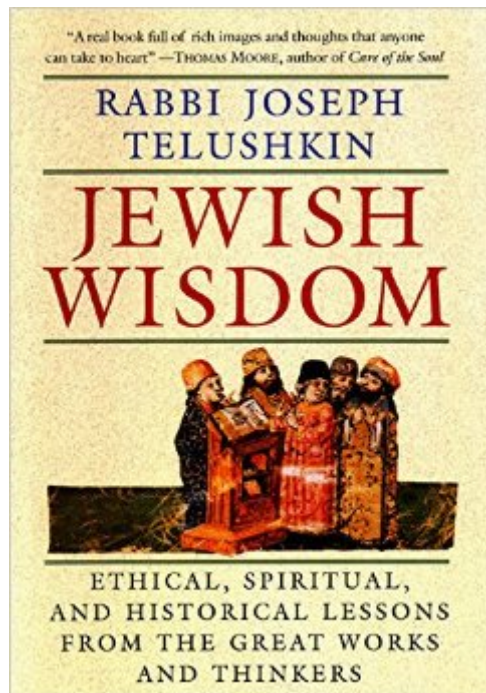


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Jewish Wisdom: Ethical, Spiritual, And Historical Lessons From The Great Works And Thinkers



Synopsis

When, if ever, should lying be permitted? If you've damaged a person's reputation unfairly, can the damage be undone? Is a person who sells weapons responsible for how those weapons are used? If the fetus is not a life, what is it? How, as an adult, can one carry out the command to honor one's parents when they make unreasonable demands? What are the nine biblical challenges a good person must meet? What do the great Jewish writings of the last 3,500 years tell us about these and all other vital questions about our lives? Rabbi Joseph Telushkin has devoted his life to the search for answers within the teachings of Judaism. In *Jewish Wisdom*, Rabbi Telushkin, the author of the highly acclaimed *Jewish Literacy*, weaves together a tapestry of stories from the Bible and Talmud, and the insights of Jewish commentators and writers from Maimonides, Rashi, and Hillel to Einstein, Isaac Bashevis Singer, and Elie Wiesel. A richer source of crucial life lessons would be hard to imagine. Accompanying this extraordinary compilation is Telushkin's compelling commentary, which reveals how these texts continue to instruct and challenge Jews and all people concerned with leading ethical lives today. As he discusses these texts, Rabbi Telushkin addresses issues of fundamental interest to modern readers: how to live with honesty and integrity in an often dishonest world; how to care for the sick and dying; how to teach children to respect both themselves and others, how to understand and confront such great tragedies as antisemitism and the Holocaust; what God wants from humankind. Within *Jewish Wisdom*'s ninety chapters the reader will find extended sections illuminating Jewish perspectives on sex, romance, and marriage, what kind of belief in God a Jew can have after the Holocaust, how to use language ethically, the conflicting views of the Bible and Talmud on the death penalty, and much, much more. *Jewish Wisdom* adds a new dimension to the many widely read contemporary books that retell the stories and reveal the essence of classic religious and secular literature. Possibly the most far-ranging volume of stories and quotations from Jewish texts, *Jewish Wisdom* will itself become a classic, a book that not only has the capacity to transform how you view the world, but one that will change how you choose to live your life.

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Customer Reviews

Like many of my most valued books, Rabbi Joseph Telushkin's `Jewish Wisdom' arrived by accident, not through deliberate choice, but rather as a result of my having missed the reply deadline for one of my book clubs. The full title of the book gives a greater sense of the scope of this 650+ page book: `Jewish Wisdom: Ethical, Spiritual, and Historical Lessons from the Great Works and Thinkers'. This statement in the subtitle comes very close to an encapsulation of the Jewish faith for me -- it is an ethical way of life; it is a spiritual way of life; it is a way of life with high regard for history; it is a way of life with high regard to teaching and learning; it is a way of life that has accomplished great works and produced great thinkers. All of these things benefit the whole of humankind. `Two thousand years ago, when a non-Jew asked Hillel, the leading rabbi of his age, to define Judaism's essence, the sage could have responded with a long oration on Jewish thought and law, and an insistence that it would be blasphemous to reduce so profound a system to a brief essence. Indeed, his contemporary, Shammai, furiously drove away the questioner with a builder's rod. Hillel, however, responded to the man's challenge: "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour: this is the whole Torah. The rest is commentary; now go and study" -- a model statement that has defined Judaism's essence ever since. As Hillel knew, the right words at the right time can inspire people for generations.' Rabbi Telushkin has written or edited literally hundreds of books, and many of them consist of collections of writings or quotations.

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