

Yom Kippur Readings - Inspiration, Information,
Contemplation. Edited by Dov Peretz Elkins.
Jewish Lights Publishing 2005.

Rabbi Dov Peretz Elkins is the author of some excellent books and articles, though it is most likely as an anthologist that posterity will remember him.

Yom Kippur Readings, the first of two volumes that will also include Rosh Hashanah, seeks to provide inspirational, informative and thoughtful texts for Jews around the many themes associated with the holiest day of the Jewish year.

Elkins takes Yom Kippur, breaks it down into its constituent liturgical and thematic parts, and then presents readings that speak to them. A few texts come from classical Jewish sources, the vast majority of the rest from the pen of modern American rabbis.

For sustained study, debate and consideration some of these pieces are excellent, though many are too long and of too disparate quality to be wholly satisfactory. A few of the texts are simply superb: *Good Grief* by Rabbi Kenneth L Cohen being the best example of the above (p.). [Memo to Jewish Lights: a rabbi who writes this well deserves to be commissioned to do his own book instead of being selectively quoted in the anthologies of others.]

Overall this collection will probably serve a useful purpose for those who require a meaty adjunct to their High Holiday machzorim, but they will need to look hard to differentiate the gristle and the lean from the fillet mignon.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh