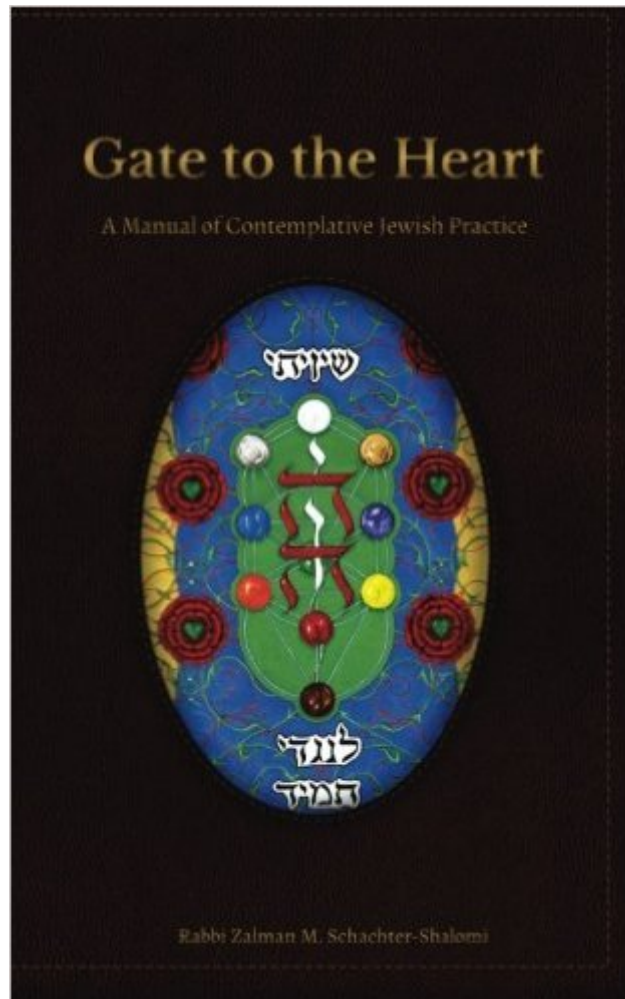


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# Gate To The Heart: A Manual Of Contemplative Jewish Practice



## Synopsis

IN THE LATE 1950's, Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, better known as 'Reb Zalman,' penned what was perhaps the first book on Jewish meditation and contemplative Judaism in English. It was called, *The First Step: A Primer of a Jew's Spiritual Life*, and was printed in a simple stapled booklet edition which he mailed out to friends and students. But it was not long before this humble booklet had reached readers as diverse as President Zalman Shazar of Israel and the famous author of *The Seven Storey Mountain*, Father Thomas Merton. In 1965, it was included as a chapter in the widely influential *Jewish Catalog*, and read by thousands of young Jews in the late 60s and early 70s looking for an authentically Jewish approach to meditation. Then, for many years, the booklet fell out of use until it was completely revised and updated in 1993, in a new booklet called, *Gate to the Heart: An Evolving Process*, which was again privately printed and distributed within the Jewish Renewal movement. In this expanded version, the booklet inspired a whole new generation of Jewish contemplatives looking for a manual of Jewish practice. Now, after being revised and supplemented once again, Reb Zalman's first and most personal book, the culmination of over 60 years of spiritual guidance work, is finally being published and made available to the general public. "For me, *Gate to the Heart* is the one essential book by Reb Zalman. Although there are others that go into more depth, and are more expansive on certain topics, none convey his authentic voice and brilliant creativity more than this one. It is the book that I want to carry with me at all times, a true vade mecum that one can consult again and again to renew one's spiritual practice." --- Netanel Miles-Yepez, co-author of *A Heart Afire: Stories and Teachings of the Early Hasidic Masters*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If there was ever one book of choice to use as a recommendation into the advancement of Jewish Spiritual Life, then this would be my choice! The keys to your spiritual journey are all presented in this book. How? It is written as a guide and is very well outlined. You will then have a fuller understanding of how you can journey in your own meditations and prayers. I would never want to part from this book. It will be one book you'll want by your side. The more you grow spiritually, the more you will appreciate this book above all others as it will open the gate to your heart and can give you the spiritual keys to go further and explore the practice of Mystical Judaism. This book will give you the keys to the car. Or should I say the merkabah.

Reb Zalman's "Gate to the Heart" provides inspiration and techniques to go deeper into your own personal spiritual practice. It includes teachings and offerings to help you personalize your journey. Reb Zalman begins the book with what feels like a dialogue between you and him on how to approach not only the book but your path on "entering an intentional Jewish spiritual discipline." If you are seeking guidance or want to reignite your passion on your path, this book is for you!

I owned this book in its earlier incarnation and loved it then. This edition is even better! Recommended for anyone interested in a heart-centered approach to Jewish meditation and prayer.

This book is a must for anyone interested in Jewish contemplative practice, or for anyone wishing to live a more heart centered life. The magic of Gate to the Heart is in its universal applications, this practice transcends Jewish studies and should be read by anyone on a spiritual path.

Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk reputedly marveled over how the Baal ha-Tanya had managed to fit a "God so big into such a little book!â • In an age where contemplative practice has grown increasingly important to us â " more important even than our Story or our calendar, in reading this book, I similarly find myself marveling: How could Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi condense an entire eraâ™s practice needs into such a tiny manual?! Read this book through. Come back to it often. If you deeply absorb what is found here, you hold the keys to an entire lifeâ™s spiritual mission.

Gate to the Heart: A Manuel of Contemplative Jewish Practice, is the latest iteration of an essay that Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, zl, wrote for the First Jewish Catalog back in the late 60s. As he explains in the introduction of this book, really this is the third or fourth incarnation of the ideas

presented in this book. This small book, at 118 pages of text, is loaded with big ideas and practices to express them. As such, it is a book that must be read slowly, and re-read. Reb Zalman does very little to expand upon the concepts in this book; quite the contrary, he appears to want this work to be cloaked in mystery. Perhaps he is harkening back to the pre-Hasidic days when esoteric knowledge was written in opaque language to fool or tire the uninitiated. So buy the book, read the book, read it again. Take notes, go slowly, try his exercises. The struggle is worth it.

Gate to the Heart arrived prior to the promised earliest day, in simply beautiful condition. Thank you so much!

Excellent book on Kabbalah. Even if you have studied for years, there are still many gems to be discovered.

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