

Davening: A Guide to Meaningful Jewish Prayer
by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi with Joel Segal.
Jewish Lights Publishing 2013.

While Reb Zalman's origins are steeped in Hasidic orthodoxy he has practised an unparalleled form of outreach within the Jewish world, seeking to connect with Jews of all kinds, regardless of their label. His ability to speak about God and the connections with the divine that come from prayer are open and unhampered by theological awkwardness.

In *Davening: A Guide to Meaningful Jewish Prayer*, Reb Zalman is addressing principally those hundreds of thousands of Progressive Jews who find belief in God a real challenge, and a meaningful encounter in the context of worship almost impossible. He also offers means of deepening personal spirituality and the opportunity to make institutional worship less 'wrapped and refrigerated' (as Lawrence Kushner says in his introduction).

Davening is divided into eight chapters: *Whisper Language*; *Intention: Davening with Kavanah*; *Niggun! A Soul in Song*; *Davening in the Four Worlds: A Deep Structure of Prayer*; *Following the Map: A Traveler's Guide*; *At Home in Shul: The Synagogue Experience*; *Who am I to Give Blessings?*; *Advanced Practice: Prolonged Prayer*.

This is a book for open-minded but spiritually 'stale' rabbis just as it is for lay people who have lost the ability to pray, or have grown bored with prayer, or who wish to learn more about the potentiality of worship. It is gentle, informative and inspirational and deserves to be very widely read.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh