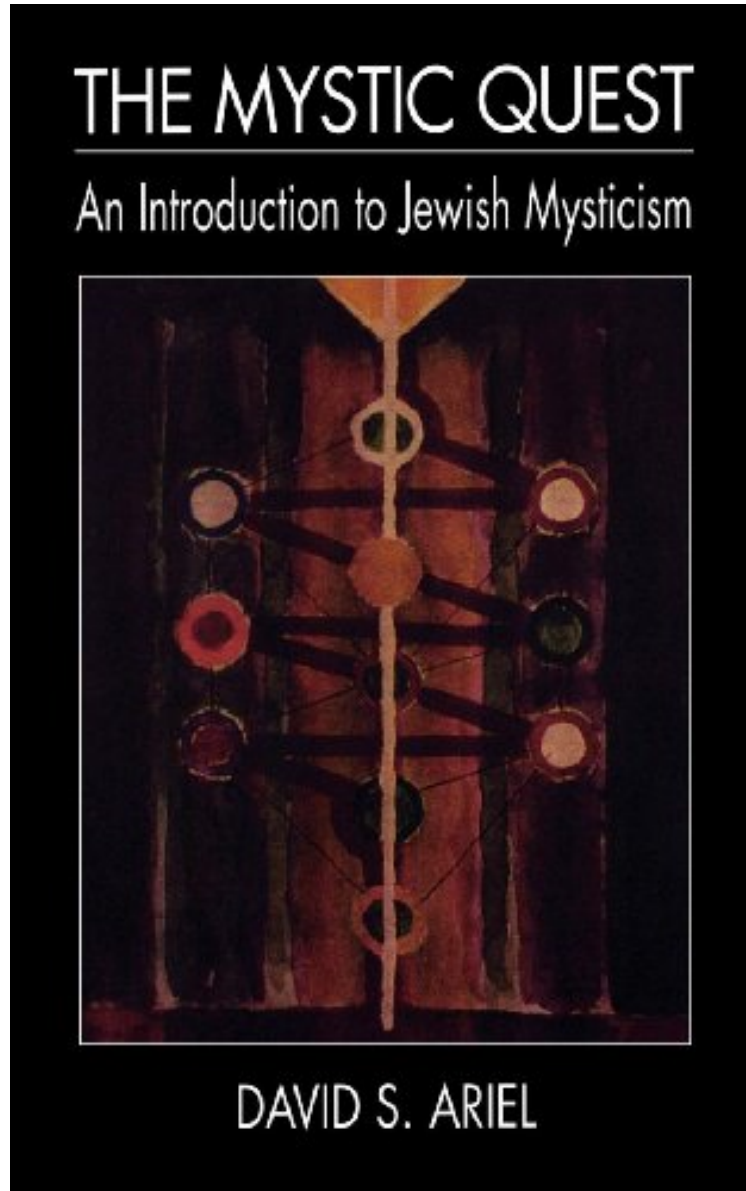


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## The Mystic Quest: An Introduction to Jewish Mysticism

*Von David S. Ariel*

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**Von David S. Ariel : The Mystic Quest: An Introduction to Jewish Mysticism** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Mystic Quest: An Introduction to Jewish Mysticism:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. An

Excellent and Lucid Introduction Von Cameron B. Clark I'm currently reading this book along with many others related to mysticism. This is an excellent and clearly presented introduction to Jewish mysticism. The chapter titles are as follows: 1) Seekers of Unity: The Nature of Mysticism 2) Bridging the Abyss: The History of Jewish Mysticism 3) Living with the Abyss: The Character of Jewish Mysticism 4) The Hidden and the Revealed: The Principles of Jewish Mysticism 5) The Calculus of the Divine World: The Teaching of the Sefirot 6) The Shekhinah: The Feminine Aspect of God 7) Language and Being: The Torah as God's Emanation 8) The Oneness of Being: The Destiny of the Soul 9) The Mystic Drama: The Religious Life of the Jewish Mystic 10) Uplifting the Sparks: Modern Jewish Mysticism 11) Jewish Mysticism and the Mystic Quest For those interested in Christian Mysticism, check out the multi-volume "The Presence of God" series by Bernard McGinn, esp. the first volume "The Foundations of Mysticism." - Brad Clark

Kurzbeschreibung The Mystic Quest explains the major ideas and concepts of Jewish mystical thought in a way that the general reader can clearly understand. Drawing upon his own extensive research as well as on the growing body of scholarly material on the subject, Dr. David Ariel, president of the Cleveland College of Jewish Studies, presents the extremely difficult and complex elements of Jewish mysticism in language that makes it accessible to the layperson. Jewish mysticism is as old as the Bible itself. It is a rich and subtle web of secret teachings and practices that has been part of Judaism since antiquity and has sought to keep the original spark of religious experience alive through the centuries. It is the relatively unknown, esoteric dimension of Judaism that has nourished a deep spiritual power within a tradition of law, ritual, and observance. A central element in Judaism, the "mystic quest" has shaped both Judaism and Jews throughout history, generating the kabbalistic tradition and Hasidism, which continue to thrive today. As Ariel says, "This book is concerned primarily with the development and meaning of the Kabbalah, the principal tradition of mystical Jewish thought." The Mystic Quest begins with an examination of the variety of phenomena known in different cultures as "mysticism." Ariel then located the Jewish mystical tradition within the context of Jewish history and traces its evolution throughout the ages. Jewish mystical theories about the hidden and revealed God, the feminine aspects of divinity, the mystical Torah, and the concepts of the soul and human destiny are then explored in detail. Finally, the author considers Hasidism and modern Jewish mystical thought, discussing the role of mysticism in contemporary Judaism. In language accessible to the beginner, yet sophisticated enough to captivate the advanced student, The Mystic Quest fills an important gap in our knowledge of mysticism by bringing a comprehensive and fresh understanding of the subject to a new generation of students. The Mystic Quest by David S. Ariel may be the most accessible and sophisticated introduction to Jewish mysticism available. Ariel starts by comparing Jewish mysticism to Christian mystical traditions, drawing on writers such as William James and Sigmund Freud to define his terms. He then provides a history of Jewish mysticism, starting with Ezekiel's vision of the chariot and working up to the present day, with special attention to the ways that kabbalah has influenced mainstream Judaism. (One notable detail is that Lekha Dodi, or "Come, My Beloved," the Friday-evening prayer, is a hymn to the kabbalist-derived feminine dimension of God.) In the book's concluding chapters, Ariel gives practical advice about how contemporary Jews can cultivate mystical spirituality. By demonstrating the pervasive mystical dimension of Jewish culture, Ariel gives his Jewish readers the great gift of enlarging their understanding of what they already know, enabling them to find new revelation in the religion that has always guided them. --Michael Joseph

Gross Pressestimmen "The Mystic Quest is a marvelous book that presents Jewish mysticism in a way that is both accessible and exciting. Readers seeking an insight into the life of the Jewish spirit will find that Ariel is a reliable guide, and a very engaging companion." -- Rabbi David Wolpe, author of Healer of Shattered Hearts "Ariel's brilliant study is the first comprehensive history of Jewish mysticism to make its ideas accessible to the nonspecialist. Readers, Jewish or non-Jewish, with an interest in mysticism will find much knowledge here." -- Publishers Weekly "Tightly focused and studded with insights.... A welcome contribution to the study of Jewish mystical thought and praxis." -- Religious Studies "David Ariel reveals the secrets of the Kabbalah with masterful clarity.... This book will surprise and enlighten many readers, as it guides them through the puzzling and profound world of Jewish mysticism." -- Daniel Matt, Graduate Theological Union