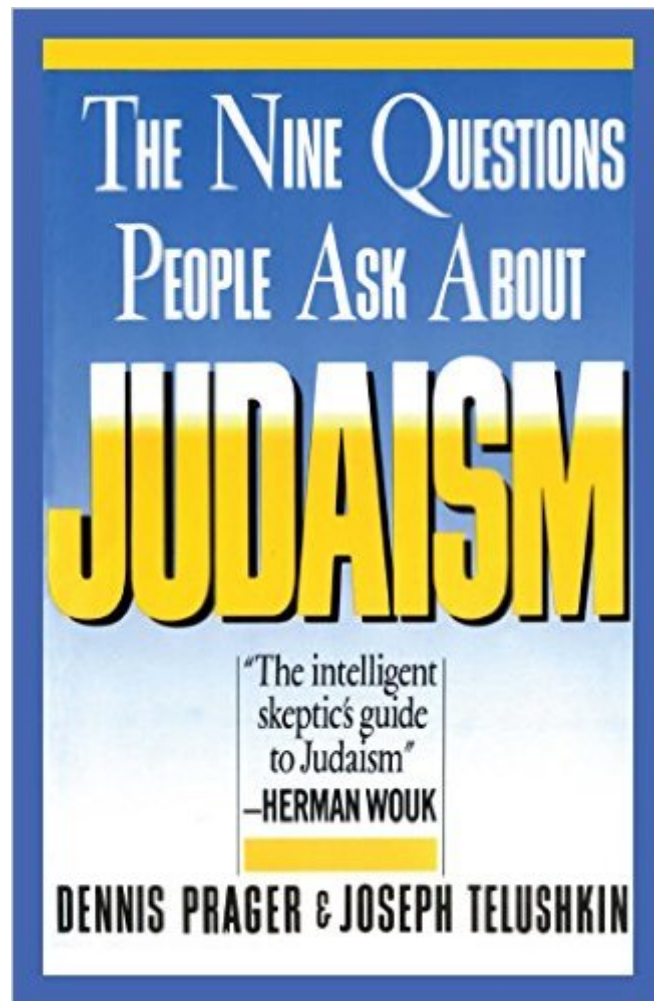


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# Nine Questions People Ask About Judaism



## Synopsis

The classic and essential guide for the educated, skeptical, and searching Jew, or for the non-Jew who wants to understand the meaning of Judaism. If you have ever wondered what being born Jewish should mean to you; if you want to find out more about the nature of Judaism, or explain it to a friend; if you are thinking about how Judaism can connect with the rest of your life—this is the first book you should own. It poses, and thoughtfully addresses, questions like these: Can one doubt God's existence and still be a good Jew? Why do we need organized religion? Why shouldn't I intermarry? What is the reason for dietary laws? How do I start practicing Judaism? Concisely and engagingly, authors Dennis Prager and Joseph Telushkin present Judaism as the rational, moral alternative for contemporary man or woman.

## Book Information

Series: Touchstone Book

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: Touchstone; Reprint edition (April 21, 1986)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0671622617

ISBN-13: 978-0671622619

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.7 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars See all reviews (58 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #288,106 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #238 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Jewish Life #296 in Books > History > World > Religious > Judaism #565 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Religious

## Customer Reviews

I am happy to report that it offers nine concise but dense and provocative answers to the nine questions it poses. Certainly people ask more than nine questions about Judaism but the book is clearly most targeted at the assimilated, disillusioned or curious nonpracticing Jew. It is perfect and on target in its speculations of main issues that trouble and perplex nonpracticing Jews (ex. How do you explain the immoral religious Jews). What makes this worthwhile reading for the non Jew is that a large bulk of the material deals with theological and metaphysical issues thoughtfully. It's also a poised argument for the superiority of religious ethics over secular ethics. Interspersed throughout the chapters are many sharp and fascinating sound bites and quotes. The mainstream success of

the authors both as writers and public speakers owes to their eloquent style which is persuasive but not absolutist. Their tone is one of sharing knowledge and belief, not forcing knowledge and belief. The authors do a wonderful job of providing a logical exposition on the soundness and consequence of ethical monotheism. This book will appeal to all Jews and to anyone who has an interest in spiritual reasoning.

Another reviewer rated this book highly because it is not the typical "same old, same old" description of basic Judaism. I heartily second that opinion. The book, in a highly readable manner, offers some very satisfying answers on some basic and important questions. One of these is the most basic question of all religions ... the question of the existence of God. I liked the answer ... that when you look at all around us there has to be a God. But, you might ask, what is God? The very satisfying answer is that if you take a scientific view that everything was created by cause and effect, then God is the original uncaused cause. Excellent!! With analysis like this, this book is of great value to those interested in Judaism as well as those interested in timeless theological questions. This book answers other important questions such as whether Jews can worship Jesus (the answer is no). Important questions are answered without equivocation. I recommend this book

Sick of books that try to introduce you to Judaism through "same old, same old" descriptions of holidays, the Sabbath, and kosher food laws? This book cuts right through all of that and says with gusto, "this is what Jews believe!" Whether you're a Jew or not, this is one book you want to pick up if you want to understand the Jewish mind a little better. Did you go to Hebrew school as a kid but now you're not sure why you should care? This book will get you caring, whether you agree with Prager or not. Even those who disagree with him cannot deny that his writing gets Judaism up off the page and brings it to life in a way that few other "Intro" books do. Prager is an apologist in a religion that offers little by way of heartfelt apologetics, and an oasis of reason in a sea of religious hyperbole.

Regardless of your background, Prager & Telushkin's introduction to the major ideas and practices of Judaism will provide an immense amount of food for thought. This book is not neutral about Judaism: it is written by two passionately religious Jews (Prager is religious, not Orthodox) who do an outstanding job at presenting a case for living Jewishly in today's world. Amazingly, The Nine Questions has a great deal to offer to Jews who are already deeply committed to Judaism, as well as to the tentative or skeptical Jewish or non-Jewish thinker who is interested at learning what

Judaism has to offer to life in modernity. The writing is crystal-clear, and the book has a straightforward and honest tone which is very appealing. I finished *The Nine Questions* in about a day, and give it a wholehearted endorsement.

For anybody thinking of converting to Judaism-or for anybody who considers himself a maven on the subject of Judaism-this is the first book I recommend.And that includes Herman Wouk's 'This Is My God';Wouk,who wrote the forward to this book-and the blurb on the cover,'The Intelligent Skeptic's Guide To Judaism'-seems to agree.For anyone interested in slugging it out in the religious tradition of Benny Leonard and Barney Ross,this book is indispensable and co-authored by a talk-show host who really is a "maven"(Prager)-and probably today's most indispensable,accessible Orthodox rabbi(Telushkin).

This quick reading book is targeted to the secular or non-practicing Jew who is reconsidering the role of Judaism in his life. Also a good book for the Jew considering intermarriage.The book is organized into sections based on the typical reasons that non-practicing jews give for the nominal role that Judaism has in their lives. There is also a chapter which gives a good but brief Jewish view of the foundations of Christianity.The authors have done a good job of organizing and thinking through their responses to statements ranging from "I can be a moral person without organized religion" to the complex issue of intermarriage.The book was written 20+ years ago, so there are a few sections that are outdated, such as the brief section that deals with Soviet Jewry.

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